

Acknowledgments

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH, LIKE travel in a foreign country, is unsettling. It challenges how we know the world and de-centers ways of thinking we take so for granted that we are not even conscious of them. It also can be exhilarating, especially when we recognize that much *is* shared across cultures and that we have the resources to live in, make sense of, and even contribute to our surroundings. In many instances, guidance from natives or locals can make the difference between a hazy encounter and an illuminating experience. For this book, I have been fortunate to be able to call on colleagues who “dwell” in biology, communication, English, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, public health, sociology, toxicology, and women’s and gender studies. I have had provocative conversations with nephrologists, otolaryngologists, and pediatricians. I have also talked with mothers and fathers who shared with me their infant-feeding stories. Every time I complete a project, I am mindful of the debt of gratitude I have incurred; this time, I feel more than a little awed by the breadth of expertise and experience from which I and this book have benefited.

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E. B. White once said that, "If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy. If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day." The world compels us to make it better, but it is also filled with wonderful things. For me, music has been the most joyful and abiding presence. It is unlikely (and, in not a few cases, impossible) that any of those who have been an endless source of comfort and inspiration to me will ever read this book. Nonetheless, in the tradition of authors who thank their pets or local coffee shop, I would like to acknowledge a disparate group of musicians joined only by the fact that they contributed much of the soundtrack to the writing of this book: Patricia Barber, Leonard Bernstein, John Coltrane, Bill Evans, Patty Griffin, Sharon Isbin, Gustav Mahler, Brad Mehldau, Cole Porter, Dianne Reeves, Virginia Rodrigues, Dmitri Shostakovich, Nina Simone, Jessica Williams, and Cassandra Wilson.

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