

# J. Robert Oppenheimer Quotes

*Science, Men, World, War, Discovery, Trying, Thinking, Believe, Inspirational,  
Philosophy, Two, Needs, Change, Military, Order, Sweet, Errors, Humanity,  
Running, People*

The optimist thinks this is the best of all possible worlds. The pessimist fears it is true.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds. (quoting the Bhagavad-Gita after witnessing the first Nuclear explosion.)

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Access to the Vedas is the greatest privilege this century may claim over all previous centuries.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

No man should escape our universities without knowing how little he knows.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Any man whose errors take ten years to correct is quite a man.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

There are children playing in the streets who could solve some of my top problems in physics, because they have modes of sensory perception that I lost long ago.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Genius sees the answer before the question.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

There are no secrets about the world of nature. There are secrets about the thoughts and intentions of men.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The people of this world must unite or they will perish.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

When we deny the EVIL within ourselves, we dehumanize ourselves, and we deprive ourselves not only of our own destiny but of any possibility of dealing with the EVIL of others.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

We may be likened to two scorpions in a bottle, each capable of killing the other, but only at the risk of his own life.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

It is perfectly obvious that the whole world is going to hell. The only possible chance that it might not is that we do not attempt to prevent it from doing so.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Science is not everything, but science is very beautiful.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

In some sort of crude sense, which no vulgarity, no humor, no overstatement can quite extinguish, the physicists have known sin; and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Truth, not a pet, is man's best friend.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

There is something irreversible about acquiring knowledge; and the simulation of the search for it differs in a most profound way from the reality.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The most beautiful philosophical song existing in any known tongue.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The Vedas are the greatest privilege of this century.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

I am become death, the destroyer of worlds.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

When you see something that is technically sweet you go ahead and do it.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

We know that the wages of secrecy are corruption. We know that in secrecy error, undetected, will flourish and subvert.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Pragmatism is an intellectually safe but ultimately sterile philosophy.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

We do not believe any group of men adequate enough or wise enough to operate without scrutiny or without criticism.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

It is a profound and necessary truth that the deep things in science are not found because they are useful; they are found because it was possible to find them.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

'It worked.' (said after witnessing the first atomic detonation).

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

We know too much for one man to know too much.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The physicists have known sin; and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The atomic bomb made the prospect of future war unendurable. It has led us up those last few steps to the mountain pass; and beyond there is a different country.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Sometimes the answer to fear does not lie in trying to explain away the causes, sometimes the answer lies in courage.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The best way to send information is to wrap it up in a person.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

I remembered the line from the Hindu scripture, the Bhagavad-Gita... "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds." I suppose we all thought that, one way or another.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

I need physics more than friends.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

To the confusion of our enemies.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The powerful notion of entropy, which comes from a very special branch of physics is certainly useful in the study of communication and quite helpful when applied in the theory of language.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Both the man of science and the man of action live always at the edge of mystery, surrounded by it.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

In the material sciences these are and have been, and are most surely likely to continue to be heroic days.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

I can't think that it would be terrible of me to say - and it is occasionally true - that I need physics more than friends.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Optimists think that this is the best of all possible worlds; pessimists fear they are right.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Maybe General Groves was right. Maybe we should just banish thinking forever.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

To try to be happy is to try to build a machine with no other specification than that it shall run noiselessly.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

In a free world, if it is to remain free, we must maintain, with our lives if need be, but surely by our lives, the opportunity for a man to learn anything

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Today, it is not only that our kings do not know mathematics, but our philosophers do not know mathematics and - to go a step further - our mathematicians do not know mathematics.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The theory of our modern technic shows that nothing is as practical as theory.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Discovery follows discovery, each both raising and answering questions, each ending a long search, and each providing the new

instruments for a new search.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

We hunger for nobility: the rare words and acts that harmonize simplicity and truth.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Things which stimulate my curiosity are pretty far removed from the practical and therefore from classification.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

The greatest of the changes that science has brought is the acuity of change; the greatest novelty the extent of novelty.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

A pragmatist is concerned with results, not reality.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

If we must live with a perpetual sense that the world and the men in it are greater than we and too much for us, let it be the measure of our virtue that we know this and seek no comfort.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

You can certainly destroy enough of humanity so that only the greatest act of faith can persuade you that what's left will be human.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

Taken as a story of human achievement, and human blindness, the discoveries in the sciences are among the great epics.

~J. Robert Oppenheimer

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