

collected quotes

William M. Akers

2006

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I first saw television when I was in my late teens. It made my heart pound. Here was a medium of great power, of potentially wondrous delights.

Dennis Potter

Upon receiving an electric mixer for Christmas:

I'm excited about this! I tried to make a meringue last week with a hand mixer... That was a terrible night.

William Akers, jr.

Though God hath raised me high, yet this I count the glory of my crown: that I have reigned with your loves. And though you have had, and may have, many mightier and wiser princes sitting in this seat; yet you never had, nor shall have any that will love you better.

Queen Elizabeth I, near the end of her reign

Politeness is to human nature what warmth is to wax.

Arthur Schopenhauer

I was a late bloomer. But anyone who blooms at all, ever, is very lucky.

Sharon Olds

You start chasing a ball and your brain immediately commands your body to 'run forward, bend, scoop up the ball, peg it to the infield,' then your body says, "Who me?"

Joe DiMaggio

This is the way it works. The drummer should watch my hips and the bass player should watch my shoulders.

Bo Diddley

The butterfly counts not years but moments and has time enough.

Rabindranath Tagore

I am constantly struck by the strangeness of reading works that seem addressed, personally and intimately, to me, and yet were written by people who crumbled to dust long ago.

Stephen Greenblatt

I never vote for anyone. I always vote against.

W.C. Fields

It's no disgrace not to be able to run a country nowadays, but it is a disgrace to keep on trying when you know you can't.

Will Rogers

After watching the first ten minutes of a wretched film adaptation of his novel, *I Spit On Your Graves...*

"These guys are supposed to be American? My ass!"

...Boris Vian had a heart attack and died.

A. J. Liebling

Cynicism is often the shamefaced product of inexperience.

It is completely unimportant. That is why it is so interesting.

Hercule Poirot

Agatha Christie's *Murder of Roger Ackroyd*

Modesty post-success is what passes for grace.

Linda Obst

If I have seen further than others, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.

Isaac Newton

If you want to make enemies, try to change something.

Woodrow Wilson

We live, as we dream - alone.

Joseph Conrad

The task of the writer is "to make you hear, to make you feel - it is, before all, to make you see. That - and no more, and it is everything."

Joseph Conrad

Society prepares the crime; the criminal commits it.

Henry Thomas Buckle

The Romans would never have found time to conquer the world if they had been obliged first to learn Latin.

Heinrich Heine

No journey ever made with dogs can approach the height of that fine conception which is realized when men go forth to face hardships, dangers, and difficulties with their own unaided efforts.

Robert F. Scott, who perished with his expedition in Antarctica because they had no dogs

Your neighbor's vision is as true for him as your own vision is true for you.

Miguel de Unamuno

By all means marry; if you get a good wife, you'll be happy. If you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.

Socrates

You can destroy your now by worrying about your tomorrow.

Janis Joplin

To find a person who will love you for no reason, and to shower that person with reasons, that is the ultimate happiness.

Robert Brault

Kindness is loving people more than they deserve.

Joseph Joubert

He who would be a leader must be a bridge.

Welsh proverb

Half of the harm that is done in this world is due to people who want to feel important. They don't mean to do harm but the harm does not interest them.

T.S. Eliot

I like grit, I like love and death, I'm tired of irony. ... A lot of good fiction is sentimental. ... The novelist who refuses sentiment refuses the full spectrum of human behavior, and then he just dries up. ... I would rather give full vent to all human loves and disappointments, and take a chance on being corny, than die a smartass.

Jim Harrison

You can have power over people as long as you don't take everything away from them. But when you've robbed a man of everything, he's no longer in your power.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

If you have the same ideas as everybody else but have them one week earlier than everyone else then you will be hailed as a visionary. But if you have them five years earlier you will be named a lunatic.

Barry Jones

To be stupid, selfish, and have good health are three requirements for happiness, though if stupidity is lacking, all is lost.

Gustave Flaubert

Man is the best computer we can put aboard a spacecraft and the only one that can be mass produced with unskilled labor.

Wernher von Braun

It doesn't matter how beautiful your theory is, it doesn't matter how smart you are. If it doesn't agree with experiment, it's wrong.

Richard Feynman

Be civil to all, sociable to many, familiar with few, friend to one, enemy to none.

Benjamin Franklin

No man is justified in doing evil on the ground of expediency.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

I leave out the parts that people skip.

Elmore Leonard, on his writing

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

Eleanor Roosevelt

The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.

William Arthur Ward

God loved the birds and invented trees. Man loved the birds and invented cages.

Jacques Deval

Many a man thinks he is buying pleasure, when he is really selling himself to it.

Benjamin Franklin

I have never been lost, but I will admit to being confused for several weeks.

Daniel Boone

Whenever people say 'We mustn't be sentimental,' you can take it they are about to do something cruel. And if they add 'We must be realistic,' they mean they are going to make money out of it.

Brigid Brophy

Blue collar people like me have zero tolerance level for the problems of celebrities.

Joe Queenan

It's better to be looked over than overlooked.

Mae West

How dreadful knowledge of the truth can be when there's no help in the truth.

Sophocles

Nature can be trusted to work her own miracle in the heart of any man whose daily task keeps him alone among her sights, sounds, and silences.

Gene Stratton Porter

A child, like your stomach, doesn't need all you can afford to give it.
Frank A. Clark

News is what people want to keep hidden; everything else is publicity.
Bill Moyers

A designer knows he has achieved perfection not when there is nothing left to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.
Antoine de Saint-Exupery

In the small matters trust the mind, in the large ones the heart.
Sigmund Freud

It's very weird to succeed at thirty-nine years old and realize that in the midst of your failure, you were slowly building the life that you wanted anyway.
Alice Sebold

The nice thing about standards is that there are so many of them to choose from.
Andrew Tannenbaum

Truth is not only violated by falsehood; it may be equally outraged by silence.
Henri Frederic Amiel

If in the last few years you haven't discarded a major opinion or acquired a new one, check your pulse. You may be dead.
Gelett Burgess

Personne autour de moi ne s'est jamais rendu compte à quel point j'aurais pu être malheureux si j'avais voulu.
Guitry

Some scientist may at last disperse
The mysteries of the universe
But me, I can not even think
Why pork is white and ham is pink
Ogden Nash

One of the most time-consuming things is to have an enemy.
E.B. White

Computers make writing so painless that the writer cannot bear to stop. On and on the writer goes, all judgment numbed. Before you know it, you've written a book.
Russell Baker

It does not require many words to speak the truth.
Chief Joseph

Power always thinks it has a great soul and vast views beyond the comprehension of the weak;
and that it is doing God's service when it is violating all his laws.

John Adams

We boil at different degrees.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.

Horace Mann

Lives' of great men oft remind us as we o'er their pages turn, / That we too many leave behind
us- / Letters that we ought to burn.

Thomas Hood

Fucking Idiot

bumper sticker with drawing of George Bush

We cannot defend freedom abroad by deserting it at home.

Edward R. Murrow

We either make ourselves happy or miserable. The amount of work is the same.

Carlos Castenada

If you obey all the rules you miss all the fun.

Katharine Hepburn

A tyrant must put on the appearance of uncommon devotion to religion. Subjects are less
apprehensive of illegal treatment from a ruler whom they consider god-fearing and pious. On the
other hand, they do less easily move against him, believing that he has the gods on his side.

Aristotle

Si tu veux être heureux, sois-le

Proverbe chinois

Most truths are so naked that people feel sorry for them and cover them up, at least a little bit.

Edward R. Murrow

In an age when pictures have become more eloquent than words, schools are still programmed to
reduce the child's immersive interaction with the visual world to the practical poverty of the
alphabet. Visual literacy should become a pedagogical priority in order to prepare our children
to function within the increasingly visual complexity of our environment.

Vik Muniz

When work is a pleasure, life is a joy! When work is a duty, life is slavery.

Maxim Gorky

Of the needs a book has, the chief need is that it be readable.
Anthony Trollop

I have always found it difficult to start [writing] with a definite idea about a character, or even a definite emotion. ... But if I start with a pond that is being drained because of a diesel fuel leak, and a cow named Hortense, and some blackbirds flying over, and a woman in the distance waving, then I might get somewhere.
Bobbie Ann Mason

Never assume the obvious is true.
William Safire

Love, I find, is like singing. Everybody can do enough to satisfy themselves, though it may not impress the neighbors as being very much.
Zora Neale Hurston

[Human beings] are just an advanced breed of monkeys on a minor planet of a very average star. But we can understand the Universe. That makes us something very special.
Stephen Hawking

A king can stand people fighting but he can't last long if people start thinking.
Will Rogers

People err who think my art comes easily to me...
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

In some ways, you know, people that don't exist are much nicer than people that do.
Lewis Carroll

Coming from Canada, being a writer and Jewish as well, I have impeccable paranoia credentials.
Mordecai Richler

You have to be very fond of men. Very, very fond. You have to be very fond of them to love them. Otherwise they're simply unbearable.
Marguerite Duras

J'ai décidé d'être heureux parce que c'est bon pour la santé.
Voltaire