Scholarship often seems the most solitary of pursuits. Shut up in our offices, toiling away over books, computers, and index cards (or tattered shreds of paper, as the case may be), there is a great temptation to imagine ourselves as independent and autonomous creatures, locked in quiet isolation with our sources and our grand thoughts. This self-image, gratifying though it may be at times, does nothing but obscure the truth of the matter: we are all utterly dependent on the labors of others—countless scholars, colleagues, librarians, bibliographers, supporters and friends, faces seen and unseen. I cannot begin to name them all; but it is pure pleasure to try.

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