

Acknowledgments

This book was inspired and enriched by the work of countless people, and I am deeply indebted to the rich and vibrant community of research and activism that grew up around it. It goes without saying that this work would be inconceivable without the remarkable generosity and resourcefulness of the women of the YWCA of Troy-Cohoes community. I would especially like to thank my research collaborators in WYMSM, including Nancy D. Campbell, Coffee, Jessica Constantine, Cuemi Gibson, Ruth Delgado Guzman, Cosandra Jennings, Chitsunge Mapondera, Patty Marshall, Christine Nealon, Zianaveva Raitano, Jennifer Rose, and Julia Soto Lebentritt. I hope I have represented our collective work faithfully. Special thanks to Isaac and Mark, who kept us smiling through long afternoon meetings.

Thanks to Pat Dinkelaker, an early and steadfast champion of this project, and executive director of the YWCA for its duration. Her leadership, vision, and kindness enriched the lives of thousands of women at the YWCA and started me on a new path. Thanks to the wonderful staff of the YWCA during my time there: Sue Alberino, Bonnie Benson, Jes Constantine, Ronnie Cush, Liz Girolami, Sue Kemnitzer, Kelly Klein, Christine Nealon, Joni Richter, Sarah Smiley, and Andrea Walters. My thanks also go to interviewees, participants in public programs, tech lab and Resource Center users, residents, and other members of the YWCA community for the honesty and generosity with which they shared their experience. They have been identified only by pseudonyms, so I won't blow their cover here. You know who you are.

My thanks also go to the members of Our Knowledge, Our Power: Surviving Welfare, the grassroots antipoverty and welfare rights organization that grew out of the work recounted here, for providing continued insight and inspiration and for keeping me accountable. Members include Linda Adams, Aalim Ammar, Anne Bink, Devona Brown, Hee Jeong

“Robyn” Chung, Jes Constantine, Roberta Farrell, Mishel Filisha, Deborah Ford, Cuemi Gibson, Catherine Gordon, Kenneth and Kenny Harris, Kizzy Howell, Molly Hussey, Victoria Kereszi, Penny Lane, Nadya Lawson, Tiffany Lherisson, Andrew Lynn, Patty Marshall, Shihoko Nakagawa, Christine Nealon, Ibi Oduyemi, Mary Pimble, Denise Roe, Glen Taylor, Donna Tenney, Shaneeka Thrasher, Maggie Torres, Kristin Turano, Jennifer Vasquez, Dametriss Walker, and Kim Wheeler.

I owe a great debt to my editor at MIT Press, Marguerite Avery, who challenged me to produce a book that would appeal to both academic and popular audiences, providing me space to rediscover the joy of writing for a broad readership. Thanks to four anonymous reviewers, whose input greatly improved the book. I am grateful to the members of Rebecca Wolff’s Hybrid Writing Workshop at the New York State Writers’ Institute for giving me a much needed push early in my rewriting. Thanks are also due to various incarnations of the Ladies Writing League—Anne Bink, Jennifer Burrell, Amy Halloran, Alethia Jones, Patricia Strach, and Meisha Rosenberg—who fed me, supported me, and provided critique and encouragement throughout the process. Amy, Alethia, and Meisha read every word of the manuscript, sometimes several times, as I struggled to put the whole story together in the final year of writing, and I owe them more than I can say.

I am extremely grateful to the staff, interns, and visitors at the Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tennessee, especially Kristi Coleman, Mónica Hernández, Pam McMichael, Jenny Paris, Rob Reining, Sheena Sood, Elandria Williams, and Susan Williams, who provided me sanctuary at two important times in this process. Thanks to Sanford Schram, who rode in like a knight in shining armor at a particularly tense moment, and to Joe Soss, one of my most enthusiastic and consistent supporters. Thanks to *Times Union* business writer Larry Rulison and feminist economists Drucilla Barker and Suzanne Bergeron for providing timely and provocative comments on chapter 4.

This project spanned my time at two unique academic institutions and extended over a period of intense change in my personal and professional life. I would not have made it through without my colleagues and friends at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the University at Albany, State University of New York. At Rensselaer, I owe a debt of gratitude to my dissertation committee, who helped me start this project: Rayvon Fouché, Davydd Greenwood, David Hess, and Langdon Winner. I thank my lucky stars that Nancy D. Campbell, my dissertation chair, decided to take a chance on a “high-risk, high-yield” doctoral thesis, and stuck with me

through all the ramifications of that decision. I am proud and honored to call you a friend and mentor.

The Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) at Rensselaer—Frances Bronet, Nancy D. Campbell, Ron Eglash, Branda Miller, Barb Nelson, and Steve Pierce—provided funding and encouragement through the research stages of this project. I thank my colleagues in Science and Technology Studies at Rensselaer: Michael G. Bennett, Jean-Francois Blanchette, Camar Diaz-Torres, Nicole Farkas, Jill Fisher, Jenrose Fitzgerald, Kim and Michael Fortun, Art Fricke, Abby Kinchy, Torin Monahan, Dean Nieusma, Jason Patton, Hector Postigo, Erich Schienke, Jeanette Simmonds, and Alex Sokoloff. Your friendship and insight helped me figure out who I am as a scholar and an activist.

I am thrilled that I found a home in the Department of Women's Studies at University at Albany, SUNY. I am inspired and encouraged by a wonderful group of colleagues in the department and across the campus: Chris Bose, Maia Boswell-Penc, Janell Hobson, Alethia Jones, Fernando Leiva, Vivien W. Ng, Gwen Moore, Marjorie Pryse, Loretta Pyles, Bonnie Spanier, Glenna Spitze, Patricia Strach, and Barbara Sutton. Special thanks go to Julie Novkov, my mentor and professional idol, for shepherding me through difficult times and evening my keel. Though there are too many to list here, I draw endless motivation and energy from all my wonderful students in the Women's Studies department. I am privileged to watch you become sharper thinkers, better advocates, and more fearless fighters for justice.

It is easier to be courageous in concert, so I draw great strength from the community of feminist activists in the Capital Region. Those I have not already mentioned include Jaclyn DeChiro, Q Diamond, Jackie Hayes, Nadya Lawson, Naomi Jaffe, Cricket Keating, Roxanne Ramlall, Carmen Rau, Barbara Smith, and Fiona Thompson. I owe my wonderful friends Nina Baldwin, Tanya Bastone, Celia DuBose, Adam Frelin, Jackie Goss, Amy Halloran, Rachel Havrelock, Niki Haynes, Alethia Jones, Penny Lane, Steve Rein, and Kate Sipher many phone calls, and thank them for helping me keep body and soul together. Thanks to Nick Matulis for putting a roof over my head, and for always asking how the writing's going. Thanks to my family—Carole Eubanks, Hardy Eubanks, David Deigan, Tommy and Brenda Eubanks, and Daphne, Patrick, and Elizabeth Haugh—for their support of this project and their endless patience with me.

Finally, I am especially and eternally grateful to Jason Martin, my first reader and closest friend, who teaches me daily how to live a life of courage, integrity, and honesty.

This research was funded in part by a HUD Community Outreach Partnership (COPC) grant and a National Science Foundation dissertation improvement grant (NSF 0322525). The manuscript was completed with the help of a Dr. Nuala McGann Drescher Leave Award from the Joint Labor-Management Committees of New York State and United University Professions. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the National Science Foundation, the Joint Labor Management Committees, or United University Professions.