

The Poetics of the Ordinary: Reverberations of the Feminine Voice

Naoko Saito
Kyoto University

INTRODUCTION

Exultation is the going
Of an inland soul to sea,
Past the houses – past the headlands –
Into deep Eternity –

Bred as we, among the mountains,
Can the sailor understand
The divine intoxication
Of the first league out from land?
– Emily Dickinson

What would be the power of the words of the female poet: the strength to sustain her creed in isolation, and to publicize its secrecy in words? The film depicting the life of Emily Dickinson (1820-1886), *A Quiet Passion*,¹ prompts me to raise this question. Her life as a 19th century American poet demonstrates the power of a female poet whose provocative existence had an impact on society, especially from a feminine perspective. Dickinson spent most of her life secluded in her house in New England; she wrote beyond what Paula Bennett has called the “safe limits of the age of nineteenth-century American thought.”²

This is a story of the creation of her poetry, written in a state of melancholy, hopelessness, and isolation, sometimes in anger, and yet with a strong passion and single-mindedness for poetic expression. As a woman who lived a 19th century conventional life (especially under the influence of her rigorous and conventional father), Dickinson was not involved directly in political action. She did not directly raise the voice of protest but addressed her own sense of oppression through what was to become the catharsis of poetry. She exercised the power to translate her inmost thoughts into a public language, both during her lifetime and in the writings she left. The film describes the relationship among the pain, suffering, and loneliness of the female poet, but also the happiness of the solitary creation of poetry; it reveals both the darkness of the human psyche and the light that flickers therapeutically as she finds her voice.

The voice of Dickinson represented in the film demonstrates a certain kind of resilience peculiar to the female poet. Indeed, analyzing the poetry of Dickinson, Bennett shows that, despite the domesticity of her own life, her poetry destabilizes masculine foundationalism. Her poetry oftentimes has no conclusion, unsettling the conventionality of grammar, confronting us with an abyss. Her language takes the risk and refuses to be fixed, venturing into the realm of uncertainties and indeterminacy, which opens multiple interpretations for a reader.³ Her approach is “anti-traditional, anti-masculinist.”⁴ Bennett represents Dickinson as “a woman [who] knew herself to stand outside the traditions, order and values of the phallogocentric culture in which she lived.”⁵ Dickinson “both was and was not a ‘woman poet’ in the American mold.”⁶ She was a woman poet who never left home, and yet she was not at home. As a female poet, she lived a life of paradox, forcing us to “confront inherent contradictions with our human condition.”⁷

John Dewey (1859-1952) addresses the task of the poet in his later work, *Art as Experience*.⁸ Highlighting the role of aesthetic judgment and imagination as a source of social and cultural criticism,⁹ Dewey calls poetry “criticism of life,”¹⁰ and identifies the poet as the “precursor of the changes.”¹¹ Through the power of “imaginative projection” and as “the moral prophets of humanity,” poets become ‘the founders of civil society.’¹² Poetic words are, in a sense,

resources to create democracy from within. Dewey's description of the poet is, however, *gender-neutral*: the power of the poetic words is represented as serving a humanistic mission in general. Dewey's voice is alien to paradox of the kind that Dickinson embodied in her poetry.

On the strength of this preliminary inquiry, this article addresses the following philosophical and educational questions concerning the *feminine* voice of the poet. What is distinctive about the voice of the female poet? In what sense is a female poet both a woman and not simply a woman? To answer these questions, I shall first examine Emerson's essay, "The Poet."¹³ Against the stereotypical image of Emerson as the proponent of the strong self-reliant individual, tacitly assumed to be masculine, Emerson's poet in fact indicates a certain kind of feminine voice. I shall then examine Stanley Cavell's claim, in his ordinary language philosophy, with regard to the "Emersonian feminine demand."¹⁴ In opposition to a certain criticism directed toward Cavell's idea of the feminine, I shall defend it as entailing a possible crossing of the gender divide. Cavell's idea of *passionate utterance* hints at a promising possible femininity in Emerson's poet's voice. I shall conclude that the poetics of the ordinary brings us to a life of affirmation and the process of conversion through expression, from silent melancholy to mourning, and then to morning. The feminine voice is reclaimed in aid of an alternative political education that has space for the dissonant, the peripheral, and the dissenting; thus is the poetics of the ordinary for philosophy of education.

EMERSON'S "THE POET"

"The man is only half himself, the other half is his expression."¹⁵

Emerson's essay, "The Poet," gives us, more elaborately than Dewey, various entries into the role of the poet and the nature of poetic language. With his influence on both Dewey and Dickinson, Emerson (1803-1882) anticipates something of the American strain in Dewey's view on the poet, while he is a precursor also for Dickinson's anti-foundationalist poetic voice. Emerson has

something to say both about the public role of the poet and the nature of poetic language. The poet, as the “Namer” and “Language Maker,”¹⁶ is, first and foremost, representative of partial men and of common wealth.¹⁷ Representing common men and women, the poet is a “new witness” who initiates them for “departure from routine.”¹⁸ As a representative, the poet also serves the role of the “foremost watchman on the peak,” to detect and announce news¹⁹; at the same time, the poet reminds others that everyone should be an artist.²⁰ With this role of “announcing and affirming,”²¹ and with the power of “Imagination,”²² Emerson indicates a kind of projective power in the poet’s language, with words spoken “somewhat wildly.”²³ Second, like Dewey and Dickinson, as an American writer and thinker, Emerson treasures the common, the ordinary, and the “constant fact of Life,”²⁴ as the resource of poetic language: “Day and night, house and garden, a few books, a few actions, serve us as well as would all trades and all spectacles”²⁵; and “[s]mall and mean things serve as well as great symbols.”²⁶

Third, the poet is a mediator, a liberating god²⁷ who releases men and women from prison and who produces a “metamorphosis” of things in the world.²⁸ He witnesses the moment of conversion, of a kind of rebirth in the ordinary from the state of miserable “dying.”²⁹ He calls it “better than my birthday,”³⁰ invoking the image of rebirth. The kind of poetic language that is reborn here, Emerson says, is fluxional.

Fourth, the poet serves as an “interpreter,”³¹ and then, as a “translator”³² of what he sees into thought and language, translating our inner, “painful secret”³³ into shared language in the outward public. Standing on the border, the poet does not freeze things, and hence the poetic language is “vehicular and transitive.”³⁴ Emerson considers this transitive and transformative nature of poetic language active. He writes: “Words are also actions, and actions are a kind of words.”³⁵

In the light of these distinctive characteristics of the poet and his language, we should bear in mind that Emerson does *not* specifically mention the *female* voice or the *feminine* voice of the poet. At best it may be that, like Dewey perhaps, his language is to be understood as gender neutral; but worse,

it may be that the poet is represented only in terms of a masculine, third person subject. Such doubts are reinforced by the stereotypical image of Emerson as a proponent of self-reliance and of power.³⁶ Elsewhere, however, Emerson explicitly refers to women in a positive way:

The truth is in the air, and the most impressionable brain will announce it first, but all will announce it a few minutes later. So women, as most susceptible, are the best index of the coming hour. So the great man, that is, the man most imbued with the spirit of the time, is the impressionable man; – of a fiber irritable and delicate, like iodine to light ... His mind is righter than others because he yields to a current so feeble as can be felt only by a needle delicately poised.³⁷

Reminding us of the “Nietzsche’s feminization of metaphysics,”³⁸ Emerson describes the delicate perception of the great man by way of a favorable reference to women. Close attention to this passage reveals intimations that the poet’s language is already in a sense feminine by nature. Paul Standish makes a similar point with reference to the Irish poet, Seamus Heaney, who distinguishes masculine and feminine modes of writing, albeit that these interweave in various ways.³⁹ Emerson suggests at various points that the poet exercises his power by “resigning himself to the divine *aura*,” by “abandonment to the nature of things,” and by “suffering the ethereal tides to roll and circulate through him.”⁴⁰ The path of things, he says, is “silent.”⁴¹ The strings of these images convey to us the receptive and responsive mode of language, which we might call feminine. At the same time, the poet’s language is, as the film about Dickinson illustrates, passionate⁴²: as the symbolism of Emerson indicates, intellect is “inebriated by nectar.”⁴³ The poet is represented even with the imagery of intensity, as “the conductor of the whole river of electricity.”⁴⁴ “The Poet” thus invokes the image of a re-placed subject, the feminine subject, who represents a receptive and yet resilient mode of thinking.

CAVELL AND THE EMERSONIAN-FEMININE VOICE

The Emersonian-Feminine Demand in Philosophy

It is Cavell who develops further this suggested link between Emerson's poet and femininity. Cavell finds Emerson's idea of authorship to be in response to demands made on the "feminine side."⁴⁵ In his film studies of what he calls "the melodrama of the unknown women," he associates the woman's demand for voice with the "Emersonian demand for thinking."⁴⁶ Emerson expresses such a demand, he says, with the idea of "thinking as reception" and thinking as the "bearing of pain."⁴⁷ Cavell then raises the question: "Does this idea of the feminine philosophical demand serve to prefigure or does it serve once more to eradicate the feminine difference?"⁴⁸ Behind this there lie his suspicions of the masculine voice in philosophy (illustrated also by the masculine voice in these films): male thinking carries "the tinge of self-imposed melancholy or pathos arising from a self-imposed suppression specifically of the male philosopher's feminine voice (not by me identified with a general female feminine voice)."⁴⁹ It is this sense of "self-suppression," Cavell says, that is at the heart of his inquiry into philosophical skepticism.⁵⁰ As a way out of this impasse, he proposes that the "relation of the Emersonian and the feminine demands for language of one's own" become the topic for a "serious conversation between men and women."⁵¹

Cavell's treatment of the Emersonian feminine voice is not without criticism. Ludger Viefhues-Bailey argues that Cavell's symbolism of gender reinstates an oppressive binary of the sexes, to the detriment of the feminine.⁵² The unique feature of Viefhues-Bailey's book is how it sheds light, through close analysis of Cavell's original texts, on a connection between the presence of the female in Cavell's film studies and the theme of skepticism. Despite his devoted reading of Cavell's text, Viefhues-Bailey says that "Cavell's *symbolism of gender* has oppressive consequences" because, "despite its complexity, [it] re-establishes the very oppressive binary that he wishes to overcome."⁵³ This symbolism of gender epitomized in women in "the role of the victim of male sceptical violence,"⁵⁴ Viefhues-Bailey argues, makes Cavell's writing vulnerable to the criticism of the feminist. He also indicates that Cavell's approach exposes the female to inequality in the political realm. Viefhues-Bailey seeks a way

beyond this “harmful oscillation between the therapeutic symbolic gender and violent political use of gender.”⁵⁵

Cavell’s view, however, cannot be reduced simply to symbolic gender difference. He challenges the monolithic masculine voice, and yet his strategy is oblique. Against Viefhues-Bailey’s criticism of the “problematic gender stereotypes,”⁵⁶ Cavell, on the one hand, retains the biological distinction between men and women, but adopts, on the other hand, a position that does not slide into political-ideological gender issues. In line with Dickinson’s paradox of being a woman and not being a woman, he himself embodies the paradox of both being a man and not being a man: Cavell takes a third position of *crossing gender divides*. His idea of the “infantile” as a state before any ideological battle between men and women is crucial in that sense.⁵⁷ Also, most importantly, his use of the “feminine” is not so much a matter of the symbolism of gender as the very mode of his style of thinking and writing. It is through this different way of doing philosophy that he presents us with an alternative sense of the political.⁵⁸

Cavell’s Thoreauvian idea of the “father tongue” symbolizes this gender crossing concept of the feminine. By contrast to the mother tongue (“commonly transitory, a sound, a tongue, a dialect merely, almost brutish”), the father tongue is “a reserved and select expression, too significant to be heard by the ear, which we must be born again in order to speak.”⁵⁹ Thoreau’s “father tongue” derives, secondarily and almost playfully, from the familiar dominant notion of the mother tongue. The father for Cavell is not restricted by any prevailing conception of the dominant male but represents qualities open to both men and women in their re-engagement with language, in finding their own voices. In resisting easy categorizations of and oppositions between men and women, and in crossing gender divides, the Emersonian feminine voice shows the way to a more oblique and yet more radical manner of political criticism. It can teach men and women to reclaim their right to speak and to find their own first-person voices.

Passionate Utterance

One way to justify further the link between Emerson and the feminine is to explore how we learn to attest to and stand within the critical moment of conversion, from negativity to affirmation, from silent melancholy to expression, as exemplified in Emerson's poet and in Dickinson herself. How does one come to the point where one can make public one's inmost thoughts, to such an extent as to say, "My participation is to be expressed as happiness, even Emersonian joy"?⁶⁰ Silence here, in the face of the unsayable, or people's "quiet desperation,"⁶¹ will provide a crucial momentum toward remembering one's desire to speak. Silence lays the way for an alternative mode of speech, beyond polemical moral debate, to which the language of sympathy and mutual respect has been supplemented.

This is what Cavell calls "passionate utterance"—a type of language that responds to the political emotions of depression, cynicism, and irony, and that indirectly illustrates the nature of language as *poiesis*. As Cavell says: "A performative utterance is an offer of participation in the order of law. ... A *passionate utterance* is an invitation to improvisation in the disorders of desire."⁶² Cavell's approach to language, though apparently similar to Rorty's contingent creation of new vocabularies, is permeated by the sense of tension and struggle, and even of an abyss beneath one's relation to language. "In the mode of passionate exchange," Cavell writes, "there is no final word, no uptake or turndown, until a line is drawn, a withdrawal is effected, perhaps in turn to be revoked."⁶³ There, passionate utterance is a mode of speech in which, in disorder, one's standpoint is at stake.⁶⁴ This sense of destabilization is an element of Cavell's anti-foundationalism—as it is also of Emerson's and Dickinson's. Such a dissonant element, however, is a condition of critical thinking and poetic creativity, as Dickinson demonstrates herself in her words and life. Passionate utterance is related to emotion, passion, and receptivity, such that no conventional separation of these from reason can be endorsed. In *The Claim of Reason*, Cavell claims that passion and desire are the sources of our "search for reason."⁶⁵ Individual impulses produce moments of discontinuity in continuity, and this is a creative source of cultural reconstruction.

Furthermore, passionate utterance is open to new possibilities all the time, and, hence, it both surprises us and disappoints us. With reference to the idea of a repetition from within which the occasion of breaking out takes place, Cavell describes a conception of composition in which anything is altered by what happens next. This is what Cavell shows in his idea of the *projective* nature of words. There is no way to contain the concatenations and associations of meaning occasioned by words. This is illustrated in the learning of language by a child. In the following, Cavell is reflecting on his own daughter, at the age of about two, when she has just begun to learn the word “kitty”:

Now take the day, some weeks later, when [the child] smiled at a fur piece, stroked it, and said “kitty.” My first reaction was surprise, and I suppose, disappointment: she doesn’t really know what “kitty” means. But my second reaction was happier: she means by “kitty” what I mean by “fur.” ... If she had never made such leaps she would never have walked into speech. Having made it, meadows of communication can grow for us.⁶⁶

Language learning involves such leaps in meaning-making. (Emerson says that the poet’s argument is not simply governed by “metres” but is “a metre-making argument.”⁶⁷) But the projective nature of language is not limited to children’s language learning; it continues to be a task assigned to human beings, men and women, life-long. To take up this responsibility is always to risk the rebuff, to risk being not understood, being rejected or dismissed. But to fail to do this is to deny the very possibility of oneself. Making a leap cannot simply be a matter of making a random choice. Rather it is, against the background of linguistic and cultural practice, to speak in one’s own voice. Without space for these new “meadows of communication,” there is no possibility of meaning-making, and hence no hope for education. In this sense, taking a chance constitutes the condition of cultural criticism. The aptness of words is continually put into question, and they are turned to new purposes. The chains of association are never closed, and this is the very arena (the “meadows of communication”) for the exercise of poetic imagination.⁶⁸

In spite of this projective nature and with the element of chance, passionate utterance is not chaotic or relativistic; it is the condition for the resilient thinking of the Emersonian-feminine voice. Emerson's and Cavell's sense of asymmetry and imbalance is at the heart of their moral perfectionism—not the perfectionism of unity and integrity, but perfection without perfectibility, with the strong sense of imperfection. Unlike the idea of harmony and integrity that is usually associated with the idea of perfectionism, Cavellian and Emersonian perfectionism maintains a space of *disequilibrium*—a space in which a disturbing element of society, such as Dickinson herself embodies, is always a crucial factor in renovating the life of the community. Although this involves instability and dissonance, it points towards a perfectionist striving for community. To be distinguished from relativism or licentious anarchism, this might be called an *an-archic perfectionism*, a perfectionism that seeks always a better state, yet without relying on any transcendental (or, that is, foundational) ground.

THE POETICS OF THE ORDINARY

I never felt at Home – Below –

And in the Handsome Skies

I shall not feel at Home – I know –

I don't like Paradise –

– Emily Dickinson

Dickinson demonstrated in her words and life that the poet's voice cannot be gender neutral, yet this does not mean that the female voice of the poet must be domesticated as a "woman voice" or involved directly in an ideological battle for social justice. Dickinson, Emerson, and Cavell, distancing themselves from the ideological battle of gender, and enabling the paradox of being a woman and not a woman, take passion, passivity, and receptivity as the sources of political action in an alternative sense. The feminine voice of Emerson's poet, resuscitated by Cavell, shows that inequality, discrimination

and oppression in relation to women can be taken advantage of and converted, through patience, into the affirmative voice of disequilibrium, which Dickinson demonstrates in the destabilizing power of her words. Cavell describes Thoreau's reference to the ugly sound of the cat-owl, coming from the Concord horizon, as the voice of prophecy. And he quotes Thoreau's words: "*Boo-hoo, boo-hoo, boo-hoo!* It was one of the most thrilling discords I ever heard. And yet, if you had a discriminating ear, there were in it the elements of a concord such as these plains never saw nor heard."⁶⁹ The words of Dickinson as the female poet echo with such discordant sounds of New England.

For Dickinson, Emerson, and Cavell, poetry as measure-making is not reserved for the talented artist. The resource of the beauty of poetry lies in the common, the familiar; and yet this is not equated to a romanticization of the mundane and ordinary. The beauty of the ordinary, as Cavell puts it, is the process and result of the "actual ordinary" being transformed into the "eventual ordinary"⁷⁰—the state of "the everyday as the locale of the sublime"⁷¹ to be achieved going through the phase of doubt, anxiety, and skepticism.

As Dickinson's life and poetry illustrate, and as Cavell's Emersonian feminine voice exemplifies, the poet's passion is reborn from within the pain of individuation between home below and "handsome skies"—from within the sense of isolation, of not belonging anywhere stably, a sojourner at home, in the "process poetics" of flux.⁷² Cavell says that bearing pain is an alternative manifestation of political engagement.⁷³ To achieve transcendence in the ordinary, the first step of education is the process of giving words to one's sense of "silent melancholy," the process of converting the suppressed state of *melancholy* into the conscious state of *mourning* in expression. The second step is to convert, as Cavell says via Thoreau, such mourning to *morning*, to celebrate the joy of rebirth, affirming one's life in passion.⁷⁴ This is a therapeutic procedure to regain "my right to exist, to have a birth."⁷⁵

The feminine voice of the poet disturbs masculine stability, raising the quiet voice of resistance. This is an educational implication to be obtained from Dickinson's, Emerson's, and Cavell's poetics of the ordinary. While this is not explicitly political, this will point toward an alternative political education that

has space for the dissonant, the peripheral, and the dissenting, with reverberations of the voice of women. If the argument of this paper is right, can there legitimately be such a thing as social science or citizenship education that is not conditioned by the feminine voice in this way? And can there be a clear and coherent account of the possibilities of human transformation (which are central to philosophy of education) that is not shaped by the poetics of the ordinary?

1 *A Quiet Passion*, film, directed by Terence Davis (Liverpool: Hurricane Films, 2016).

2 Paula Bennett, *Emily Dickinson: Woman Poet* (Brighton: Edward Everett Root, Publishers, 2018), 36.

3 *Ibid.*, 28, 30, 32, 39, 40, 49.

4 *Ibid.*, 48.

5 *Ibid.*, 50.

6 *Ibid.*, 19

7 *Ibid.*, 45.

8 John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (1934), in *The Later Works of John Dewey*, Vol. 10, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989).

9 *Ibid.*, 328.

10 Arnold quoted in Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 349.

11 Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 348.

12 *Ibid.*, 350.

13 Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Poet," in *The Annotated Emerson*, ed. David Mikics (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012).

14 Stanley Cavell, *Contesting Tears: The Hollywood Melodrama of the Unknown Woman* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 221.

15 Emerson, "The Poet," 288.

16 *Ibid.*, 211.

17 *Ibid.*, 200.

18 *Ibid.*, 216.

19 *Ibid.*, 204–205.

20 *Ibid.*, 202.

21 *Ibid.*, 205.

22 *Ibid.*, 213.

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*, 210.

25 *Ibid.*, 209.

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*, 215, 216.

28 *Ibid.*, 210, 214, 215.

29 *Ibid.*, 217.

30 *Ibid.*, 205.

- 31 Ibid., 204.
- 32 Ibid., 218.
- 33 Ibid., 202.
- 34 Ibid., 217. "His [the poet's] speech flows with the flowing of nature" (Ibid., 210).
- 35 Ibid., 203.
- 36 Cornel West, *American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1989), 11.
- 37 Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Fate," in *Selections from Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Stephen E. Whicher (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957), 350.
- 38 Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir argues that "Nietzsche's critique of essentialist conceptions of identity are the basis for any critique or deconstruction of essentialist or ontological conceptions of the difference between men and women (Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir, "Nietzsche's Feminization of Metaphysics and Its Significance for Theories of Gender Difference," in *Feminist Reflections on the History of Philosophy*, eds. Lilli Alanen and Charlotte Witt (Dordrecht: Springer, 2004), 52).
- 39 Paul Standish, *Beyond the Self: Wittgenstein, Heidegger and the Limits of Language* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1992), 79–81.
- 40 Emerson, "The Poet," 213.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Ibid., 204.
- 43 Ibid., 214.
- 44 Ibid., 221.
- 45 Stanley Cavell, *Contesting Tears*, 221.
- 46 Ibid., 220.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Ibid., 33.
- 49 Ibid., 33–34.
- 50 Ibid., 34.
- 51 Ibid., 221.
- 52 Ludger Viefhues-Bailey, *Beyond the Philosopher's Fear: Cavellian Reading of Gender, Origin and Religion in Modern Skepticism* (New Haven: Yale University, 2007).
- 53 Ibid., 7.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid., 123.
- 56 Ibid., 10.
- 57 Cavell, *Contesting Tears*, 209.
- 58 Ibid., 221.
- 59 Henry D. Thoreau, "Walden," in *Walden and Resistance to Civil Government*, ed. William Rossi (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), 68–69.
- 60 Stanley Cavell, *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome: The Constitution of Emersonian Perfectionism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 29.
- 61 Henry D. Thoreau, *Walden and Resistance to Civil Government*, ed. William Rossi (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), 5.
- 62 Stanley Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 185 (emphasis added).

63 Ibid., 183.

64 Ibid., 185.

65 Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 20.

66 Ibid., 172.

67 Emerson, "The Poet," 204.

68 The argument in this paragraph is published in: Naoko Saito, "Taking a Chance: Education for Aesthetic Judgment and Cultural Criticism," *Ethics and Education* 10, no. 1 (2015): 96–104.

69 Words from Thoreau's *Walden* quoted in Stanley Cavell, *The Senses of Walden* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 76.

70 Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow*, 134.

71 Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 463.

72 Bennett, *Dickinson*, 49.

73 Stanley Cavell, *Little Did I Know: Excerpts from Memory* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 539.

74 Stanley Cavell, *A Pitch of Philosophy: Autobiographical Exercises* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 36; Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow*, 217.

75 Cavell, *A Pitch of Philosophy*, 38.