Advance Praise for *Dreams of the Overworked*

“This marvelous book captures the contemporary experience of nine families, allowing them to speak for themselves about their dreams and how they cope with everyday life. Uniquely, it celebrates the fact that it is the dense web of social connections, or scaffolding, that enables family life to thrive in the digital age.”

—Judy Wajcman, London School of Economics

“Beckman and Mazmanian capture timeless and essential truths about blending parenting and employment. This is a book about cooperation and dependence—dependence on both earning an income and being an involved parent; dependence on our children for their cooperation in the shared endeavor; dependence on our family and friends for their engagement and care; dependence on caregivers who provide the scaffolding that makes each unique work–family blend possible.”

—Kathleen L. McGinn, Harvard Business School

“In their excellent new book, Beckman and Mazmanian explore the Herculean task today’s families face as they strive to live up to the unrealistic expectation of doing everything perfectly while also being bombarded by ‘helpful technologies.’ Their in-depth look at different family configurations frames the challenges—and potential solutions—that today’s unique families need to understand in order to thrive in these changing times.”

—Brad Harrington, lead author of *The New Dad* research series

“This wonderfully intriguing book reveals how invisible and undervalued support from extended family members, friends, neighbors, and communities is the scaffolding that makes survival and success possible. The example-rich writing is delightful and the informative endnotes fully cover a wide range of literature. This book is eye-opening and a must-read for all.”

—Lotte Bailyn, MIT Sloan School of Management

“What makes this book unique is its tough love message. Left to its own devices, technology makes us more likely to buy into myths of our perfectibility. The way out begins with our deep understanding of our vulnerability. From there, these savvy and humanistic researchers can help you design a customized plan for individuals and organizations. But it’s going to be a *plan*, not a gimmick.”

—Sherry Turkle, author of *Alone Together*

“Beckman and Mazmanian show the stakes in everyday life as we pursue perfection. Whether being the best parent and worker or having a perfect body, we try achieving the unattainable by working hard and efficiently to do more and do it better. *Dreams of the Overworked* explores the internal work that fills our days as we navigate life, simultaneously alone and in a crowd.”

—Chuck Darrah, co-author of *Busier Than Ever!*

This page intentionally left blank

DREAMS OF THE OVERWORKED

The background of the cover features a light gray silhouette of a woman and a young child walking away from the viewer, holding hands. The woman is on the left, and the child is on the right. The title is overlaid on the woman's silhouette.

DREAMS OF THE OVERWORKED

Christine M. Beckman

The background of the cover features light gray silhouettes of a parent and a child. The parent is on the right, taller, and the child is on the left, shorter. They are both facing away from the viewer and holding hands. The title text is centered over this image.

LIVING, WORKING, AND PARENTING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

and Melissa Mazmanian

STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
Stanford, California

STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Stanford, California

© 2020 by the Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University.
All rights reserved.

All artwork courtesy of Vera Khovanskaya.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or
by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and
recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system without the
prior written permission of Stanford University Press.

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free, archival-quality paper

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Beckman, Christine M., author. | Mazmanian, Melissa, author.

Title: Dreams of the overworked : living, working, and parenting in the
digital age / Christine M. Beckman and Melissa Mazmanian.

Description: Stanford, California : Stanford University Press, [2020] |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019051227 (print) | LCCN 2019051228 (ebook) |

ISBN 9781503602557 (cloth) | ISBN 9781503612334 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Mental fatigue. | Quality of life. | Families.

Classification: LCC BF482 .B43 2020 (print) | LCC BF482 (ebook) |

DDC 155.9/2—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019051227>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019051228>

Book design by Kevin Barrett Kane

Typeset at Stanford University Press in 10/14 Mercury Text G1

to Kim and Mary,
who scaffold our dreams

This page intentionally left blank