

Don DeLillo

Quotes

Thinking, People, Writing, World, Literature, Men, Technology, Book, Want, Mean, Past, Reality, Fiction, Novelists, Self, Night, Lonely, Trying, Art, War

I like the construction of sentences and the juxtaposition of words-not just how they sound or what they mean, but even what they look like.

~Don DeLillo

I think more than writers, the major influences on me have been European movies, jazz, and Abstract Expressionism.

~Don DeLillo

We seem to believe it is possible to ward off death by following rules of good grooming.

~Don DeLillo

As technology advances in complexity and scope, fear becomes more primitive.

~Don DeLillo

No sense of the irony of human experience, that we are the highest form of life on earth, and yet ineffably sad because we know what no other animal knows, that we must die.

~Don DeLillo

I've come to think of Europe as a hardcover book, America as the paperback version.

~Don DeLillo

I don't want your candor. I want your soul in a silver thimble.

~Don DeLillo

What we are reluctant to touch often seems the very fabric of our salvation.

~Don DeLillo

California deserves whatever it gets. Californians invented the concept of life-style. This alone warrants their doom.

~Don DeLillo

A writer takes earnest measures to secure his solitude and then finds endless ways to squander it.

~Don DeLillo

Human existence had to have a deeper source than our own dank fluids. Dank or rank. There had to be a force behind it, a principal being who was and is and ever shall be.

~Don DeLillo

And what's the point of waking up in the morning if you don't try to match the enormousness of the known forces in the world with something powerful in your own life?

~Don DeLillo

There's always a period of curious fear between the first sweet-smelling breeze and the time when the rain comes cracking down.

~Don DeLillo

It's no accident that my first novel was called Americana. This was a private declaration of independence, a statement of my intention to use the whole picture, the whole culture.

~Don DeLillo

The writer is the person who stands outside society, independent of affiliation and independent of influence.

~Don DeLillo

Say heat. Say wet between my legs. Say legs. Seriously, I want you to. Stockings. Whisper it. The word is meant to be whispered.

~Don DeLillo

These are the days after. Everything now is measured by after.

~Don DeLillo

Pain is just another form of information.

~Don DeLillo

Too much has been forgotten in the name of memory.

~Don DeLillo

Writing is a form of personal freedom. It frees us from the mass identity we see in the making all around us.

~Don DeLillo

It was the time of year, the time of day, for a small insistent sadness to pass into the texture of things. Dusk, silence, iron chill. Something lonely in the bone.

~Don DeLillo

The cheesecake was smooth and lush, with the personality of a warm and well-to-do uncle who knows a hundred dirty jokes and will die of sexual exertions in the arms of his mistress.

~Don DeLillo

The true life is not reducible to words spoken or written, not by anyone, ever.

~Don DeLillo

Sometimes I see something so moving I know I'm not supposed to linger. See it and leave. If you stay too long, you wear out the wordless shock. Love it and trust it and leave.

~Don DeLillo

I've got death inside me. It's just a question of whether or not I can outlive it.

~Don DeLillo

Every sentence has a truth waiting at the end of it and the writer learns how to know it when he finally gets there.

~Don DeLillo

To a writer, madness is a final distillation of self, a final editing down. It's the drowning out of false voices.

~Don DeLillo

Fame requires every kind of excess. I mean true fame, a devouring neon, not the sombre renown of waning statesmen or chinless kings.

~Don DeLillo

Writing is a concentrated form of thinking.

~Don DeLillo

It is possible to be homesick for a place even when you are there.

~Don DeLillo

Silence, exile, cunning and so on... it's my nature to keep quiet about most things. Even the ideas in my work.

~Don DeLillo

Eye contact was a delicate matter. A quarter second of a shared glance was a violation of agreements that made the city operational.

~Don DeLillo

I'm not reclusive at all. Just private.

~Don DeLillo

The world isn't going to be destroyed, but you don't feel safe anymore in your plane or train or office or auditorium.

~Don DeLillo

She became confused when she stepped onto an escalator that wasn't

working.

~Don DeLillo

Longing on a large scale makes history.

~Don DeLillo

Everything that goes on in your whole life is a result of molecules rushing around somewhere in your brain.

~Don DeLillo

To be a tourist is to escape accountability.

~Don DeLillo

Past, present and future are not amenities of language. Time unfolds into the seams of being. It passes through you, making and shaping.

~Don DeLillo

People who are in power make their arrangements in secret, largely as a way of maintaining and furthering that power.

~Don DeLillo

It's my contention that each book creates its own structure and its own length. I've written three or four slim books. It may be that the next novel is a big one, but I don't know.

~Don DeLillo

It occurred to me that eating is the only form of professionalism most people ever attain.

~Don DeLillo

Somehow pictures always lead to people as masses. Books belong to individuals.

~Don DeLillo

Tourism is the march of stupidity.

~Don DeLillo

Only a catastrophe gets our attention. We want them, we depend on them. As long as they happen somewhere else.

~Don DeLillo

People had no tolerance for your particular hardship unless you knew how to entertain them with it.

~Don DeLillo

Fame and secrecy are the high and low ends of the same fascination.

~Don DeLillo

The future belongs to crowds.

~Don DeLillo

Nostalgia is a product of dissatisfaction and rage. It's a settling of grievances between the present and the past.

~Don DeLillo

The smoke alarm went off in the hallway upstairs, either to let us know the battery had just died or because the house was on fire.

~Don DeLillo

People who are powerless make an open theater of violence.

~Don DeLillo

Before pop art, there was such a thing as bad taste. Now there's kitsch, schlock, camp, and porn.

~Don DeLillo

That's why people take vacations. No to relax or find excitement or see new places. To escape the death that exists in routine things.

~Don DeLillo

Any assault on the borders of perception is going to seem rash at first.

~Don DeLillo

I watch movies occasionally, and I watch documentaries. Virtually nothing else.

~Don DeLillo

I quit my job just to quit. I didn't quit my job to write fiction. I just didn't want to work anymore.

~Don DeLillo

Writers in repressive societies are considered dangerous. That's why so many of them are in jail.

~Don DeLillo

I hate my life. I'm at the point where I want to hear about other people's lives. it's like switching from fiction to biography.

~Don DeLillo

When you try to unravel something you've written, you belittle it in a way. It was created as a mystery.

~Don DeLillo

One truth is the swing of the sentence, the beat and poise, but down deeper it's the integrity of the writer as he matches with the language.

~Don DeLillo

I don't know what I think about certain subjects, even today, until I sit down and try to write about them.

~Don DeLillo

A Catholic is raised with the idea that he will die any minute now and if

he doesn't live his life in a certain way, this death is an introduction to an eternity of pain.

~Don DeLillo

I see contemporary violence as a kind of sardonic response to the promise of consumer fulfilment in America.

~Don DeLillo

Once you've seen the signs about the barn, it becomes impossible to see the barn.

~Don DeLillo

The modern meaning of life's end-when does it end? How does it end? How should it end? What is the value of life? How do we measure it?

~Don DeLillo

The less important you are in an office, the more they expect the happy smile.

~Don DeLillo

Your brain has a trillion neurons and every neuron has ten thousand little dendrites. The system of inter-communication is awe-inspiring.

~Don DeLillo

If I were a writer, how I would enjoy being told the novel is dead. How liberating to work in the margins, outside a central perception. You are the ghoul of literature. Lovely.

~Don DeLillo

I slept for four years. I didn't study much of anything. I majored in something called communication arts.

~Don DeLillo

Some people are larger than life. Hitler is larger than death.

~Don DeLillo

I think there is a sense of last things in my work that probably comes from a Catholic childhood.

~Don DeLillo

When I work I have a sculptor's sense of the shape of the words I'm making. I use a machine with larger than average letters: the bigger the better.

~Don DeLillo

I embarked on my life - I didn't do anything. I don't have an explanation.

~Don DeLillo

True terror is a language and a vision. There is a deep narrative structure to terrorist acts, and they infiltrate and alter consciousness in ways that writers used to aspire to.

~Don DeLillo

There came a time in every prolonged effort when he had a moment of near panic, or 'terror in a lonely place', the original semantic content of the word. The lonely place was his own mind.

~Don DeLillo

I saw a photograph of a wedding conducted by Reverend Moon of the Unification Church. I wanted to understand this event, and the only way to understand it was to write about it.

~Don DeLillo

There are two categories of writers, it could be said: The author who is just a voice, and the one who is also creating a picture. I belong to the latter, because I have an acute visual sense.

~Don DeLillo

I am ashamed every day, and more ashamed the next.

~Don DeLillo

American writers ought to stand and live in the margins, and be more dangerous.

~Don DeLillo

The family is the cradle of the world's misinformation.

~Don DeLillo

When birds look into houses, what impossible worlds they see.

~Don DeLillo

There's a connection between the advances that are made in technology and the sense of primitive fear people develop in response to it.

~Don DeLillo

In a repressive society, a writer can be deeply influential, but in a society that's filled with glut and repetition and endless consumption, the act of terror may be the only meaningful act.

~Don DeLillo

I felt Joyce was an influence on my fiction, but in a very general way, as a kind of inspiration and a model for the beauty of language.

~Don DeLillo

Men with secrets tend to be drawn to each other, not because they want to share what they know but because they need the company of the like-minded, the fellow afflicted.

~Don DeLillo

It is interesting ... how weapons reflect the soul of the maker.

~Don DeLillo

I think a playwright realizes after he finishes working on the script that this is only the beginning. What will happen when it moves into three dimensions?

~Don DeLillo

I have only a bare working knowledge of the human brain but it's enough to make me proud to be an American.

~Don DeLillo

We need time to lose interest in things.

~Don DeLillo

Technology is just removed from nature.

~Don DeLillo

Out of some persistent sense of large-scale ruin, we kept inventing hope.

~Don DeLillo

It was important for him to believe that he'd spent his life among people who kept missing the point.

~Don DeLillo

When he died he would not end. The world would end.

~Don DeLillo

Being called a 'bad citizen' is a compliment to a novelist, at least to my mind. That's exactly what we ought to do.

~Don DeLillo

Isn't death the boundary we need?

~Don DeLillo

If you know you're worth nothing, only a gamble with death can gratify

your vanity.

~Don DeLillo

Maybe when we die, the first thing we'll say is 'I know this feeling. I was here before'.

~Don DeLillo

Ecology is boring for the same reason that destruction is fun.

~Don DeLillo

I used to think it was possible for an artist to alter the inner life of the culture. Now bomb-makers and gunmen have taken that territory.

~Don DeLillo

In the face of technology, everything becomes a little atavistic.

~Don DeLillo

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