## Acknowledgements

It has taken us quite a long time to write this book; too long, because so many things have happened along the way – new houses, new jobs ... basically, life happened! And because the book has taken so long, we have accrued many debts.

First and foremost, the team at Edinburgh University Press have been supportive and patient throughout. Thank you to our original commissioning editor, Gillian Leslie, and the editorial team – Jenny Peebles, Richard Strachan – and to Laura Williamson for her ongoing commitment and enthusiasm for the book as we prepared to submit it.

In writing this book, we were committed to analysing (and therefore sharing with our readers) poems and fiction that we enjoy. Since many of these works are contemporary, we have on several occasions had to obtain permissions. Thanks to the English Research Committee at De Montfort University and to the Humanities Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University for helping to cover some of the permissions costs; thanks also to the authors who gave permission freely and whose work has inspired our analyses.

Thanks to students who read draft chapters and gave us their feedback on the book as learners; in particular thanks to Lauren Anstey, Chelsea Humphries, Ashleigh McCann, Liam Moffat, and Louella Murfin. Thanks also to the students on the 'EGH317 Investigating Real Readers' module at the University of Sheffield for helping to test out and reflect upon the reader response methods covered in Chapter 22 and allowing us to use some of their think-aloud responses in this book.

Our thinking and writing has benefited from our connections with the Poetics And Linguistics Association (PALA) and the International Association of Literary Semantics (IALS). We also feel privileged to be part of the Cognitive Poetics Research Group (CPRG) based in Sheffield. We are particularly indebted to friends and colleagues who suggested literary texts, or read, reviewed, and gave advice about chapters in this book: Alice Bell, Kathy Bell, Joe Bray, Sam Browse, Will Buckingham, Joanna Gavins, Chloe Harrison, Jane Hodson, Chris Hopkins, Anu Koskela, Jessica Mason, Louise Nuttall, Simon Perril, Joe Phelan, Stephen Pihlaja, Keith Scott, and Peter Stockwell. Thanks also to all those who have politely inquired about the book's progress and offered encouragement and support along the way.