



Stanley Cavell: Philosophy's Recounting of the Ordinary

By Stephen Mulhall

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This is the first full-length philosophical study of the work of Stanley Cavell, best known for his seminal contributions to the fields of film studies, Shakespearian literary criticism, and the confluence of psychoanalysis and literary theory. It is not fully appreciated that Cavell's project originated in his interpretation of Austin's and Wittgenstein's ordinary-language philosophy and is given unity by an abiding concern with the nature and the varying cultural manifestations of the skeptical impulse in modernity. This book elucidates the essentially philosophical roots and trajectory of Cavell's work, traces its links with Romanticism and its recent turn toward a species of moral perfectionism associated with Thoreau and Emerson, and concludes with an assessment of its relations to liberal-democratic political theory, Christian religious thought, and feminist literary studies.

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Stanley Cavell: Philosophy's Recounting of the Ordinary By Stephen Mulhall Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #3369469 in Books
- Published on: 1999-03-04
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.40" h x .70" w x 5.40" l, 1.06 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 384 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"Despite what his book's title might suggest, Stephen Mulhall's thorough explication of Stanley Cavell's philosophy is anything but ordinary. At the outset Mulhall makes it clear that he intends to address Cavell's exceptional formidability, and set himself not to attempt to do what can and must only be done by Cavell's own prose, but to clear the space that is required for it to do so!....to Mulhall's credit...he has cleared the space for such a return."--*Philosophy and Literature*

"This book contains what is likely to remain for some time the most comprehensive and most ramified account of Cavell's work. It is a *tour de finesse*, at once densely argued and lucidly written, destined to become required reading in these fields."--*Ethics*

About the Author

Stephen Mulhall is Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy at New College, Oxford. He was previously Reader in Philosophy at the University of Essex.

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