First, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Paul Abbott, who kindly provided me with copies of his work, prized scripts and wonderful interview material. It was Paul’s work that motivated me to write this book, and his work that has inspired and excited me from my childhood to the present day. I feel truly honoured.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Humanities Research Institute and my wonderful colleagues at Keele University for allowing me the time and space to complete my research. Matthew Frost at Manchester University Press, series editors Steven Peacock and Jonathan Bignell, I want to thank you for your support and patience throughout the writing and editing process. Deborah Goodman and Jan Bradley – many thanks go to you for your wealth of knowledge and continuous aid. Nicky Johnston, thank you so much for allowing me to include your beautiful *Shameless* image in this monograph. Thanks also go to Dave Woodward and Justine Rhodes at ITV as well as Steve McInerny at FremantleMedia Enterprises.

On a personal note, this book is lovingly dedicated to two Pauls. First, to Paul Abbott: a giant amongst men and the most brilliant television writer and creator of our age. You are a true inspiration. Thank you for your work, your time, your kindness, your friendship, your voice. I hope this book ‘shouts’ for you.

Secondly, to Paul Smith: my husband, best friend and love. On our wedding day, you read this passage to me and today, I want to dedicate it to you.

You trip along through life minding your own business until one day – bang – someone steps in front of you, stops you in your tracks, leans in to kiss you and rips your heart right out of your chest. And it’s all right, you know. It doesn’t hurt. Not at first. Not so long as they look after it and maybe give you theirs in return. And you might be lucky that the last person to rip your heart out is the one who’ll look after it, the one who’ll wrap it in tissue paper, and tinsel and stars. Being married means you join a club. You see a load of other people with rings on their fingers and you go ‘oh yeah, I did that. I stood up in front of the world and told someone that I love them and I wanted to be with them for the rest of
xiv  Acknowledgements

my life’. And it really doesn’t matter how you do it, when and where you
do it. Just as long as there’s truth and honesty. If there’s no truth and
honesty, there’ll never be love. No beauty. (Shameless Series 7, Episode 8
(Kelly Marie Maguire – closing))