

# Dana Spiotta

## Quotes

*Writing, Thinking, Character, People, Trying, Want, Ideas, Book, Wall, Real, Names, Long, Way, Teaching, World, Art, Mean, Technology, Memories, Self*

Your memories from your early childhood seem to have such purchase on your emotions. They are so concrete.

~Dana Spiotta

Occupy Wall Street means making Wall Street and the corporate power elite understand that the people affected by the binge of unregulated greed are not going away, and they are not going to give up.

~Dana Spiotta

All roads lead to Wall Street, but we feel the effects of Wall Street on every street corner. Certainly in Syracuse, N.Y., where I live.

~Dana Spiotta

There are lots of authentic, moving characters in so-called systems novels, just as there are certainly deep structural ideas in some character-driven novels.

~Dana Spiotta

The writer has to take risks and go somewhere full of mystery and possibility for the novel to deepen over the years it takes to write it.

~Dana Spiotta

My teaching forces me to articulate what I think works in a piece of fiction and how I think it works. All of that gives me energy as a writer.

~Dana Spiotta

In order to be a living, breathing thing, a novel has to be failed in some kind of way. Or at least that's how I keep writing them.

~Dana Spiotta

A good novel should be deeply unsettling - its satisfactions should come from its authenticity and its formal coherence. We must feel something crucial is at stake.

~Dana Spiotta

Yes, I did try acting when I was in high school and I was terrible at it. So I definitely have had the experience of being bad at artistic endeavor.

~Dana Spiotta

I take the outline from a real person as inspiration, but the in-line is totally made up. Which is why I usually invent imaginary names.

~Dana Spiotta

Even a documentary portrait of a person that tries to be very accurate is shaped by the filmmaker in so many ways.

~Dana Spiotta

Even if we try to see people in our lives accurately, it is distorted by our own wants and prejudices and experiences.

~Dana Spiotta

I am, it seems, interested in people with multiple identities. I think we all have multiple identities.

~Dana Spiotta

I think most writers have to have a practice of writing. For me it is very early in the morning. I try to make it a separate world from the rest of my life.

~Dana Spiotta

My teaching exists in a different part of my brain. However, I am lucky enough to teach very smart graduate students.

~Dana Spiotta

When I write characters, I need to hear their voice. As soon as I get them speaking, and I feel how they use language, I understand who they are and what they want.

~Dana Spiotta

I want what I write to be deeply engaging and strange and true.

~Dana Spiotta

The writer has to be brave, I think.

~Dana Spiotta

Tell me it's forbidden, unthinkable, and that's where I want to go. Because the chances are it's complicated, and the complications are meaningful.

~Dana Spiotta

I think there's a lot to be learned from pop culture. But at the same time I see the dangers of using it in an exclusive way to construct meaning in your life.

~Dana Spiotta

The novel is about, for me, sustained and organized looking. I do think that people have a hunger for a sustained engagement, that concentration that the book can offer.

~Dana Spiotta

I am always trying to do something new and different. The first step is curiosity, questions. You pay attention to what fascinates you. If you can't shake it, there is something there.

~Dana Spiotta

That was one of the reasons I became a writer - I never really had that many friends. I would read a lot, and listen to music. And that was my life.

~Dana Spiotta

It takes a long time to write a novel when you have to keep interrupting your work to earn money.

~Dana Spiotta

I try to write about how we live today, how we use language, technology, our bodies.

~Dana Spiotta

I like to buy books for the kids in my family. I guess that's why they call me the 'mean' aunt.

~Dana Spiotta

I like the challenge of creating a world with only sentences.

~Dana Spiotta

I always think the novelist should go to the culture's dark places and poke around. Pose a lot of hard questions.

~Dana Spiotta

Getting an audience requires luck as well as talent. Some artists are private and shy. It costs them too much.

~Dana Spiotta

I am a great procrastinator. When the writing is going really well, the laundry piles up.

~Dana Spiotta

Usually there is a paradox in what a character wants. A conflict is built deeply within them. And then you put them in motion, throw everything at them until they reveal themselves further.

~Dana Spiotta

The issue isn't, Am I good enough? No. The issue is, Do I not have any other choice? Will and desire don't matter. Ability doesn't matter. Need is the only thing that matters.

~Dana Spiotta

You are always working towards the moments in which characters

experience reckonings or insight or change. I like to track them past those moments.

~Dana Spiotta

I have to say that movies have as much impact on me as music. And that I learned as much about narrative from movies as I did from reading novels, how to arrange stories, how to juxtapose things.

~Dana Spiotta

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