

Jacques Derrida

Quotes

Writing, Believe, Language, Names, Mean, Thinking, Speak, Eye, Play, School, Philosophy, Looks, Secret, Differences, Would Be, Reading, Firsts, Philosopher, Said, Years

I was wondering myself where I am going. So I would answer you by saying, first, that I am trying, precisely, to put myself at a point so that I do not know any longer where I am going.

~Jacques Derrida

If I only did what I can do, I wouldn't do anything

~Jacques Derrida

The blindness that opens the eye is not the one that darkens vision. Tears and not sight are the essence of the eye.

~Jacques Derrida

Psychoanalysis has taught that the dead - a dead parent, for example - can be more alive for us, more powerful, more scary, than the living. It is the question of ghosts.

~Jacques Derrida

If things were simple, word would have gotten around.

~Jacques Derrida

To pretend, I actually do the thing: I have therefore only pretended to pretend.

~Jacques Derrida

Monsters cannot be announced. One cannot say: 'Here are our monsters,' without immediately turning the monsters into pets.

~Jacques Derrida

I always dream of a pen that would be a syringe.

~Jacques Derrida

The traditional statement about language is that it is in itself living, and that writing is the dead part of language.

~Jacques Derrida

One often speaks without seeing, without knowing, without meaning what one says.

~Jacques Derrida

Everything is arranged so that it be this way, this is what is called culture.

~Jacques Derrida

There is nothing outside the text

~Jacques Derrida

Surviving - that is the other name of a mourning whose possibility is never to be awaited.

~Jacques Derrida

I say things that contradict each other, that are in real tension with each other, that compose me, that make me live, and that will make me die.

~Jacques Derrida

I'm no good for anything except taking the world apart and putting it together again (and I manage the latter less and less frequently).

~Jacques Derrida

I speak only one language, and it is not my own.

~Jacques Derrida

The end approaches, but the apocalypse is long lived.

~Jacques Derrida

Who ever said that one was born just once?

~Jacques Derrida

We are all mediators, translators.

~Jacques Derrida

Beyond the touchline there is nothing.

~Jacques Derrida

I am one of those marranes who no longer say they are Jews even in the secret of their own hearts.

~Jacques Derrida

As soon as there is language, generality has entered the scene.

~Jacques Derrida

Each time this identity announces itself, someone or something cries: Look out for the trap, you're caught. Take off, get free, disengage yourself.

~Jacques Derrida

Deconstruction never had meaning or interest, at least in my eyes, than as a radicalization, that is to say, also within the tradition of a certain Marxism, in a certain spirit of Marxism.

~Jacques Derrida

No one gets angry at a mathematician or a physicist whom he or she doesn't understand, or at someone who speaks a foreign language, but rather at someone who tampers with your own language.

~Jacques Derrida

Whatever precautions you take so the photograph will look like this or that, there comes a moment when the photograph surprises you. It is the other's gaze that wins out and decides.

~Jacques Derrida

Every discourse, even a poetic or oracular sentence, carries with it a system of rules for producing analogous things and thus an outline of methodology.

~Jacques Derrida

What cannot be said above all must not be silenced but written.

~Jacques Derrida

Beauty only happens once.

~Jacques Derrida

I do everything I think possible or acceptable to escape from this trap.

~Jacques Derrida

The circle of the return to birth can only remain open, but this is a chance, a sign of life, and a wound.

~Jacques Derrida

In a language, in the system of language, there are only differences. Therefore, a taxonomical operation an undertake the systematic, statistical, and classificatory inventory of a language.

~Jacques Derrida

I have always had school sickness, as others have seasickness. I cried when it was time to go back to school long after I was old enough to be ashamed of such behavior.

~Jacques Derrida

The first problem of the media is posed by what does not get translated, or even published in the dominant political languages.

~Jacques Derrida

We are given over to absolute solitude. No one can speak with us and no one can speak for us; we must take it upon ourselves, each of us must take it upon himself.

~Jacques Derrida

Still today, I cannot cross the threshold of a teaching institution without physical symptoms, in my chest and my stomach, of discomfort or

anxiety. And yet I have never left school.

~Jacques Derrida

Survival in the conventional sense of the term means to continue to live, but also to live after death.

~Jacques Derrida

Circumcision , that's all I've ever talked about.

~Jacques Derrida

Actually, when I write, there is a feeling of necessity, of something that is stronger than myself that demands that I must write as I write.

~Jacques Derrida

Why is it apparently the philosopher who is expected to be "easier" and not some scientist or other who is even more inaccessible to the same readers?

~Jacques Derrida

My most resolute opponents believe that I am too visible, that I am a little too alive, that my name echoes too much in the texts which they nevertheless claim to be inaccessible.

~Jacques Derrida

If this work seems so threatening, this is because it isn't simply eccentric or strange, but competent, rigorously argued, and carrying conviction.

~Jacques Derrida

In philosophy, you have to reckon with the implicit level of an accumulated reserve, and thus with a very great number of relays, with the shared responsibility of these relays.

~Jacques Derrida

Such a caring for death, an awakening that keeps vigil over death, a conscience that looks death in the face, is another name for freedom.

~Jacques Derrida

Cinema plus Psychoanalysis equals the Science of Ghosts.

~Jacques Derrida

I do not believe in pure idioms. I think there is naturally a desire, for whoever speaks or writes, to sign in an idiomatic, irreplaceable manner.

~Jacques Derrida

In Algeria, I had begun to get into literature and philosophy. I dreamed of writing-and already models were instructing the dream, a certain language governed it.

~Jacques Derrida

These critics organize and practice in my case a sort of obsessive personality cult which philosophers should know how to question and above all, to moderate.

~Jacques Derrida

The boarding-school experience in Paris was very hard, I didn't put up with it very well. I was sick all the time, or in any case frail, on the edge of a nervous breakdown.

~Jacques Derrida

An act of naming should quite rightly enable me to call any-thing a self-portrait, not only any drawing, 'portrait' or not, but everything that happens to me, that I can affect, or that affects me.

~Jacques Derrida

I became the stage for the great argument between Nietzsche and Rousseau. I was the extra ready to take on all the roles.

~Jacques Derrida

I love language as I love life itself!

~Jacques Derrida

I am like a child ready for the apocalypse, I am the apocalypse itself, that is to say, the ultimate and first event of the end, the unveiling and the verdict.

~Jacques Derrida

There is nothing outside of the text. [Fr., Il n'y a pas de hors-texte.]

~Jacques Derrida

I wrote some bad poetry that I published in North African journals, but even as I withdrew into this reading, I also led the life of a kind of young hooligan.

~Jacques Derrida

Certain readers resented me when they could no longer recognize their territory, their institution.

~Jacques Derrida

I rightly pass for an atheist.

~Jacques Derrida

No one will ever know from what secret I am writing and the fact that I say so changes nothing.

~Jacques Derrida

These years of the Ecole Normale were an ordeal. Nothing was handed to me on the first try.

~Jacques Derrida

I believe in the value of the book, which keeps something irreplaceable,

and in the necessity of fighting to secure its respect.

~Jacques Derrida

I never give in to the temptation to be difficult just for the sake of being difficult. That would be too ridiculous.

~Jacques Derrida

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