Foreword

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Many studies of sexual offences are carried on for some years and then tend to be discontinued. The studies which form the basis for this book have been conducted at the Forensic Clinic of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, established by the Government of Ontario in affiliation with the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Toronto. Provision was made, not only for diagnosis and treatment, but also for teaching and research on a continuing basis. The findings which are presented in this book demonstrate beyond question the social value of such endeavours. The approach to definitions and categorization, well substantiated in this work, should clarify essential problems which have beset previous studies.

Psychiatrists will find a great deal of information about selection of cases for treatment. The prognosis for sex offenders is generally good but it is better for some categories of offenders than others. For example, the heterosexual pedophile who is a first offender is not likely to repeat; the outlook for the homosexual pedophile with a criminal record is much less favourable. With rare exceptions, the sex offender is not mentally ill or mentally defective, except with regard to his sexual deviation. Psychotic pedophiles are rare; they are a bad risk and should not be treated outside an institution.

Judges and magistrates will find here information that is of value in sentencing a sexual offender. Research has produced data which provide a reasonably accurate prediction about the likelihood of recurrence. The prediction cannot be made about sex offenders generally because the recidivism rate varies with such factors as the type of offence, the nature of the act, and previous criminal record.

Social workers and educators will be particularly interested in the description of sexual molestation of young children. They will be able to convey such information to parents whose child has been assaulted and will be better able to assess the effects on the child and to deal with them.