

Edmund White

Quotes

*Men, Book, Writing, Gay, Thinking, People, Hate, Sex, Memories, Dream,
Sincerity, Views, Imagination, America, Years, Past, Desire, Order, Clothes,
West*

Biography can be the most middle-class of all forms, the judgment of little people avenging themselves on the great.

~Edmund White

The most important things in our intimate lives can't be discussed with strangers, except in books.

~Edmund White

I think that there are empty ecological niches in the literary landscape crying to be filled and when a book more or less fills a niche it's seized on, even when it's a far from perfect fit...

~Edmund White

I think sincerity was my sole aesthetic and realism my experimental technique.

~Edmund White

Paris... is a world meant for the walker alone, for only the pace of strolling can take in all the rich (if muted) detail.

~Edmund White

As a young teenager I looked desperately for things to read that might excuse me or assure me I wasn't the only one, that might confirm an identity I was unhappily piecing together

~Edmund White

Tennessee Williams recognized that great theater begins with great talkers, and that great talkers obey two rules: they never sound like anyone else and they never say anything directly.

~Edmund White

If I take a less defensive tone, I'd admit that I couldn't write today a very jazzy, contemporary look at America as I did in 1979 in *States of Desire*.

~Edmund White

I've always seen writing as a way of telling the truth. For me, writing is about truth. I have always tried to be faithful to my own experience.

~Edmund White

I didn't want to write a biographic romancee especially since I already write novels, nor did I want to challenge the rules of the biography game, arbitrary as those rules might be

~Edmund White

At certain crucial moments - an emergency or an opportunity - one must act first and think later.

~Edmund White

All his leisure clothes were absurd - jokes, really - as though leisure itself had to be ridiculed.

~Edmund White

In writing one draws in the rest, the forgotten parts.

~Edmund White

Of course the success of *A Boy's Own Story* took me utterly off guard.

~Edmund White

Someone once remarked that in adolescence pornography is a substitute for sex, whereas in adulthood sex is a substitute for pornography.

~Edmund White

What is new about Barthes's posthumous reputation is the view of him as a writer whose books of criticism and personal musings must be admired as serious and beautiful works of the imagination.

~Edmund White

Hell is God's Absence.

~Edmund White

I saw literature as a fantasy, no less absorbing for all its irrelevance - a parallel life, as dreams shadow waking but never intersect it.

~Edmund White

Dreadful is a poignant biography of a forgotten man who drank himself to death. It's a brilliant evocation of a self-hating gay novelist in the 1940s whom Gore Vidal once considered a rival.

~Edmund White

The notion that I might have been able to court friends, win attention, conjure it, would have spoiled it for me. Unbidden love was what I wanted.

~Edmund White

When we are young... we often experience things in the present with a nostalgia-in-advance, but we seldom guess what we will truly prize years from now.

~Edmund White

I'd rather come back with a few transcendent memories than an album of snapshots.

~Edmund White

I still feel that sincerity and realism are avant-garde, or can be, just as I did when I started out.

~Edmund White

These rejections hurt me terribly because I felt it was my life that was being rejected.

~Edmund White

I felt if I went chronologically, I'd get bogged down in childhood and that's part of our culture of complaint in America. This endless wailing about your childhood.

~Edmund White

The imagination is not the consolation people pretend. It can even be regarded as the admission of some sort of failure.

~Edmund White

Perhaps we'd understood each other too well to be attracted to one another. There were no occlusions in communication, those breaks in understanding that awaken desire.

~Edmund White

Psychoanalysis feeds on intensity, as though life were all flame and no ash.

~Edmund White

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