### CONTENTS

# Acknowledgments ix

#### INTRODUCTION 1

- CHAPTER 1. A Theory of Black Elevated Minority Status 11
- CHAPTER 2. "Where did you come from and what should I call you?": How a New York City Labor Union Explains Changing Demographics 38
- CHAPTER 3. Political Participation and the Socialization of Blacks into Unions and the Polity ss
- CHAPTER 4. "You win some, you lose some": Hard Work and the Black Pursuit of the American Dream 80
- CHAPTER 5. Union Leadership and Policy Choices: Trends in Neutral and Racial Government Policies 113

### Conclusion 137

Appendix 2A: African Immigrants to the United States, 1980 to 2008-9 147

Appendix 2B: Local 371 Respondent Demographics (in percentages) 149

Appendix 2C: SSEU Local 371 Participation Survey 151

Appendix 2D: Local 371 Early v. Late Survey Respondents (in percentages) 161

Appendix 3A: Labor Thermometer 163

Appendix 3B: Local 371 Rates of Citizenship 165

Appendix 3C: Political Stability of Home Country (in percentages) 167

viii Contents

Appendix 4A: Black Ethnic Work Ethic Perception and Feeling

Thermometers 169

Appendix 5A: Local 371 Attitudes Toward People on Welfare and the Poor 173

Notes 175

Bibliography 187 Index 205

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanking all of the institutions, scholars, friends, and family who have supported me in this project may be the most daunting task of this entire endeavor. First, I would like to thank the members of Social Services Employees Union (SSEU) Local 371 in New York City. The former president, Charles Ensley (1941–2010), was an inspirational leader in so many ways. I will forever be indebted to Charles for his generosity. I have tried my best to present the story of this dynamic union and truly appreciate the entire union granting me access into their lives.

First and foremost I must thank Jim Glaser for introducing me to the field of political science at Tufts University. I fondly remember our discussions on how to conduct research in new cities, how not to make assumptions about interviewees, and the importance of thinking about a question that excites you to the core. Jim continues to be a diligent mentor and adviser and has laid much of my political science foundation and interest in American politics. Bob Shapiro, Ira Katznelson, and Ester Fuchs have guided me through the dense forest of academia and have each provided their own unique styles in aiding my scholarship. They read earlier drafts of the manuscript and I am grateful for their incisive comments and suggestions. Bob's knowledge of quantitative methods and public opinion has introduced me to a new way of thinking about marginalized populations. Bob has consistently encouraged me "onward" throughout this project. Ira's pointed questions of clarification consistently urged me to think about the larger picture. And Ester continues to remind me that my thoughts have realworld and policy implications. I have been privileged to work with these three groundbreaking scholars and take sole responsibility for any shortcomings in this project. I would also like to thank the anonymous Oxford University Press reviewers who provided substantive suggestions and constructive critiques of the entire manuscript. Their diligent reading of the project helped me to untie certain knots and tie up particular loose ends. I would also like to thank the team at Oxford University Press: David McBride, Sarah Rosenthal, and Gwen Colvin