

Bloom, "The Western Canon"

One breaks into the canon only by aesthetic strength, which is constituted primarily of an amalgam: mastery of figurative language, originality, cognitive power, knowledge, exuberance of diction. (29)

We possess the Canon because we are mortal and also rather belated. There is only so much time, and time must have a stop, while there is more to read than there ever was before. (30)

Here they [the "School of resentment"] confront[s] insurmountable difficulty in Shakespeare's most idiosyncratic strength: he is always ahead of you, conceptually and imagistically, whoever and wherever you are. He renders you anachronistic because he *contains* you; you cannot subsume him. You cannot illuminate him with a new doctrine, be it Marxism or Freudianism or Demanian linguistic skepticism. (25)