I have put off writing these acknowledgments for a long time because I have no way to clear the debts to others I acquired in the process of researching and writing this book. In fact, I am sure I will never even properly remember them all. Most important is what I owe to the men and women of my two main field sites and in several other towns where I conducted supplementary observation and interviews. I cannot mention them by name without violating their privacy. I wish my writing could in some way do justice to the contribution they made to my research, but it simply cannot. They welcomed me into their homes, shared their families, their meals, their histories, and their passion for democracy with me. Most of all they taught me things I really needed to know; only some of those things were about politics. I thank them. I miss them.

Research of the sort I do is expensive. Mine was supported by a 1999 Japan Society for the Promotion of Science postdoctoral fellowship, and a 2002 Fulbright Research Fellowship administered by the Japan–United States Educational Commission. At my institutional home, Washington and Lee University, I received funding from the Glenn Grant program for summer research, the Class of ’62 grant program for extending sabbaticals, and the Nasdaq/Suntrust Global Commerce Faculty Development Grant for international research. I was welcomed twice, in 1999 and 2002, as a research fellow at Rikkyō University in Tokyo. In the fall of 2007 I finished the last bit of my research while an International
Christian University Foundation visiting professor of political science at International Christian University, also in Tokyo. At both institutions smart and friendly colleagues, effective staff, and subsidized housing helped make my time in Tokyo productive and satisfying.

I have borrowed from the intellect of any person I thought might contribute to my own thinking, including a prospective kindergarten teacher for my son. Most of my unwitting creditors cannot be listed here. However, some have been especially helpful in my work. Igarashi Akio of Rikkyō University has guided my work in Japan since my days as a graduate student. Without his advice I would never have begun a study of Japanese local politics; without his introductions I could never have done the fieldwork in this book. His personal commitment to doing research that furthers a more democratic and ethical world is an inspiration to me. Another longtime political science colleague, Ōgai Tokuku, was also very giving with introductions and intellectual feedback. So was Sasaki Yasushi, whose rich understanding of the Japanese language (and patience with its nonnative speakers) was indispensable in the early stages of my work. Mike Schneider, Sascha Goluboff, Walter Bennett, and Yumiko Mikanagi read chapter drafts with sharp eyes and generous spirits. A provocative dinner conversation with the anthropologists Bill Kelly and Karen Nakamura following a talk I gave at Yale University in 2007 challenged me to rethink my arguments about cheating in chapter 4. I probably haven’t satisfied Bill or Karen, but I know my work is better as a result of their questions. Gavin Whitelaw provided me with important background information about small retail businesses in Japan. Reed Malcolm at the University of California Press was immediately enthusiastic and supportive. Jan Bardsley, Andrew Barshay, and one anonymous reviewer provided detailed, practical advice for me in the last stages. Caroline Knapp, my manuscript editor, shepherded the project through the production process with almost no pain for me, and Judith Hoover’s exacting work as copy editor has greatly enhanced my prose (and my rather impoverished understanding of punctuation).

A number of staff members at Washington and Lee have contributed to providing a hospitable environment for my research. Three have been especially helpful during the course of my project. Carolyn Hammett processed countless Japanese-language receipts and yen-dollar equivalency spreadsheets to make sure I would be reimbursed for all of my research expenses. Lynda Bassett-de Maria made it possible for me to look good at my other university commitments (most notably a campuswide student research conference and a year as head of Women’s
Acknowledgments

and Gender Studies) while I kept working at this book, and reference librarian Dick Grefe produced important background information for my introduction. My dean, Larry Peppers, did what I think all deans should do. Even when I couldn’t fully articulate what I was up to, Larry cheerfully accepted that my crazy project might someday amount to something, sent financial resources my way, and then left me to my own devices.

I tried to write this book for my students, who each day remind me that politics is supposed to be about making a better world. A few have been especially important to this project. At the beginning Brooks Hickman helped me build a bibliography of research on men’s studies. His independent study in Confucian ethics became a source for my own thinking on the topic, and our discussions of power theory helped me refine my frustrations with it. Ashley Hubbard read a draft of the entire manuscript, helping particularly in my efforts to straighten out the confused elements of my introduction. Peter Kyle devoted long hours to editing the last two versions of the manuscript. Peter has proofreading skills I envy hugely, but more important he is a sober, insightful, and gutsy editor. Without Peter’s sound advice I would have written a much worse book.

Other than Peter, no one has been more fully subjected to my many drafts of difficult sections than David Millon. One summer evening conversation about the banality of good helped me to, at long last, understand what I wanted to say in chapters 4 and 5. Perhaps as helpful as David’s belief in this project, however, has been his penchant for enjoying a good meal. Whether we shared them at restaurants, he cooked them for me, or I cooked them for him, our meals together have been a valued respite from work and, more than once, the incentive I needed to push through a long day of writing.

On the subject of external supports, I would never have put together the disparate writing projects that became this book if it had not been for one intense week of uninterrupted writing at my brother Bill’s house in Atlanta, perfectly located between the nice morning people at Aurora Coffee and the pecan chocolate chunk cookies at Alon’s Bakery. I should not neglect to mention that Billy’s leftover pork in mojo sauce kept me focused through the afternoons between the coffee and the cookies. I doubt any location makes a finer writer’s retreat.

My son was born, my parents died, and I was divorced over the course of researching and writing this book. I have many good friends who said and did the things I needed in that difficult time. My sister, Lizzy, and
my stepmother, Sarah, have offered me a regular means of connecting to the world outside myself. My ex-husband, Michael McClure, was an early supporter of this project; he continues to share his sense of irony and wisdom when I need a defense against my own doubts. My running friends, Louise Uffelman, Tom Contos, Jim Kahn, Peter Jetton, and of course David Millon, have humored me throughout. Ellen Mayock and Domnica Radulescu taught me how powerful any smart woman armed with a few choice words can be. (I just wish I had as many choice words as they do!) My son, Tieran, has every day called me to see how new, how possible, and how beautiful the world is.

As I said at the beginning, some debts cannot ever be repaid. My father died in 2005 at sixty-three of a terrible and rare disease, amyloidosis, that destroyed his digestive system and starved him. I doubt I'll ever know what caused my father’s disease, but it taught me what individuals with catastrophic illness and their families can suffer.

For a number of years during my childhood, my father worked at one of the Department of Energy facilities in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, that I describe in the introduction. Those facilities leaked a range of dangerous pollutants into the environment during decades of high-security work. As the U.S. government acknowledged with the passage of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act in 2000, the pollutants at Oak Ridge facilities greatly damaged the health of some workers. I wrote the section of the introduction that is about Oak Ridge in 2003, more than a year before I knew my father was sick, and it was not my intention at the time I wrote it to speak about my father. I have no proof whatsoever that his illness was caused by his years working there. His type of amyloidosis has no known cause. Nonetheless, disease as brutal as that was certainly a possibility for many who worked in the Oak Ridge DOE facilities during the years my father was employed there.

My father did not seek to understand the source of his illness, and he complained very little about what he suffered during it. Usually my father was not a man to simply bow to the status quo. He could offer sharp critiques of American social, economic, and political values over the dinner table on any given evening. I’m sure my fascination with and suspicions about power were spurred in those childhood conversations. But my father also grew up with limited financial resources and put enormous energy into achieving the American Dream for himself and his offspring. He never resisted the notion that it was his duty as a man to be the family’s breadwinner, even if that duty sometimes required
personal sacrifice. My father had a gift for living the joy available in the present moment; I think that is why he often enjoyed his work. But he also looked forward to a freer time after retirement when he would get to pursue the interests he really cared about. He didn’t get that time.

The Oak Ridge section of my book is barely changed from what I originally wrote in 2003. As I revised the rest of the introduction and the book in the years after losing my father, however, I began to wonder what he quietly endured in order to do what he thought a good man should. I hope that, in some way, this book both honors his memory and challenges the good men who come after him to ask more of power than it does of them.