Acknowledgments

Writing this book has been an adventure stretching over many years and many locations and, like all good adventures, it has only reached its successful conclusion with an awful lot of help along the way.

This project began as my dissertation, and I am indebted to the faculty and staff of the Government and Politics Department at the University of Maryland, College Park for their time, attention, and advice. In particular, my dissertation committee provided invaluable feedback and perspective, and this project is many times better because of it. I am grateful to Kris Miler for pushing me to develop a clearer and more robust theoretical framework, to Mike Hanmer for holding me accountable for my methodological decisions, to David Karol for providing limitless historical insight, and to Christopher Foreman for challenging me to expand my thinking beyond the world of political science alone. I also wish to thank the multiple conference participants and two anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful suggestions and improvements.

I am not the first to recognize this, and surely will not be the last, but it simply cannot be possible to have had a better mentor than the indomitable Frances Lee. Every step along the way, Frances offered encouragement, insightful suggestions, and the kindest form of constructive criticism. I walked away from every conversation with a stronger, smarter, and considerably more grammatically sound project, and I am eternally grateful.

I have been very fortunate to have extremely supportive family and friends. Much gratitude is owed to Jaime, my siblings, and my parents for their patience with my near single-minded focus on this project over the past few years. Special thanks go to my mother, who offered enthusiastic support over the course of this journey, and never doubted that this book would happen.

Finally, it is one of my greatest aspirations to at some point find the appropriate words to express my appreciation for the ceaseless support and encouragement that my wife Kari provided from beginning to end. With her, this process has been immeasurably more joyful and more grounded. For the untold hours of conversation, the many rounds of edits, the delight in the ups, the reassurance in the downs, and the laughter throughout, I thank you.