

# Dennis Ritchie

## Quotes

*Unix, People, Real, Simplicity, Java, Computer, Long, Thinking, Advice, Simple,  
Software, Book, Language, Research, Labs, Two, Careers, Done, Writing,  
Growing*

UNIX is basically a simple operating system, but you have to be a genius to understand the simplicity.

~Dennis Ritchie

The only way to learn a new programming language is by writing programs in it.

~Dennis Ritchie

Unix has retarded OS research by 10 years and linux has retarded it by 20.

~Dennis Ritchie

C was already implemented on several quite different machines and OSs, Unix was already being distributed on the PDP-11, but the portability of the whole system was new

~Dennis Ritchie

C is quirky, flawed, and an enormous success.

~Dennis Ritchie

C++ and Java, say, are presumably growing faster than plain C, but I bet C will still be around.

~Dennis Ritchie

For infrastructure technology, C will be hard to displace.

~Dennis Ritchie

A language that doesn't have everything is actually easier to program in than some that do

~Dennis Ritchie

... with proper design, the features come cheaply. This approach is arduous, but continues to succeed.

~Dennis Ritchie

I'm not a person who particularly had heros when growing up.

~Dennis Ritchie

Pretty much everything on the web uses those two things: C and UNIX.

~Dennis Ritchie

I'm just an observer of Java, and where Microsoft wants to go with C# is too early to tell.

~Dennis Ritchie

The number of UNIX installations has grown to 10, with more expected.

~Dennis Ritchie

Sometimes when you fill a vacuum, it still sucks.

~Dennis Ritchie

I'm still uncertain about the language declaration syntax.

~Dennis Ritchie

At least for the people who send me mail about a new language that they're designing, the general advice is: do it to learn about how to write a compiler

~Dennis Ritchie

A program designed for inputs from people is usually stressed beyond breaking point by computer-generated inputs.

~Dennis Ritchie

UNIX is simple and coherent, but it takes a genius (or at any rate, a programmer) to understand and appreciate its simplicity.

~Dennis Ritchie

The kind of programming that C provides will probably remain similar

absolutely or slowly decline in usage, but relatively, JavaScript or its variants, or XML, will continue to become more central.

~Dennis Ritchie

Some consider UNIX to be the second most important invention to come out of AT&T Bell Labs after the transistor.

~Dennis Ritchie

From an operating system research point of view, Unix is if not dead certainly old stuff, and it's clear that people should be looking beyond it.

~Dennis Ritchie

Obviously, the person who had most influence on my career was Ken Thompson.

~Dennis Ritchie

I listen to mostly-classical music, but mostly by radio - I'm not an audiophile.

~Dennis Ritchie

I've done a reasonable amount of travelling, which I enjoyed, but not for too long at a time.

~Dennis Ritchie

When I read commentary about suggestions for where C should go, I often think back and give thanks that it wasn't developed under the advice of a worldwide crowd.

~Dennis Ritchie

C is peculiar in a lot of ways, but it, like many other successful things, has a certain unity of approach that stems from development in a small group.

~Dennis Ritchie

Steve Jobs has said that Xwindows is brain-damaged and will disappear in two years. He got it half-right.

~Dennis Ritchie

I fix things now and then, more often tweak HTML and make scripts to do things.

~Dennis Ritchie

Any editing, software work, and mail is done in this exported Plan 9

~Dennis Ritchie

Twenty percent of all input forms filled out by people contain bad data.

~Dennis Ritchie

It seems certain that much of the success of Unix follows from the readability, modifiability, and portability of its software.

~Dennis Ritchie

One of the obvious things that went wrong with Multics as a commercial success was just that it was sort of over-engineered in a sense. There was just too much in it.

~Dennis Ritchie

Oh, I've seen copies [of Linux Journal] around the terminal room at The Labs.

~Dennis Ritchie

A new release of Plan 9 happened in June, and at about the same time a new release of the Inferno system, which began here, was announced by Vita Nuova.

~Dennis Ritchie

The notion of a record is an obsolete remnant of the days of the 80-column card.

~Dennis Ritchie

It's true that compared with the scene when Unix started, today the ecological niches are fairly full, and fresh new OS ideas are harder to come by, or at least to propagate.

~Dennis Ritchie

C is declining somewhat in usage compared to C++, and maybe Java, but perhaps even more compared to higher-level scripting languages. It's still fairly strong for the basic system-type things.

~Dennis Ritchie

The True-GNU philosophy is more extreme than I care for, but it certainly laid a foundation for the current scene, as well as providing real software.

~Dennis Ritchie

For books, I don't read much fiction, but like travel essays and good pop-science.

~Dennis Ritchie

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