THE PROJECT that became this book was conceived at the University of Southern Illinois at Carbondale where, long ago, I studied in the Department of Speech Communication (which offers a unique emphasis on phenomenology and the philosophy of language and communication). I thank the members of that department for their much needed moral and financial support, and the Graduate Division at SIU for awarding me the Dissertation Research Fellowship that supported the beginning of this present work. Much more recently, my work has been supported by the institution where I now teach: the University of California, Santa Cruz. Research and writing have been regularly funded through grants from both the Faculty Senate Research Committee and the Arts Division Faculty Research Committee.

At various times, colleagues in the cinema studies community have had occasion to respond to the manuscript. In this regard, I particularly want to express my deep gratitude to Dudley Andrew and Peter Brunette for their careful, critical, and appreciative readings. I have taken their comments most seriously. Thanks and apologies also go to Joanna Hitchcock of Princeton University Press, an immensely gracious editor who possesses boundless patience.

Finally, I should like to thank three people whose critical intelligence, support and love, whose passion for what, after all, was my project, enabled me to write this book: Richard L. Lanigan, a mentor in the most rigorous and nurturing sense of the term and the person to whom this work is dedicated; Bill Pietz, an astute critic and loving source of support, who first understood the material in what I was writing; and Paige Baty, a true friend and colleague, who, provoked by the manuscript, shared invaluable editorial suggestions and many glasses of wine with me during wonderful evenings of exciting and far-ranging talk. Becoming would not have been as precious an adventure without the company of these three.