Anyone who has ever watched the Academy Awards show knows there is never enough time to acknowledge everyone who has contributed to a body of work. It is also painfully clear during those acceptance speeches that the more the winner tries to be inclusive, the more inevitable it is that they leave someone out or shortchange those they list at the end. To that end, I want to first thank everyone who had a hand in making this volume a reality.

In particular, I want to thank the authors and contributors to this volume for trusting me with stewardship of their work and ideas. An edited book is only as good as its contributors, and the combined intellect, creativity, and scholarship of all the submissions made the reading and editing process both rewarding and humbling. I would also like to thank my editorial assistant at IGI Global, Beth Ardner, for her support in developing the book and responding to all my questions and requests as the book evolved from proposal to publication. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the editorial board and reviewers, who dedicated many hours to reviewing the submissions to help ensure that authors got the best feedback and that I benefited from the collective intelligence of the community in my selection of chapters.

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My father is responsible for my interest in technology in general, whether from the many times I accompanied him to work as a systems analyst at the Institute for Social Research or his patient support in showing me how to using *DocuMat*, the word processing program he wrote for the CPM operating system. The day he brought home *Cave Adventure* on an 8.5-inch floppy disk may be the single most important event in terms of leading to my scholarship in games and to the book you hold in your hands now.

I want to thank two mentors in my professional life whom I am also privileged to call friends. Jack Dempsey was my committee chair during my doctoral studies at the University of South Alabama, but this does not begin to convey the influence he had and continues to have on my life. From responding to an unknown doctoral program applicant’s question about games as an area of study to involving me...
in research well before I could be much help to him in doing so, to treating me as much as a colleague and friend as a student, his mentorship has been key to any success I have had. His is a hard example to follow in this regard, but it has served as a guide to me in my own experience as a professor in higher education.

Likewise, I have Art Graesser to thank for showing me the true value of interdisciplinary research and productivity. My experience working with him at the Institute for Intelligent Systems at the University of Memphis convinced me that the biggest questions and the best research can only be tackled with the will and perspective of a diverse group of researchers from multiple disciplines. It takes a special person to keep a group like that focused and productive while also allowing everyone to feel like an equal partner in the process.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Sandy, for everything she has done for me and meant to me. What a daunting sentence—there is no way I could thank her adequately even if I were to fill the rest of the pages in this book. As a collaborator in my professional life, she is an equal partner. As my partner in life, she is the reason any of it makes sense.

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