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# *Preface*

It is hoped that the soup-to-nuts approach used in organizing *Forensic and Clinical Applications of Solid Phase Extraction* will provide the reader with a good basis for developing the types of customized extractions that will need to be developed to solve the practical problems associated with the analytical chemistry of toxicological problems.

There are books in which solid phase extraction (SPE) is summarized and reviewed either independently or as part of some other field of endeavor. However, the present work is different in that it is designed to be used as a laboratory reference manual in a variety of forensic environments. It is also designed to provide a comprehensive review of the principles that affect the outcome of novel extractions that researchers may wish to perform.

Along with sections of history, theory, and chemistry, a significant number of applications, troubleshooting, and appendices have been included to provide reference tables and helpful data related to forensic analysis. The applications have been grouped by drug types and matrices.

As we review the history of SPE and look at its application to very selective extractions, one may reach the conclusion that SPE is being purported as a cure-all. This is not the case. Rather, it is a powerful tool that seems to excel in separating specific compounds from very complex matrices, and its improvement makes it extremely useful for extracting both neutral drugs and polar metabolites. A good rule of thumb is that the dirtier the matrix and more polar the compounds, the more likely SPE will be the best choice for sample preparation.

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