

DEDICATION

Vor sechs Jahren ging es los
Es war wie eine Revolution
Ziel und Richtung unbekannt
Das Alte wurde niedergerannt

from *Wehende Fahnen*, Die Toten Hosen, 1983

In loving memory of Athena, Helmuth, Martin and Willi

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I remember clearly that sunny (!) day in Bangor, walking up Penrallt and reading Gert Webelhuth's beautiful acknowledgements in his *Syntactic Saturation* book (basically verbatim from his dissertation) That was the first time I read this little section and swore to myself right there that one day I would write acknowledgements for a doctoral dissertation myself.

It's hard to believe but this day has come. I have dreamed about this moment for so long, I already had all the excitement one could wish from acknowledgements, and after a hectic month or two I'm brain dead anyway. In my mind, Gert's still remains the best, and in the meantime I have had the pleasure of reading many others, some of them pretty good. I don't have the energy to compare my own attempts and rather than qualifying and apologizing—something I've sworn to drop now that I am a doctor—I've decided to change the format a little. I've had the pleasure of writing a long acknowledgements section in my BA thesis, and then again in my generals paper, and I know that some people make fun of this fact to this day. I also know that many people are anxiously waiting to see how many pages I would fill this time.

I am incredibly grateful to so many people. If you have sat down and discussed my work with me over the years, I am grateful for your input. If you have sat down with me and talked about your own work, I am grateful for sharing it with me. If you have sat down and just chatted about linguistics, I am grateful for the exchange. If you just had a pint with me, or a coffee, shared a smoke or made me laugh or laughed with me or at me or if you did anything else pleasurable with me, for me or against me, I am grateful. I am grateful for my friends and my enemies, and above all my family, for encouragement, stimulation, support and love. You know who you are and you know that I love you.

Thank you everyone. Thank you world. Thank you Jonathan Walker and friends, thank you Alfred Dunhill for 865 good times, and thank you R.J. Reynolds for 24/7. Thank you punkrock, nostalgia and everything that comes with it! Oh Joy! *Danke*.