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## Acknowledgements

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My sincerest gratitude to all the *Handbook* contributors; the opportunity to work with such an exceptional and renowned group has been amazing. Your enthusiasm for work–life issues exudes throughout this volume.

I am fortunate to have talented and dedicated Doctoral students who supported my work on this book. Thank you, Michael Litano and Heather Bolen. Thanks also to Old Dominion University, VA, USA for supporting my contributions.

Of course, I have my own work–life tale to share. I still recall anticipating becoming a mother and wondering how I would make it all work. In an effort to alleviate my high anxiety, I did research and talked to friends and colleagues who were already managing career and family roles. I reminded myself that I had chosen academia for its relative flexibility and family-friendliness. When my son was born, I was stunned by the ease with which ‘family’ so naturally and obviously declared itself as my top priority. That doesn’t mean it has been easy to live out that priority, but it has made the path clearer and lessened my experience of ‘conflict’. There is no magic formula or one best way. My son is now a teenager, and it’s still a continuous process of figuring out what works for us. My wish is for all families to have the support and flexibility to figure out what works for them.

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I have been trying to integrate work and family before this area became a field of study. Here is but one example. My first daughter, Sharon, was born in July and I started my academic career 13 months later in September. Sharon had a series of ear infections that winter, usually resulting in a fever. I would put her in the bathtub to lower her temperature, then I would hold her in one arm in a rocking chair in our den until she fell asleep, while I held a book for a course I was teaching for the first time in the other hand. (I was one week ahead of the students.) Talk about

work and family integration and enrichment. My family continues to be a major source of joy in my life.

This is my first collaboration with Debra Major, with another in the works. It was a delight to work with her. She managed relationships with our authors and our publisher, Edward Elgar. The high quality of her work in this area and her personal relationships with many of our authors made the job relatively easy.

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*Ronald Burke*  
*Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

