earnestly didactic Hesiod is of limited appeal to students, still less to a general readership. At the same time, an ostensibly closed Hesiodic text does little to encourage ongoing scholarly interest: dissuaded by its dusty reputation, we look elsewhere for the clever textual games by which we seek to distinguish ourselves. West's monumental scholarship sits heavy upon this text; inevitably, too, it will be fundamental to any future reappraisal. We may be left with little choice but to read Hesiod against the grain of – and with deep respect for – West's painstakingly closed reading.

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