Dickinson's Fascicles: A Spectrum of Possibilities is the first collection of essays dedicated exclusively to re-examining Emily Dickinson's fascicles, the extant forty hand-crafted manuscript “books” consisting of the roughly 814 poems crafted during the most productive period in Dickinson's writing life (1858-1864). Why Dickinson carefully preserved the fascicles despite her meticulous destruction of many of her early manuscript drafts is the central question contributors to this volume seek to answer.

The collection opens with an essential portion of Sharon Cameron's 1992 book that was the first to abandon the until-then popular search for a single unifying narrative to explain the fascicles, inaugurating a new era of fascicle scholarship. Eight prominent Dickinson scholars contribute essays to this volume and respond vigorously and variously to Cameron's argument, proposing, for instance, that the fascicles represent Dickinson's engagement with the world around her, particularly with the Civil War, and that they demonstrate her continued experimentation with poetic form.

Dickinson's Fascicles is edited by Paul Crumbley and Eleanor Elson Heginbotham. Other contributors include Paula Bernat Bennett, Martha Nell Smith, Domhnall Mitchell, Ellen Louise Hart, Melanie Hubbard, and Alexandra Socarides who assess what constitutes a vast final frontier in the Dickinson literary landscape. Susan Howe provides a coda.

Paul Crumbley is professor of English at Utah State University.

Eleanor Elson Heginbotham is professor emerita at Concordia University–Saint Paul. She now teaches in and around Washington, D.C.