

Of Counsel, New York

White Collar Defense and Investigations



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Education

J.D., Yale Law School, 1980

B.A., Harvard College, 1976
(*summa cum laude*; Phi Beta Kappa)

Bar Admissions

New York
District of Columbia
Connecticut

Experience

Law Clerk, Hon. Herbert J. Stern,
U.S. District Court for the District
of New Jersey (1980-82)

Government Service

Assistant U.S. Attorney, Southern
District of New York (1983-87)

Associate Independent Counsel,
Iran-Contra Investigation (1987-89)

Chair, New York City Civilian Complaint
Review Board (1994-96)

Member, New York City Mayor's
Advisory Committee on the Judiciary
(2018-25)

Associations

Visiting Lecturer in Law, Yale Law School
Fellow, Yale Law School Center for the
Study of Corporate Law

David M. Zornow founded the firm's white collar defense practice in 1989. He represents corporations and individuals in federal and state grand jury investigations and at criminal trials. He also represents clients in regulatory investigations, including investigations by the Securities and Exchange Commission and state attorneys general, and conducts internal investigations.

From 2009-20, Mr. Zornow was the global head of Skadden's Litigation/Controversy practices and a member of the firm's Policy Committee.

As a federal prosecutor, Mr. Zornow served as associate independent counsel in the Iran-Contra investigation and was a member of the trial team in *United States v. Oliver L. North*.

Mr. Zornow also served as an assistant United States attorney for the Southern District of New York, where he supervised a wide range of white collar cases, including the investigation of corruption at the New York City Parking Violations Bureau. He was a member of the trial team that obtained the RICO conviction of Stanley Friedman, the Bronx Democratic leader. For his investigative and trial work on the *Friedman* case, Mr. Zornow was awarded the Department of Justice's Director's Award.

Mr. Zornow is ranked in *Chambers USA* (Band 1 for New York White Collar Crime and Government Investigations) and also was named to *Lawdragon's* 2021 Legends of the 500 list, which recognizes attorneys "whose contributions define justice and excellence in the legal profession." In addition, *The Wall Street Journal* included Mr. Zornow on a "short list" of lawyers to call when faced with high-profile insider trading charges and *The New York Times* cited him as a leading white collar defense lawyer. He also was one of the world's leading 10 lawyers listed in *Who's Who Legal: Investigations*.

Mr. Zornow is a Visiting Lecturer in Law at Yale Law School, a Fellow of the Yale Law School Center for the Study of Corporate Law and, during Yale's 2023-24 academic year, the Oscar M. Ruebhausen Distinguished Fellow. At Yale, he teaches courses on white collar criminal defense, internal investigations, the business of law firms, and professional ethics and government lawyers. In recognition of his "distinguished achievement in law and business," Mr. Zornow was selected as the 2025 recipient of the Yale Law School Center for the Study of Corporate Law's Simeon E. Baldwin Award. He has taught in the trial advocacy programs at Harvard Law School and the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law and is a frequent speaker and writer on white collar crime issues. Mr. Zornow co-authored "On the Brink of a Brave New World: The Death of Privilege in Corporate Criminal Investigations," 37 *Am. Crim. L. Rev.* 147 (2000). After presenting at a Fordham Law School conference on "Bob Dylan and the Law," Mr. Zornow published "Dylan's Judgment on Judges: Power and Greed and Corruptible Seed Seem To Be All That There Is," 38 *Fordham Urb. L.J.* 1511 (2011). He has received a Burton Award for legal writing.

Mr. Zornow also has been recognized for outstanding *pro bono* service to the New York City Legal Aid Society, and in 2016 he received the Milton S. Gould Award for Outstanding Advocacy from the New York Office of the Appellate Defender. From 1994-96, Mr. Zornow served as chairman of the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board, an independent agency that investigates allegations of police misconduct. From 2018-25, he was a member of the New York City Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary, having been nominated for the position by two successive chief judges of New York State.