## Acknowledgement

It is a luxury to have so many wonderful people to thank for their help in producing this work. My adviser, Penny Eckert, has been a mentor, role model and critic in the best of senses. She, more than anyone, has helped to shape who I am as both a researcher and teacher and has taught me that the most important thing of all is having work you can call your own. I have also been blessed with a committee of remarkable insight and caring. John Rickford has time and again reminded me of the collaborative nature of research, pointing out connections to other work and helping me to see the genealogy of the field. Arnold Zwicky has grounded me with his passion for data and saved my sanity a number of times by gently pointing out the difference between a dissertation and a life's work. Tom Wasow helped to shape my discussions with his insightful comments, as well as offering a kind word when it was sorely needed.

Carrying out this research would not have been possible without the help of the participants themselves. I am particularly grateful to the speakers for lending their voices to the project. The linguists at North Carolina State University have a special place in my heart for their warm and generous welcome when I came looking for subjects and advice. Walt Wolfram kindly facilitated my connection there while Erik Thomas offered comments, resources and encouragement. Ben Torbet went above and beyond the call of duty in helping me contact students to participate in my study and I will always be grateful. Staff at Duke and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill were generous in allowing me to use their students and their facilities. Special thanks go to Ron Butters and Carol Renegar at Duke for their work and patience in helping me with those arrangements. Barbara Goldman at UNC was also

most patient with me. The "Home Team", too, pitched in to recruit participants. My thanks go to Arnold Zwicky, Tom Wasow, Emily Bender, John Rickford, David Beaver and anonymous others who passed along my pleas for assistance.

Surviving this experience without colleagues would have been impossible. I received a special combination of moral support and substantive feedback from Mary Rose, as well as Robert Podesva, Julie Sweetland, Angi Kortenhoven and Sarah Roberts in our regular "dissertation group" meetings. The SLIC group, although predating this project, was the place where many of my thoughts were first explored on these topics. Emily Bender, Susanne Riehemann, Cathryn Donohue, Andrew Wong and Devyani Sharma lit the path just a few steps ahead and helped me see my way forward.

Friends outside of school have been an essential stabilizing force. Ricky Connell has listened patiently to my tales of woe and helped me to forget my role as an overworked student. It has also been in his living room that I have found many of my closest friends. Serinda Newell, Eli Dart, Adam Haberlach and Stephanie Hebert are not only dear friends in their own right but generously shared their time for this project. Rosa Carson is the "best friend" I wish I'd had in 5th grade and came to my rescue with transcription services when I was injured. The homeport IRC crowd has my thanks for support and amusement provided literally on a daily basis. And I thank Michaela Schlocker for providing me with the most useful insight into the experience of graduate school that I have found anywhere.

There are no words to express my gratitude to my parents, Pat Campbell and Tom Kibler. Although they did, as the saying goes, make me what I am today, that pales next to the wealth of love, support, advice and practical assistance they have given throughout this project. My mother especially has served as statistical consultant and unofficial 5th committee member, to say nothing of her guidance on the social aspects of academic life.

My son Seth has shown patience beyond his years with this competitor for my attention. He has generously shared the results of his own sociolinguistic investigations, some of which may be seen in the pages that follow. He has also blessed me with his philosophical insights, including one captured by our friend Jeanette Pettibone "sometimes falling down is just a chance to play with your feet". It is difficult to find advice more appropriate to writing a dissertation.

Finally, I must attempt to express a small portion of my thanks to my husband, David Mortman. His contributions to this dissertation have been immense. He has tirelessly copyedited page after page. He has taken time off work to fly to North Carolina with a fractious toddler so I could be near both my work and my son. He has counseled me through innumerable emotional strains. Most importantly, he has built with me a life worth living. In doing so, he has engaged in an amazing work of social change, redefining fatherhood on a daily basis in the corporate world. With good humor and patience, he has taught his colleagues to accept the occasional childish voice in the background of a conference call, assuming matter-of-factly their support in this shared experiment of equitable and joyous co-parenting. For that and many other things, he has my awe, my thanks and my love.