The outcome of this case would not have been possible without the effort of the defense team that was put together to represent Lee Boyd Malvo. Special mention must be made of attorney Craig Cooley, who devoted time and energy to showing the world that Malvo was worthy of the best legal representation the Commonwealth of Virginia could offer, and even after the case was over did not cease his interest in seeing to the growth of this young man. Craig’s interest extended to his cooperation for this book. Alas! If only Malvo had met a Craig Cooley before he met Muhammad.

My love and thanks go to my family and friends for their support and encouragement. To the two women who raised me, my mother and my grandmother, Joyce Josephs and Ellen Thomas, who taught me the virtue of giving back; to my daughter, Tamika, and my grandsons, Douglas and Nathaniel; to Conrad, without whose wisdom and critical eye this project would not have come to fruition; to the CVA crew, Eutifan, Alene, Simone, Winnifred, and Maxine, who were there with me as I worked through the Malvo case. To Cessie, my mentor and friend, who introduced me to the field of mitigation and believed in my ability do this work; to the editorial staff of Columbia University Press for their guidance; to Jonathan Mack for agreeing to do the forensic analysis, and to Lee Boyd Malvo for trusting me enough to open up about his life, and to publish this work in the hope that others will learn from his experiences.

In all this I remember the victims, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice with their lives. Thanks to Cheryl Shaw, the daughter of Jerry Taylor, and Sonia Wills, the mother of Conrad Johnson, for allowing me the chance to speak with them and share in their pain. I acknowledge and am humbled by their strength and their willingness to reach out so that others can learn from this tragedy.
The Making of Lee Boyd Malvo