

Female sexual offenders: Unrecognized and underreported

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Sexual offenses committed by women, while often unrecognized and underreported, have become the subject of a new book by a University of Montreal professor. *Female Sexual Offenders: Theory, Assessment and Treatment* (Wiley), is the first volume of its kind to provide an overview of female-perpetrated sexual abuse, statistics on the crime, as well as treatment options for offenders.

The book was co-edited by Franca Cortoni, a University of Montreal criminology professor and clinical forensic psychologist who specializes in male and female sexual offenders. She teamed up with Theresa A. Gannon, a forensic psychology lecturer at the University of Kent who also specializes in sexual offenders.

One chapter that Dr. Cortoni coauthored, with University of Montreal PhD candidate Myriam Rousseau, examines the frequency and nature of mental health disorders among female sexual offenders. "According to international research we reviewed, female sexual abusers have more [mental health](#) issues than male sexual abusers," says Dr. Cortoni.

Among the dozen chapters, one examines the rates of criminal recidivism among female sexual offenders - an issue at the heart of most decisions of the criminal justice system. Another reviews emerging research on polygraph testing of these [women](#). It also compares the modis operandi of male to female sexual offenders. Another section provides options for one-on-one and group treatment for female sexual offenders.

"Although my research shows that women constitute 4 to 5 percent of all sexual offenders, sexual offences by women have long been an under-recognized issue that is finally coming to the forefront in our society," says Dr. Cortoni. "This book provides the very latest information regarding prevalence, theory, research and practice with female sexual offenders in one accessible resource for professionals, students and researchers interested in the field."

Provided by University of Montreal

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