

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been a long time in the making. It has been made possible and so much better thanks to the generous support, advice, and friendship of many along the way. I am ever so grateful.

My sincere thanks to the University of California Press, especially Sabine Frühstrück and Enrique Ochoa-Kaup for their generous advice at every step of the publication process, as well as to the New Interventions in Japanese Studies editorial board and the anonymous readers for their many careful reads and guidance. I am indebted to Richard Feit for his ever-so patient and meticulous copyediting and to everyone at UC Press—Jeff Anderson, Sylvie Bower, Teresa Iafolla, and Ramón Smith and also Paige MacKay at Ubiquity Press—who helped to produce and promote the book.

I offer my deep gratitude to the following individuals: Jordan Sand for his advice in the book's earliest stages that immensely helped to shape its scope and approach; Anne Allison for generously sharing her own work on the subject and for encouraging me to think about the bodily remains as well as the textual ones; Sharalyn Orbaugh for all the help in thinking through the project at various stages, including hosting a very helpful workshop session with her graduate students and colleagues at the University of British Columbia in 2019; Stefania Burk for her enduring friendship and help at every turn; and Alan Tansman, who has offered me his time and advice for decades now with astonishing generosity.

Over the years, I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to test out my ideas on the book topic at a series of venues. I am indebted to the organizers and audiences for these events, especially the 2012 Japan Speaker Series at the University of Maryland hosted by Michele Mason, the 2013 Mellon Sawyer Seminar

at Washington University organized by Rebecca Copeland, the 2019 International Conference on “Mishima: 50 Years After” at Université de Paris co-organized by Thomas Garcin and Gérard Siary, a workshop organized by Dennis Washburn and Alan Tansman with UC Berkeley graduate students in 2022, and the 2023 conference “Death and Dying in East Asia” at Western Michigan University where I benefited from feedback and conversations with other scholars working in death studies, especially Mark Rowe. An earlier version of chapter 5 appeared in the February 2020 issue of the *Journal of Japanese Studies* under the title “Noting Suicide with a Vague Sense of Anxiety” and benefited greatly from the anonymous peer reviewers’ suggestions. Although there are too many colleagues to name from countless annual Association for Japanese Literary Studies (AJLS) meetings over the years, I thank this incredibly supportive community. I also thank the Association of Asian Studies for sponsoring an AAS Workshop on the Second Book in March 2018 that helped move the book along.

The interdisciplinary scope of this project has been informed by many colleagues over the years. An appointment as a faculty fellow at the UT Humanities Institute in spring 2010 led by Polly Strong and alongside other scholars working across campus was especially essential to its early conception. Colleagues in the UT Austin Film Faculty Group from 2012 to 2016 helpfully read and commented on an early Mishima chapter draft, with special thanks to Lalitha Gopalan, Joan Neuberger, and Paul Stekler. Researchers at the 2019 International Summit on Suicide Research patiently explained how their work in diverse fields of neurobiology, epidemiology, and genetics applies to suicide intervention and prevention strategies. At a critical juncture, both Adam Clulow, editor at *Not Even Past*, and Nick Lehr, Arts + Culture editor at *The Conversation*, helped me think about how to tell complicated controversial stories about suicide to a broader audience.

My research has been generously funded by UT Austin at crucial junctures: a subvention grant from the Office of the Vice President for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Endeavors of the University of Texas at Austin; the Mitsubishi Endowment in Japanese Studies; College Research Fellowships in 2014 and 2019; a 2012–15 Humanities Research Award and Humanities Institute Faculty Fellowship in spring 2010; and a 2020–21 Provost’s Authors Fellowship, which gave me not only the gift of time and money but also the good counsel of my cohort, Eric Drott in the Department of Music and Ben Brower and Erika Bsumek in the Department of History.

To all my UT Department of Asian studies colleagues, past and present, for their unstinting support with special mention to Martha Selby for her generous feedback on early drafts and to Yvonne Chang, Akbar Hyder, Patti Maclachlan, and Rupert Snell for many years of friendship and encouragement. My sincere thanks to Naoko Suito for always entertaining my Japanese-related questions, and especially to Chiaki Watanabe for all his help hunting down obscure references, translating difficult passages, and deepening the research at every turn. On

this score, I am also very grateful to my research assistants, former and current PhD students Maeri Megumi and Yunfei Shang, as well as Alexander Trotter for his work on the index. And to my UT JapanLab collaborators—Adam Clulow, Jessa Dahl, Megan Gilbert, and Mark Ravina—for the energizing distractions of JapanLab (and Hopfields).

Thanks to all the librarians and Interlibrary Service loans that got me through the pandemic years especially, and to Yi Shang, the fabulous East Asian Studies librarian at UT Austin who consistently went above and beyond any call of duty to help me find crucial resources (and for University of Iowa Libraries' Tsuyoshi Harada's kind interventions when we were in a pinch). Archivists and librarians in Japan kindly helped get me access to essential materials both when I was on research trips and from afar: my gratitude to Watanabe Tomoko, the archivist and librarian at the Kyoto Seika University International Manga Research Center/Kyoto International Manga Museum; Yoshinaga Mami, the curator at the Dazai Osamu Bungaku Salon in Mitaka; and Koyano Yoshifumi, head volunteer of the Mitaka Tour Guide Association. I thank Yokoo Tadanori for his generosity in allowing me to use his hauntingly beautiful self-portrait as the cover art for this book (*T+Y Jigazō*, 2018). And my forever thanks to David Averbach for his generosity and time and for his technical and artistic expertise in preparing the images for the book.

Most of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the many friends, colleagues, and students who have shared their own stories of encountering suicide in texts and in life over the years.

Finally, I thank my friends and family who have sustained me. To the Daikuharas—Okāsan, Otōsan, and Takako-san—who let me into their home and into their family decades ago now. To Mary Fischer for her unwavering enthusiasm. To my mom and dad—Joe and Patricia Cather—for everything. To my sisters Cori and Danielle. And most of all, to Will, Sam, and Natalie (& Pearl, too) for all the love, support, and fun along the way.

