

The Shibboleth List

The Emerson Hall School of Wittgenstein Exegesis claims not to have any actual doctrine. But you can recognize them by their distinctive accent. Here are some samples:

“What Wittgenstein wishes us to see...” (Stanley Cavell, excerpt from *The Claim of Reason*, in *The New Wittgenstein*, p. 21.)

“Why did Wittgenstein call sharp attention to...?” (Ibid., p. 24)

“That...is what, as I read him, Wittgenstein wishes us above all to grasp. This is what his ‘methods’ are designed to get us to see.” (Ibid., p. 26)

“I think that what Wittgenstein ultimately wishes to show...” (Ibid., p. 36)

[the above aren’t full-fledged uses, because Cavell goes on to say what it is Wittgenstein wishes to show]

“Wittgenstein fights the picture of meanings as rule-like items... by pointing to its emptiness...” (Edward Minar, “Wittgenstein and the ‘Contingency’ of Community,” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 72 (1991): 203–234, at p. 204.)

“... broader pictures of meaning and understanding that Wittgenstein wants to resist. He opposes himself to the idea that...” (Minar, p. 203)

“Wittgenstein hints...” (Minar, 205)

“But, I shall maintain, for Wittgenstein the questions... are suspect.” (Minar, 206)

“*Investigations* §185 dramatizes this question...” (Minar, 207)

“Wittgenstein... unearth[s] an ungrounded preconception operating at the beginning of our philosophical difficulties...” (Minar 210)

“Wittgenstein asks whether we really understand what we are trying to say here.” (Minar 211)

“Wittgenstein confronts the drive to find a foundation. . .” (Minar 215)

“Wittgenstein challenges the need. . . the search is unmotivated.” (Minar 215)

“Wittgenstein tries to convince us that we have found no stance from which to articulate a need. . .” (Minar 217)

“. . . Wittgenstein has quieted the tendency. . .” (Minar 218)

“he points toward the futility of attempting to explain. . .” (Minar 224)

“Wittgenstein. . . loosens the hold of the picture. . .” (Minar 226)

“Wittgenstein’s efforts free us to turn away from an intellectualized concern with. . . (Minar 226)

“Wittgenstein acknowledges and then *calms* [worries]. . .” (Minar 230)

“Wittgenstein tries to show that we look away from, do not see the significance of, what is open to view.” (Diamond, “Rules: Looking in the Right Place,” in D. Z. Phillips and Peter Winch, *Wittgenstein: Attention to Particulars* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989), pp. 12–34, at p. 18.)

“One of Wittgenstein’s larger ambitions in making such remarks is to discredit a deeply engrained philosophical understanding. . .” (Alice Crary, “Wittgenstein’s Pragmatic Strain,” *Social Research* 70 (2) (Summer 2003), p. 205.)

“Wittgenstein. . . wants us to see that. . . The end result is supposed to be a greater receptivity on our part to a philosophically heterodox view. . .” (ibid., p. 207)

“This line of argument is threatened by the same tension that infects other inviolability views.” (Alice Crary, “Wittgenstein’s Philosophy in Relation to Political Thought,” in Crary and Read, *The New Wittgenstein*, p. 127.)

“he discourages us from simply assuming. . .” (ibid, p. 133)

“[Wittgenstein] is attacking the idea of a perspective on language as if from outside from which can discern. . .” (ibid, p. 137)

“Wittgenstein wants us to recognize that it is only in so far as. . .” (ibid, p. 138)

“Wittgenstein hopes to expose as confused the idea that...”  
(ibid, p. 138)

“There is, he wants us to grasp,...” (ibid, p. 138)

“His aim is to get us to relinquish the idea of...” (ibid, p. 138)

“in taking for granted an idea Wittgenstein is concerned to criticize...” (ibid, p. 139)

“he repeatedly accents the idea...” (ibid, p. 139)

*Then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand. (Judges 12:6)*