Philosophy of Film
Without Theory

Edited by
Craig Fox · Britt Harrison

Palgrave Film Studies and Philosophy

This series offers a Film Studies centred approach to philosophy. In the light of the increasing numbers of volumes appearing in the fast-developing field of film-philosophy, it is fruitful to distinguish between those that are designed to introduce students to philosophy through the use of popular film – the films acting as a bridge to the subject area of Philosophy – and those that critically consider the myriad ways in which films might be said to 'do' philosophy. Importantly, within both approaches, the term 'film' is ambiguous, standing for specific film texts and, less directly, for the subject area of Film Studies itself. Numerous philosophers writing in this new field conjoin philosophy with a discussion of specific films, following a template drawn from aesthetics in which philosophy is applied to a particular art form. As a result, the discipline of Film Studies is oddly absent from such works of film-philosophy. This series aims to redress the balance by offering a Film Studies centred approach to philosophy. This truly interdisciplinary series draws on the long history of philosophical debates within Film Studies, including aesthetic evaluation, style, genre, representation, and the image (its properties and processes), placing them centre stage. The series encourages philosophising about areas of aesthetic evaluation, style, genre, representation, and the image through engagement with the films and the use of evidence from them.

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CONTENTS

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in its application to arts and aesthetics, dance education, embodied understanding and knowing-how, the pictorial oeuvre and *Weltanschauung* of Egon Schiele, and the intellectual and artistic atmosphere of fin-de-siècle Vienna. She currently develops her own artistic practice under the name of O|C.

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Katheryn Doran studies and teaches courses on American philosophy, contemporary Anglo-American philosophy, environmental ethics, and philosophy and film at Hamilton College where she is Associate Professor and General Director of the Hamilton in New York City Program. She co-edited the most recent edition of *Critical Thinking: An Introduction to the Basic Skills* and has published several papers on the problem of scepticism. She was appointed in 2013 to the American Philosophical Association Committee on the Teaching of Philosophy for a three-year term and served as the guest editor of a special issue of the *American Philosophical Association's APA Newsletter* that addresses teaching philosophy in nontraditional settings. Doran ran a philosophy book group at Marcy Correctional Facility from 2007 through the New York State Covid lockdown of March, 2020, and hopes someday to resume that work.

Craig Fox is Professor of Philosophy at Pennsylvania Western University. He teaches courses in logic, aesthetics, and the history of philosophy. Recently, he has been working on pieces of an overall project focused on aesthetics as a path into understanding the significance and relevance of Wittgenstein's later thought.

John Gibson is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Louisville. His research focuses on topics in aesthetics, the philosophy of literature, and the philosophy of the self. He is the author of *Fiction and the Weave of Life* (2007), editor of *The Philosophy of Poetry* (2015), and co-editor of, among others, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Literature* (2015) and *Wittgenstein & Literary Studies* (Cambridge, forthcoming). He is currently writing a book titled *Poetry, Metaphor & Nonsense: An Essay on Meaning*.

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Britt Harrison is a film producer, screenwriter, and script consultant. In 2022 she gained a PhD from the University of York, under the supervision of Peter Lamarque, with her dissertation, *Cinematic Humanism: Cinematic, Dramatic, and Humanistic Value in Fiction Films*. In her first PhD, *The Epistemology of Know-How* (University of Hertfordshire in 2012), she drew on resources and insights from Ludwig Wittgenstein and Danièle Moyal-Sharrock to challenge the 'propositional presumption' that all knowledge is, or can be, reduced to the propositional.

Colin Heber-Percy is an award-winning screenwriter and an Anglican priest. He gained his doctorate in medieval philosophy from King's College, University of London. His monograph *Perfect in Weakness: Faith in Tarkovsky's Stalker* was published in 2019. His article on Jonathan Glazer's *Under the Skin* is available in the Philosophy of Film *Without Theory* Special Issue of the journal *Aesthetic Investigations*. He is a regular contributor to the Church of England's *Reflections for Daily Prayer*. And his book *Tales of a Country Parish* was published to critical acclaim in February 2022.

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LIST OF FIGURES

Introduction: Philosophy of Film, With and Without Theory

Craig Fox and Britt Harrison

Is philosophy of film *without theory* an oxymoron or a family of non-, anti-, and/or a-theoretical approaches with which to engage in film-involving philosophical scholarship and understanding? The goal of this collection is to argue for the latter and to do so by example. By demonstrating a mere handful of the many ways in which philosophy of film *without theory* might be pursued, in tandem with the insights born of these methods, this volume implicitly and explicitly challenges the contemporary academic assumption that engaging philosophically with film must be a theoretical activity.[1] It also, we would argue, reminds us of the potential value of theory-free scholarship across the humanities as a way of practicing, pursuing, and celebrating humanistic understanding.

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I

Were one new to film studies, particularly its more philosophically informed work, one might assume from the title of David Bordwell and Noël Carroll's 1996 collection of articles, *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*, that such a volume as this already exists. Not so. For Bordwell and Carroll's title did not herald the stepping away from, or moving beyond, theoretically orientated philosophical engagement with film. Rather the editors' stated aim was to justify *piecemeal theorizing*, an alternative philosophical method to the then dominant Film Theory. In their 'Introduction' to *Post-Theory*, Bordwell and Carroll announced, "What is coming after Theory is not another Theory but theor*ies* and the activity of *theorizing*" (1996, Preface xiv, original emphasis). In other words, 'Post-Theory' is not a matter of philosophizing *without theory*, rather it champions theoretical (lower case 't') methods over those found in Theory (with a capital 'T'), drawing on the commitments championed by W.V.O. Quine's vision of philosophy as "continuous with science" (1969, p. 126).

Carroll's own 'Prospects for Film Theory' in his and Bordwell's (1996) enjoined the more continentally orientated Film Theorists to a theoretical showdown in the name of progress (1996, pp. 37–68). Suggesting an interactive "methodologically robust pluralism", he proposed a shared enterprise in which competing theories about film would be evaluated and revised along the lines of standard scientific practice: where possible such theories would be consolidated, where necessary eliminated (1996, p. 63). In promoting the idea of this joint effort, Carroll criticised those Theorists whose work owed much to the substance and preoccupations of Louis Althusser, Jacques Lacan, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and others, condemning their suspicions of science as "feckless" and evaluating their interpretations of films as the products of a "standard-issue sausage machine churning out readings that look and smell the same" (1996, p. 59 & p. 43). Unsurprisingly, the theoretical battle went unjoined.

More than twenty-five years later, the theory versus Theory wars are over—and nobody won. Bordwell and Carroll, together with many of their cognitivist-inclined theorizing colleagues still engage with, and in the spirit of, those naturalising philosophers of mind, empirical researchers, and cognitive scientists, whose cognitivism often assumes propositional and/or representational theories of the mind/brain. The various strands of Theory and preoccupations of those 'doing' Theory—be they

Marxist, psychoanalytic, feminist, and so on—have continued their own intellectual evolution and these days typically eschew the capital 'T'. One might consider the orientations and preoccupations of what is now characterised as film-philosophy as a re-booting and re-branding of 'Theory' in the wake of Bordwell and Carroll's 1996 onslaught.

Put simply, the majority of philosophical engagement with, and reflection on, film can be viewed as almost entirely constituted by three traditions—all unabashedly theoretical—whose adherents and legatees continue today: (1) classical film theory (driven by concerns to justify the artistic status of films and which began in the second decade of the twentieth century); (2) Theory or Grand Theory (the major driver and touchstone for academic consideration of film, media, and culture from the 1960s and 1970s on, of which theoretical film-philosophy is one of the major post-1996 iterations); this also includes philosophers who apply the writings of other theoretical philosophers (e.g. Heidegger) to film in a theoretical or quasi-theoretical manner; and (3) cognitive and/or piecemeal film theorizing (operating in partnership with analytic philosophy of mind and cognitive science, and underway by the mid-1990s). The very idea of doing philosophy of film *without theory* is orthogonal to all three of these theoretical trajectories and thus may take various forms.

Inevitably, this picture of the theoretical engagement with film demands substantial finessing.[2] Not all analytic anglophone philosophers of the post-War period are card-carrying Quineans. Not all those who champion cognitivist-orientated philosophy of film actually do it, or do it all the time.[3] And indeed, there are a small number of philosophers and film scholars, including Stanley Cavell, Richard Allen, and Malcolm Turvey, who cannot be situated squarely within any of the three traditions; questioning as they do the methodological and meta-philosophical implications of (certain types of) theorizing.

Before characterising the ambitions and approaches of philosophy *without theory* let us consider what philosophy *with* theory, or indeed philosophy *as* theory tends to be or to aspire to. Methods and methodologies found in theoretical philosophy include some, though not necessarily all, of the following: the search for and justification of law-like regularities, universal or unifying generalisations, and/or totalising claims; the postulation and exploitation of unobservable theoretical posits (both physical and metaphysical); concept creation (rather than clarification); the pursuit of a-historical, a-temporal, context-free, non-situated facts; the use of mathematical and algorithmic techniques and expression; the reduction of

person-level characteristics, features, and abilities to a sub-personal level; the assumption that any resistance to physicalism entails a commitment to supernaturalism; prioritising the third-personal point of view often to the exclusion of all others, even presuming the possibility and authority of the view from nowhere, and so on.

While many of these theoretical activities are standard components of today's scientific practice, the suitability of such methods for philosophy remains a contentious meta-philosophical question. For those who embrace the third tradition above—regarding philosophy as continuous with science—this is not a problem. For those who wish to resist the conflation of science and philosophy (or indeed with the humanities *tout court*) embracing such theoretical methods and priorities is often criticised as *scientistic*, that is, it extends the application of scientific principles and practices beyond the realm of their legitimate use.[4] In the case of philosophy, this imperils what might be achieved by our philosophical investigations into, and understanding of, ourselves, each other, and our world.

By contrast, the methodological priorities and principles relevant to the pursuit of **philosophy** *without theory* (**in general**) include, but are by no means limited to: fine-grained description and discernment; disentangling confusions; reactive and/or reflective critical inquiry, the exploration of conceptual connections; conceptual clarification and synthesis; logical geography; the provision of perspicuous presentations and surveyable overviews; systematic and non-systematic engagement with individual or particular works, subjects, objects, ideas, events and/or situations; and an appreciation that the view is always from somewhere and at some time, and so on. Methods and priorities in **philosophy of film** *without theory* might include any of the above, without being limited to them.

Theory-free philosophy is nothing new; it can, of course, be traced back two and half thousand years, to Socrates. Some of Plato's dialogues, such as the *Protagoras* and *Theatetus* can be read as (straightforwardly or ironically) challenging the idea that wrangling our philosophical preoccupations into submission requires establishing metaphysical essences or discovering putative theoretical frameworks. More recently, the leading challenge to the importation of scientific-style theorizing is found in the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein. For Wittgenstein, philosophy is "not a body of doctrine, but an activity"; a philosophical work aims at "elucidations" (1961, 4.111–4.112). To conflate philosophical methods with those of the natural sciences is to confuse philosophy and science. Wittgenstein diagnoses the temptation to do this as sourced in our

"craving for generality"; something that "leads the philosopher into complete darkness. I want to say here that it can never be our job to reduce anything to anything, or to explain anything. Philosophy really is 'purely descriptive'" (1969, p. 18). The risk is that in searching for metaphysical essences or hidden commonalities, à la science, one fails to see what lies open to view while delving 'beyond' or 'beneath' for something hidden, something that demands excavation or theoretical invention. Wittgenstein's invitation is not to recognise that scientific theories are one thing, philosophical ones another, but to appreciate that it is not philosophy without theory that is an oxymoron, but the very idea of a (certain kind of) valuable philosophical theory. "What we do is the opposite of theorizing. Theory blinds" (1946/7 MSS 133, quoted in Monk, 2009, p. 135). A tendency we would like to avoid.

II

In Ingmar Bergman's 1974 *Scenes from a Marriage*, we meet Marianne and Johan: He is a psychologist, she a lawyer and they have two children. According to Bergman's own description of the beginning of the film, the viewer sees "a pretty picture of an almost ideal marriage" (1976, p. v). This seems especially so after Johan and Marianne's friends have a dramatic argument during a dinner party. The contrast between the couples is palpable, and watching Johan and Marianne clean up after the party is soothing and reassuring. Then, seemingly all of a sudden, Johan tells Marianne that he has met another woman and that he's going away with her. Years pass and though they have not officially divorced each is now involved with other people. They continue to meet from time to time; almost as if they need to. Eventually they sign divorce papers, after which they make love—only to then segue into a violent fight. Both remarry and the film concludes with one more meeting between Johan and Marianne; a scene that the Criterion DVD calls 'Different Kinds of Love'.

In this final scene, Marianne has had a bad dream and she describes it to Johan. She abruptly then asks whether everyone is living in "utter confusion". Her face is directed towards the camera through the scene, occupying most of the screen. She is distraught. She then mentions never having loved anyone, nor having been loved. Johan gently suggests that she is being dramatic. "I know what I feel", he says, "I love you in my selfish way, and I think you love me in your fussy pestering way. We love each other in an earthly and imperfect way". Marianne reacts immediately.

The despair vanishes from her face. Now seemingly genuinely happy, she wants to stay huddled together for the rest of the night.

It is Marianne's reaction to Johan's words that is so striking here. In telling her that love can be earthy and imperfect—and that they share such a love—he is providing her not with a reassurance but with a revelation. Rather than offering her proof of something she doubted, he provides a new way of seeing what was never hidden, yet was never seen like this. Johan's words provide her with the wherewithal to describe, to understand, and now to appreciate something about her, him, and their situations and experiences; showing some of the commonalities, the connections, and the differences between them. Nothing has changed, factually, yet everything, as it were, is different.

Compare Bergman's use and treatment of Marianne's dream with Wittgenstein's discussion of the way Freud handles a patient's dream. (The issue here is not the empirical accuracy of Wittgenstein's account, but the use he makes of what he takes to be Freud's words.) In the third of his four *Lectures on Aesthetics*, given in 1938, in Cambridge, Wittgenstein—as recorded by his students—says this:

> Freud does something which seems to me immensely wrong. He gives what he calls an interpretation of dreams. … A patient, after saying that she had a beautiful dream, described a dream … Freud shows what he calls the 'meaning' of the dream. The coarsest sexual stuff, bawdy of the worst kind … *Is* it bawdy? He shows relations between the dream images and certain objects of a sexual nature. Does this prove that the dream is what is called bawdy? Obviously not … But *wasn't* the dream beautiful? I would say to the patient, 'Do these associations make the dream not beautiful? It was beautiful. Why shouldn't it be?' I would say Freud has cheated the patient. (1966, III, 20)

Wittgenstein objects to what he takes to be Freud's correction; he objects to Freud telling her the supposed 'actual meaning' of the dream, which is at odds with her own understanding.

Each of these 'scenes'—Marianne and Johan, and Freud and his patient—gives us an instance of someone who is trying to sort through a complex situation; trying to come to what they regard as a satisfactory understanding and appreciation of it. Marianne has brought something to that process—as we do—which amounts to a view, an assumption, about what 'love' must be like, in order to *be* love. Johan says things that enable her to put aside that assumption and, arguably, to see things more clearly.

She embraces his re-description. Freud, like Marianne, also brings assumptions to the dream discussion—again as we do—about the meaning of symbols and 'how to understand dreams'. Yet, according to Wittgenstein, the patient is not better off, but more confused. Unlike Johan's facilitation of Marianne's understanding of things, Freud seems to obscure the patient's understanding. His assumptions are 'getting in the way'.

There is, we propose, an analogy between 'theory' and that 'something or other that gets in the way'. This can amount to the witting or unwitting imposition of constraints on what counts as (ways of) understanding; blinkering where we might look and what we might therefore see. This is not to say that there will always be a theoretical mote in our philosophical eyes, but rather we need to be reminded that sometimes there might be; and we'd be wise to remember this and learn to look around it.

III

What this means for our potential understanding and appreciation of films, of works of art, and indeed of other people, and so on, is that *without theory* approaches can serve a range of distinct philosophical, humanistic, and otherwise valuable purposes. As the various contributions to this volume demonstrate, *without theory* approaches can be reflective, systematic, discursive, illuminating, and intellectually provocative. When it comes to saying something about how one might understand a particular film, or what a film might help one to understand, the explorations tend to start from (and ultimately return to) that film.[5] It will also be noted that while the names of particular philosophers surface periodically in these articles, there is nothing essential about their employment. Indeed, as demonstrated, one might make use of a theoretical philosopher's ideas but in metaphorical or other non-theoretical ways. Equally, mentioning certain philosophers does not and would not necessarily ensure a *without theory* approach.

Opening Part One, 'Doing Without Theory Yet Still Doing Philosophy' is a discussion with the philosophically orientated film scholars Richard Allen and Malcolm Turvey. Their *Wittgenstein, Theory and the Arts* offers *the* ground-breaking collection (and set of arguments) not just for philosophy of film *without theory*, but for theory-free philosophy of art, in general.[6] The conversation provides a revealing guided tour of the context and rationale behind some of the defining books in the recent history of theory-informed film studies and theoretically orientated philosophy of

film. Furthermore, it lifts the lid on various questionable pedagogical prac-
tices in academic philosophy, encouraging us to reflect on how we do
philosophy (of film) and are trained into doing philosophy. Allen and
Turvey finish with personal reflections on a number of contemporary
opportunities and challenges in these fields. Andrew Klevan's contribution
brings the preoccupations found in ordinary language philosophy to bear
on an example of analytic philosophy of film by Berys Gaut, questioning
the value of sacrificing the particular, the specific, and the singular, in the
self-imposed task of building another theoretical house on already theo-
retical foundations. Acknowledging the indefinite multiplicity of relations
between emotion, music, and so-called identification, Klevan argues
against a method that seeks to subsume a manifold of concepts and con-
ceptualizations under single words, rather than expand, enrich, and reveal
the distinct nuances they offer. Katheryn Doran explores a number of
philosophical similarities and differences at play in Rob Reiner's body-
swap comedy *All of Me* and John Sayles' *Lonestar*. Keeping the border
between film and philosophy open, she discovers ways in which cinematic
ambiguity can, *contra* Murray Smith and Thomas Wartenburg, be philo-
sophically rewarding. Constantine Sandis recognises the temptations to
impose theory on, or find it in, *Last Year at Marienbad* but argues for the
possible pointlessness of either pursuit, as the film, in an important sense,
has nothing to hide. There is no film-specific lock ready to surrender to
the right theoretical key. Max de Gaynesford offers a set of systematic
observations that recognise the opportunities and challenges available in
the philosophical investigation of films that are constituted by actual, or
seemingly, continuous shots. In exploring some of the ways in which films
play around with the relations between space, time, and cinematic story-
telling, de Gaynesford's prolegomena also argues for the value of attuning
our philosophical engagement to film criticism.

Part Two, 'The Appeal of—and to—Wittgenstein', begins with one
possible example of such attunement: John Gibson's re-calibration of
Wittgenstein's notion of a perspicuous presentation achieved in tandem
with his understanding of Fellini's *Le notti de Cabiria*. Gibson argues that
reflection on the everyday need not be limited to the quotidian, or the
near documentary, but might embrace the poetic and the melodramatic in
pursuing clarity-facilitating departures from the familiar. Rupert Read rec-
ognises an internal relation between the form of Alfonso Cuaron's *Gravity*
and the extent to which our human wandering is itself internally con-
nected to our coming home. Considering the two major tracking shots,

early in the film, Read employs those wisdom-orientated Wittgensteinian tactics of offering invitations and reminders to help readers, and viewers, 'see' something in a way that might have been forgotten or gone unnoticed or unvalued. Developing this notion of 'seeing as' is part of Carla Carmona's demonstration that Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, not least in its form as a philosophical *album*, is capable of illuminating the cinematic investigations of Jean-Luc Godard's *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*—and vice versa. By using a criss-crossing form that resonates with both of these works, Carmona's paper also delves into their implications for the notion of the filmic reality and, by way of Arthur Danto and Noël Carroll, the relation between art and philosophy.

In the opening chapter of Part Three, 'Revisiting—and Reconsidering—Cavell', David Macarthur scrutinises afresh the source and supposed type of scepticism that Stanley Cavell thinks is the very stuff of movies, finding standard characterisations either misplaced or misguided. Reconstruing the relationship between ourselves and others (in life and on screen) as a matter of acknowledgement does not merely raise questions about some supposed sceptical gap but provides the resources to diminish a specifically epistemic worry. Craig Fox brings Cavell's paper 'Music Discomposed' and Iranian filmmaker Kamran Shirdel's seeming documentary, *The Night it Rained*, into an orchestrated encounter that resuscitates and reorients a number of modernist preoccupations. He thereby shows that an augmented construal of modernism may enable us to better engage in sense-making. William Rothman uses Cavell's repeated engagement with the characters of Dexter and Tracy in George Cukor's film *The Philadelphia Story* as one possible way of characterising Cavell's life-long philosophico-cinematic quest for Emersonian perfectionism. In so doing, Rothman not only illuminates some of the roles this and other films play, for Cavell, in the 'register of the moral life'; he thereby provides reasons for us all to return to familiar films throughout our (philosophical) lives.

In Part Four, 'Seeing Faces, Finding Others', Eran Guter and Inbal Guter do just that, and more. The Guters find in Godrey Reggio's *Visitors* a way of re-connecting to ourselves as human beings, facilitated *inter alia* by the marriage of slow motion photography and Philip Glass's music with its themes from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Out of their observations comes an appreciation of the extent to which our 'Menschenkenntnis' is crucially an aesthetic understanding. Rob van Gerwen draws our attention to two specific moments of self-betrayal in Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*; moments that expose the extent to which our humanity is there in our

very animal responsiveness. Van Gerwen finesses Roland Barthes notion of punctum—the way an aspect of a photograph can prick or puncture one—to investigate how this works, both on- and off-screen. Lucy Bolton argues that a phenomenological encounter with, and appreciation of, the Garth Davis-directed film *Mary Magdalene*, illuminates the value of Iris Murdoch's limited but important writing on cinema. Considering the power of the close-up to confirm the face as a locus of human character, Bolton champions Murdoch's complementary belief in the power of film to enlarge our imagination.

James Conant opens Part Five, 'Cinematic Investigations' with a consideration of the invisibility of several of Hitchcock's achievements in the shower scene in *Psycho*. He challenges theoretical approaches which recognise only the obvious, and the obviously theoretically serviceable elements of film, especially when they fail to situate parts, scenes, and/or sequences of a film in relation to the movie, as a whole. The importance of the part-whole interdependence is further demonstrated by Sebastian Sunday's detailed account of Woody Allen's *Blue Jasmine*, a film, he argues, that allows viewers the rare, yet rewarding opportunity to happily, and reflectively, experience unhappiness. Colin Heber-Percy brings together medieval philosophy, Krzysztof Kieślowksi's *Three Colours: Red*, John Badham's *War Games*, and the articulations of a schizophrenic to explore the centuries old ways of accommodating the tension between free will and determinism. Key to this is his reminder that *Three Colours: Red* shares much in form and structure with romantic comedy. In the final contribution of this section, Iris Vidmar Jovanović argues that understanding our long-term commitments to long-form television series—such as the recent adaptation of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*—requires going beyond Noël Carroll's account of sympathy and Margrethe Bruun Vaage's work on familiarity. She identifies the importance of the care we have for the work, and the dialogue between our internal and external perspectives on it.

These contributions demonstrate the fact that doing philosophy of film *without theory* is a matter of engaging in an open-ended range of film-involving philosophical practices; practices that need not share a common method. Rather, each author tips their hat to some, but by no means all, of a range of criss-crossing themes, priorities, interests, and methodological principles. These include a reverberating philosophical curiosity about, and valorisation of, such things as the similarities *and* the differences between the everyday and the extraordinary; between understanding and

knowledge; between description and criticism; between cinematic form and content; between the philosophical and the artistic, and so on.

To provide a singular conclusion or 'take-away' as to the nature, purpose, and/or ambition of philosophy of film *without theory* would be to succumb to the reductionist abstraction that theory-free philosophers resist. Our goals with this volume are (1) to provide pointers to those whose work and arguments in these areas have gone either unrecognised or underappreciated, such as Allen and Turvey (2001); (2) to provide a window on some contemporary ways of putting film and philosophy into productive conversation; (3) to champion the idea that future philosophy of film need not conform to its past; and (4) to demonstrate, in a modest way, that laissez-faire theoretical pluralism is sometimes only possible if one curtails one's meta-philosophical reflections. As such, this volume both acknowledges its position as an heir to the theory wars inaugurated by Bordwell and Carroll, while nonetheless aiming to show the value to be had by moving beyond theory, 'Theory', and theorizing of all stripes. The non-theoretical yet nonetheless philosophical approaches found here show, we trust, that resisting the theoretical does not entail postmodernism; that non-empirical understanding does not entail a commitment to anything 'supernatural'; and that interdisciplinary intellectual engagement does not entail sacrificing the distinct achievements of humanist understanding.

NOTES

1. See Fox and Harrison (2020) and the rest of our Special Issue of the journal *Aesthetic Investigations* dedicated to Philosophy of Film *Without Theory* in the wake of the inaugural international 'Philosophy of Film *Without Theory*' conference, held at the University of York in 2019.
2. For a variety of further systematisations and nuances of the various 'schools' and orientations see Richard Allen and Malcolm's Turvey 'Introduction' to their (2001); Turvey (2019); Sinnerbrink (2019); Currie (2016); and Carroll et al. (2019).
3. One could make the case for Carroll (2011) as exemplifying philosophy of film *without theory*.
4. See Kenny (2009).
5. We take this point to be consistent with various ways others bring philosophy to bear on film. See also, for example, Stephen Mulhall's discussion around his disappointment that commentary on his *On Film* focused on the

"general philosophical claims" instead of his readings of particular films (Mulhall, 2008, p. 134ff.).

6. See particularly Allen & Turvey's Introduction to the volume, 'Wittgenstein's later philosophy: a prophylaxis against theory' (2001, pp. 1–36) and the included reprint of P.M.S. Hacker's 'Wittgenstein and the autonomy of humanistic understanding'; a seminal work in the argument for theory-free philosophy *tout court*.

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Doing Without Theory Yet Still Doing Philosophy