Mikics posits that “literature, music and art express; computers, by contrast, lead you in a step-by-step way. You’re not immersed in a reality, you’re staring at a screen”. To contrast art with computers, however, makes no more sense than to contrast truth with toothpicks. Does an MP3 count as “music” or “computer”? If you read Homer on your Kindle, does your “staring at a screen” mean that nothing is “expressed”? One might as well take instead of a library card, an onion paper leads in a step-by-step way, making print incompatible with art. Software designers anticipated Mikics’s model of the book when they made ereaders one of the few apps lacking an onscreen clock. Amazon and Apple both assumed that books, unlike websites, would make users lose track of time. Like Mikics, they were idealizing printed paper – for while great literature stops clocks and even hearts, the average book is no less topical or ephemeral or hastily edited than the even larger number of websites. Take Mikics’s acid-free hardcover volume. Page 16 explains that “slowness and concentration are needed to learn to do anything well that is worth doing well, from fly-fishing to electrical engineering to playing the violin. The same is true of reading”; page 19 that “there is no mastery of any skill or craft without time, dedication, and concentration. This is true for mastering the piano . . . the violin. The same is true of reading”; page 26 that “there’s a technique to your choices about how to respond to a book, just as there’s technique required in any activity that you need to learn, from ballroom dancing to playing music”; and page 41 that “reading well requires a skill born of concentration”. The rules themselves are sensible, and the examples grant a glimpse into the classroom. Mikics gently reassures readers, “you will be able to make detailed, insightful remarks like the ones I’ve recorded”. The rules themselves are sensible, and the examples grant a glimpse into the classroom of a gifted teacher. His only mistake was to shakele them to prematurely aged platitudes about the superiority of epics to emotions.