This book is geared to social work students and to practitioners who do not have a high level of research sophistication. Accordingly, we have presented relatively simple research concepts and techniques that can easily be mastered. In trying to present this material in an understandable and approachable form, it is inevitable that we will be accused of oversimplifying research by some of our researcher colleagues. Clinicians also may accuse us of oversimplifying clinical issues.

Our intent has not been to oversimplify. Rather, it has been to link some basic research concepts with the fundamentals of clinical practice. Similarly, the bibliographies at the end of each chapter are selective. They provide the reader with some basic sources. Rather than being exhaustive and redundant, they are representative. Finally, they were selected with a mind to what consumers without extensive research training could read and understand.

Although for the purposes of this book we divided treatment into three phases, we recognize that assessment, intervention, and evaluation are interrelated in practice. Moreover, the research techniques introduced in the context of any one of these phases might just as easily have been applied to one of the others. So, for example, rating scales can be used in diagnostic assessment, treatment
monitoring, and in evaluation of effectiveness. Consequently, a complete understanding of the book requires flexible application of the research concepts and techniques discussed to different areas of clinical decision making.

Perhaps the most difficult idea that we have tried to convey is that the logic of research can be applied to clinical practice. In other words, research thinking can be used for purposes other than pure research. In this vein we hope the book contributes to bringing research and clinical social work practice closer together.