

In regards to the following quotes:

- “... it is that our most inclusive, most enlightened choices will fail against even the most generous requirements for statistical significance” (113).
 - Cora raised skepticism over the use of “statistical significance” for a canonical overview. She argued that thematic coverage and style were more important
 - Abby echoed these sentiments, asking what constitutes statistical significance.
- “It is one thing to worry that your canon is not sufficiently inclusive, or broad, or representative. It is another thing when your canon has no better chance of being these things than a random selection” (113).
 - Cora expressed disagreement with the term “random selection.” She, Todd, and Catherine argue that if certain works have stood the test of time, their place in the canon is justified and not random.
 - Catherine also brought up that some writers only achieved recognition centuries later and that the canon is constantly shifting. Personally, I like this point because I feel that a canon is a cultural product—a product of its society. For centuries, the Western canon has been dictated by the privileged (e.g. socioeconomic status, race, gender) and to reinforce their selections only would be to uphold the prejudiced views that excluded the work of so many marginalized writers.
- “...the fact that millions of people have read it might become a compelling argument for why you should read it too” (113).
 - Students had contrasting views on the validity of this statement. Emma argued in favor of it, while Simone and Zoe had some reservations. I personally agree with Emma because while a book in the literary canon doesn’t have to be everyone’s cup of tea, there’s still value in reading a book that has universal appeal and recognized takeaways.

Topics:

- Students seemed to have gripes with the metrics used to determine if a piece is canon-worthy. Abby asks, “Is it possible to standardize a canon when everyone might read the texts in a different way?”

- Adding my own two cents: I think the idea of a monolithic canon is outdated. Because it isn't an official designation, is it worth trying to update or even dismantle it?
- Information retrieval in the digital age
 - Nathalia: increased research capabilities, but at the price of raised expectations for quality of work
 - I'd like to add that the sheer volume of accessible information online can be overwhelming and even counterproductive without the necessary filters.
 - Abby: the spread of misinformation
 - Catherine: human-computer interaction -> increased quality of life; the act of making discoveries yourself instead of on YouTube diminishes the "value in embarking on a path to culture"
 - Zoe and Theo: browsing through physical libraries is still valuable in that the information available has already been narrowed
- Recommendation algorithms
 - Todd: "simplifying associations based on keywords creates a homogenization of texts presented to a reader" with anything outside of popular trends being pushed into obscurity
 - Zoe and Catherine: looking for media yourself without the bias of recommendation algorithms is meaningful