

Acknowledgments

If it is true that all books constitute the very objects they study, collaborative work allows these objects to emerge in new and more complex ways. As we initially set out to publish a collection of early German film theory in English, we found that the category of “theory”—and more specifically the question of *which* writings to include under its umbrella—is anything but self-evident today. Moreover, we realized that it is far from obvious what a sourcebook of early-twentieth-century writings on film should look like at a time when film history is increasingly seen as part of a nexus that includes media, technology, and visual culture; when canonical writings are understood less as autonomous, fixed texts than as parts of discursive networks that extend far beyond their field and ours; when the material and cultural histories around cinema are garnering as much attention as the films themselves; and when the idea of “theory” is being debated and historicized along fascinating lines. Looking back, we believe that the different perspectives each of us brought to the table helped to produce a richer and more dynamic approach to both film theory and the form of the sourcebook.

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