Acknowledgements

Completing a behemoth such as a dissertation is never possible without the support of lovers, friends, foes, and colleagues—okay, so maybe not the foes. Invariably, there’s never enough space or words to express the amount of gratitude necessary to match the support given throughout this process.

Nevertheless, I would like to thank the members of my committee Drs. Michael Awkward, Regine O. Jackson, and Pamela Scully, who have stuck with me through what seems like an endless process. I am especially grateful for their invaluable comments and guidance (on the project, academia, and life) and for their willingness to journey into the thickets of my mind and come back with usable goods. I would especially like to thank Regine for her mentorship as well as her friendship. Thank you for sharing your family and your time!

Throughout this process I have been lucky to have obtained the financial support necessary to sustain me and this project. Early support came from the Emory Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Later support came from several sources: The Transforming Community Project (Thank you Dr. Leslie Harris for having the vision to create!); The Office of Undergraduate Education Graduate Assistantship (Special thanks to Dr. Tom Lancaster for being an early mentor on the administrative route in academia; Dr. Vialla Hartfield-Mendez and Maureen Sweatman of the Scholars Program; Dr. Robert Brown, formerly of the FAME program); The Office of University-Community Partnerships Graduate Fellowship (Thank you for introducing me to community building as a movement); The James Weldon Johnson Institute for Advanced Research Graduate Assistantship (Dr. Rudolph Byrd, thank you for being inimitably you! And thank you to Dr. Calinda Lee, Dorcas Ford-Jones, my fellow researcher in crime, Erica Bruchko, as well as all the visiting scholars with whom I’ve had the pleasure to talk and work). As is clear, I’ve made my way around the university and in the process have met and worked with some incredible minds and generous souls.

There are always those special friends who go above and beyond, and will tell you’re right just to make you feel better—and, more importantly, that you’re wrong when you need to hear it. Dr. Robert J. Patterson, you were there from interview weekend and you are still here at the end. Only you can recognize me from all angles. For your friendship, your encouragement—through both sermon and song—your irreverent humor, and your intelligence, thank you. Guirdex Massé: thank you for listening, for reading, and for debating back. I got your back when it’s your turn. Michael Klinga, you’ve always been there—from college to graduate school, and, I’m sure, throughout life, I know I can always count on you—even when I ask too much. Thank you, Raphus Cucullatus! I didn’t realize I had so many men to thank until I started writing this. But I guess it just goes to show that it’s not true that feminists are man-haters.

Throughout this process, I’ve met and said good-bye to many—for different reasons. Some of you have been there at the right time to ask the right question, or to say the right thing; others would just check in to make sure all is well. I’ve met you at conferences, in classrooms, over lunch, at home (yours and mine), and in the library. If only for the five minutes we spoke each time we saw each other, you’ve made a difference: Danica Tisdale, Dr. Angela Wiley, Shruthi Vissa, Brenda Tindal, Sheri Davis, Julia Wallace, Dr. Susana Morris, Dr. Aida Hussen, Dr. Kim Wallace-Sanders, Dr. Brittney Cooper, Kwesi Degraff-Hanson, Kazumi Hasegawa, Zeb Baker, Dr. Kim Green, Dr. Chante Baker, Dr. Folashade Alao, Kamili Hayes, Carlton McClendon, Dr. Michael Owens (MiLO), Juhwan Kim, Nathaniel Smith, Dr. Shannon Miller, Moya Bailey, Dr. Anjulet Tucker, Sarah Vitorino, Tracy Blandon, Haipeng Zhou, and my OUE lunch crew (Tina, Charlene, Cheryl, Carlton, Rob, Tim, Maureen, and Ono)--thank you all!

Last and certainly not least, to my Caribbean crew, my family: you all made me crazy and have kept me sane throughout this process. Your love and financial support will, hopefully, pay-off—maybe not through academia, but when I make it big, I will cut you all checks, but don’t cash them all at once. To my sister Trisha, niece Natalia, nephew Gabe, brothers Brian and Khalil, and my parents Gloria and Lloyd, I would not be me or where I am without all of your support, love, and encouragement. I love you all immensely!!! To my beautiful and brilliant ‘other’ mother, my GRANDmother, my Rose Jones, your absence has forced me grow and expand—to become the me you’ve helped to create. I love you and miss you beyond words. Finally, to my partner, my love, Donald James Montanocordoba: te amo mucho. Gracias por todo, pero especialmente tu corazón, tu alma, et tu vida. Tu creaste un camino hacia mi corazón, y estarás allí para siempre. And, finally, to Zoë Rose or James, we’ve not met yet, but I look forward to meeting you on January 5th, 2011. I feel you kicking as I type, and I love you already!