

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The acknowledgments are often the first thing I will read in any academic book. They map out the networks and frameworks of support that all authors are indebted to: whom the author works with; where they've traveled; the conversations they've had; the people who have championed them, challenged them, or been a shoulder to cry on; and the ones who have kept them calm, fed, and watered or offered (un)wanted distraction. My own life has been front and center of this project, but it simply wouldn't have come together in the form it is now without the belief and support of Lynn Spigel and Elizabeth Ault, who kept the faith from initial concept to the delivery of the final manuscript. I am also indebted to the reviewers who have pushed, challenged, and encouraged me to make this work the best it could be (even though I sometimes wished for an easier path). Karen Lury has been sounding board and pep squad throughout, and I couldn't wish for a more generous colleague, collaborator, and friend. Special thanks to Rachel Moseley, who has read numerous drafts at various stages, for her insights and enthusiasm, and to Alison Peirse: our shared experiences (always best to be the same) underpinned the ideas for chapter 4, and her writing tutorials helped me finish it.

The writing of this book has been generously supported by the College of Arts and the School of Culture and Creative Arts at the University of Glasgow through periods of research leave, teaching relief, and travel funding. Many thanks also to my colleagues in Film and Television Studies for the collegiality, check-ins, impromptu writing surgeries, study days, dinners, and drinks. The ideas in this book and the confidence to take them forward are also the result of conversations with friends and colleagues, whether brief or sustained, that helped me put the pieces of the puzzle together, in no particu-

lar order: Matthew Allen, Hannah Tweed, Zöe Shacklock, Amanda Ptolemy, Andrew Kötting, Paul Sutton, Anna McCarthy, Faye Woods, Kerr Castle, Lisa Kelly, Rowan Aust, Glyn Davis, and the members of the Northern Television Studies Research Group. Bryony Randall and Geraldine Parsons have also continued to provide much-needed “peer mentoring” and support. I am also particularly grateful to the organizers of the following conferences and symposia for giving me a space to try out my work in progress and for the audiences (often small but perfectly formed) for their thoughts and feedback: the Screen conference (University of Glasgow, 2013, 2015, 2017), “Television for Women” (University of Warwick, 2014), “Media and Place” (Leeds Beckett University, 2016), the Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference (University of Chicago, 2017), “Disability and Disciplines” (Liverpool Hope University, 2017), and “Ageing, Illness and Care in Cultural and Literary Narratives” (University of Huddersfield, 2019). I am also grateful for the invitations to give research presentations at the University of South Wales, University of St. Andrews, University of Hull, University of Warwick, and De Monfort University. However, my most significant testing ground has been in two of the television studies courses I have taught and continue to teach at Glasgow: Television Analysis and Advanced Topics in Television. The undergraduate and postgraduate students in these classes have been a constant source of inspiration—sharing their own thoughts and experiences of living with television while also being willing and good-humored participants in my TV-viewing experiments.

My family and friends are present throughout this book—whether on the page or in between the words—and none more so than our dear friend John Parker (1977–2019), whom we miss every day. In getting my life stories down on paper, I am beyond grateful to my mum, who has continually supported and contributed to this venture with her honesty, her resilience, and her candid reflections on our family life. In the words of most reality TV participants, “we’ve been on a journey together,” and I thank her and the rest of my family for making the best (most annoying, amusing, nurturing, frustrating, loving, and loved) companions: Jessica, Sam and Annie, Dad, Briony and Ta. And not forgetting Doris and Geoffrey, Muriel and George, Joseph, and Alice (always).

Finally, to Michael, for the love, patience, and peace I once thought I might never find.