

# Carolyn Heilbrun

## Quotes

*Marriage, Men, Moving, World, Long, Jobs, Sex, Stories, Simple, Life, Taken,  
Years, Adventure, Age, Today, Writing, Spirit, People, Law, Dirty*

To recommend that women become identical to men, would be simple reversal, and would defeat the whole point of androgyny, and for that matter, feminism: in both, the whole point is choice.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

A literary academic can no more pass a bookstore than an alcoholic can pass a bar.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Power consists to a large extent in deciding what stories will be told.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Androgyny suggests a spirit of reconciliation between the sexes.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Ideas move fast when their time comes.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Professors of literature collect books the way a ship collects barnacles, without seeming effort.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Normal is absolutely my least favorite word.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

I don't know why togetherness was ever held up as an ideal of marriage. Away from home for both, then together, that's much better.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

That is the point of quotations. One can use another's words to be insulting.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Nostalgia is a dangerous emotion, both because it is powerless to act in

the real world, and because it glides so easily into hatred and resentment against those who have taken our Eden from us.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Quoting, like smoking, is a dirty habit to which I am devoted.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

The sign of a good marriage is that everything is debatable and challenged; nothing is turned into law or policy. The rules, if any, are known only to the two players, who seek no public trophies.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

The married are those who have taken the terrible risk of intimacy and, having taken it, know life without intimacy to be impossible.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

You can flush my ashes down the toilet, for all I care.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Whether animals admit it or not, they and I communicate.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Today's shocks are tomorrow's conventions.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

One cannot make up stories; one can only retell in new ways the stories one has already heard.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

People who are genuinely involved in life, not just living a routine they've contrived to protect them from disaster, always seem to have more demanded of them than they can easily take on.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

One hires lawyers as one hires plumbers, because one wants to keep one's hands off the beastly drains.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

The compulsion to find a lover and husband in a single person has doomed more women to misery than any other illusion.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Most full lives are filled with empty gestures.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Thinking about profound social change, conservatives always expect disaster, while revolutionaries confidently anticipate utopia. Both are wrong.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

We cannot guess the outcome of our actions... Which is why our actions must always be acceptable in themselves, and not as strategies.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

We in middle age require adventure.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Ironically, women who acquire power are more likely to be criticized for it than are the men who have always had it.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

In former days, everyone found the assumption of innocence so easy; today we find fatally easy the assumption of guilt.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Today's youth seem finally to have understood that only by freeing woman from her exclusively sexual role can man free himself from his

ordained role in the rat-race: that of the rat.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Power is the ability to take one's place in whatever discourse is essential to action and the right to have one's part matter.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

as the years go on a sense of deep patience comes over one; one seems to know the virtue of ripeness, and the danger of rushing events.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

New York is not like London, a now-and-then place to many people. You can either not live in New York or not live anyplace else. One is either a lover or hater.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

It's hard to be happy, and safe, and applauded in a miserable world.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

A dog is the only exercise machine you cannot decide to skip when you don't feel like it.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Only a marriage with partners strong enough to risk divorce is strong enough to avoid it.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Everyone likes to talk shop, which is the most interesting talk in the world, in the beginning.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

maturity ... is letting things happen.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Quoting, like smoking, ... is a dirty habit to which I am devoted. But then ... I am a professor of English literature; it is an occupational hazard.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Cynic' is the sentimentalist's name for the realist.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Upon becoming fifty the one thing you can't afford is habit.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Male friends do not always face each other; they stand side by side, facing the world.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Life has this in common with prizefighting: if you've received a belly blow, it's likely to be followed by a right to the jaw.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

. . . a relationship has a momentum, it must change and develop, and will tend to move toward the point of greatest commitment.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

a revolutionary marriage ... [is] one in which both partners have work at the center of their lives and must find a delicate balance that can support both together and each individually.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

... success always worries academics, when it moves into the popular world.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

What marks a writer is this: until she - or he, of course - writes down whatever happened, turns it into a story, it hasn't really happened, it hasn't shape, form, reality.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Is there any vanity greater than the vanity of those who believe themselves without it?

~Carolyn Heilbrun

one sank into the ancient sin of anomie when challenges failed.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

The journey is over. Love to all.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

Shifting problems is the first rule for a long and pleasant life.

~Carolyn Heilbrun

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