

Johan Huizinga

Quotes

*Culture, History, Mean, Past, Play, Understanding, America, Men, Art, Order,
War, Civilization, Thinking, Simple, Truth, Way, Science, Elements, Looks,
Struggle*

Play is older than culture, for culture, however inadequately defined, always presupposes human society, and animals have not waited for man to teach them their playing.

~Johan Huizinga

Culture arises and unfolds in and as play... culture itself bears the character of play.

~Johan Huizinga

Play is a uniquely adaptive act, not subordinate to some other adaptive act, but with a special function of its own in human experience.

~Johan Huizinga

You can deny, if you like, nearly all abstractions: justice, beauty, truth, goodness, mind, God. You can deny seriousness, but not play.

~Johan Huizinga

Every age yearns for a more beautiful world. The deeper the desperation and the depression about the confusing present, the more intense that yearning.

~Johan Huizinga

Educators are aware that they can reach the youth only by making use of gang spirit and guiding it, not by working against it.

~Johan Huizinga

The eternal gulf between being and idea can only be bridged by the rainbow of imagination.

~Johan Huizinga

If we are to preserve culture we must continue to create it.

~Johan Huizinga

Life is made too easy. Mankind's moral fibre is giving way under the

softening influence of luxury.

~Johan Huizinga

The modern city hardly knows a pure darkness or true silence anymore, nor does it know the effect of a single small light or that of a lonely distant shout.

~Johan Huizinga

Quite apart from any conscious program, the great cultural historians have always been historical morphologists: seekers after the forms of life, thought, custom, knowledge, art.

~Johan Huizinga

History is the interpretation of the significance that the past has for us.

~Johan Huizinga

History can predict nothing except that great changes in human relationships will never come about in the form in which they have been anticipated.

~Johan Huizinga

Culture must have its ultimate aim in the metaphysical or it will cease to be culture.

~Johan Huizinga

Culture requires in the first place a certain balance of material and spiritual values.

~Johan Huizinga

A crude mind could easily think: something is valid, therefore it is true.

~Johan Huizinga

An aristocratic culture does not advertise its emotions. In its forms of expression it is sober and reserved. Its general attitude is stoic.

~Johan Huizinga

The repudiation of the primacy of understanding means the repudiation of the norms of judgment as well, and hence the abandonment of all ethical standards.

~Johan Huizinga

All seemingly profound thinking which passes for realism, because it conveniently does away with all troublesome principles, has a great attraction for the adolescent mind.

~Johan Huizinga

One does not realize the historical sensation as a re-experiencing, but as an understanding that is closely related to the understanding of music, or rather of the world by means of music.

~Johan Huizinga

From whichever angle one looks at it, the application of racial theories remains a striking proof of the lowered demands of public opinion upon the purity of critical judgment.

~Johan Huizinga

Systematic philosophical and practical anti-intellectualism such as we are witnessing appears to be something truly novel in the history of human culture.

~Johan Huizinga

But one sound always rose above the clamor of busy life and, no matter how much of a tintinnabulation, was never confused and, for a moment lifted everything into an ordered sphere: that of the bells.

~Johan Huizinga

The title of hero is bestowed by the survivors upon the fallen, who themselves know nothing of heroism.

~Johan Huizinga

What the study of history and artistic creation have in common is a mode of forming images.

~Johan Huizinga

There are no instances known to me of cultures having forsaken Truth or renounced the understanding in its widest sense.

~Johan Huizinga

The second fundamental feature of culture is that all culture has an element of striving.

~Johan Huizinga

Revolution as an ideal concept always preserves the essential content of the original thought: sudden and lasting betterment.

~Johan Huizinga

A superstition which pretends to be scientific creates a much greater confusion of thought than one which contents itself with simple popular practices.

~Johan Huizinga

You only live a short time... and you are dead a long time.

~Johan Huizinga

Whether the aim is in heaven or on earth, wisdom or wealth, the essential condition of its pursuit and attainment is always security and order.

~Johan Huizinga

In order to begin an analysis, there must already be a synthesis present in the mind.

~Johan Huizinga

The susceptibility of the average modern to pictorial suggestion enables advertising to exploit his lessened power of judgment.

~Johan Huizinga

The new knowledge has not yet settled in culture. It has not yet been integrated in a new cosmic conception.

~Johan Huizinga

These are strange times. Reason, which once combatted faith and seemed to have conquered it, now has to look to faith to save it from dissolution.

~Johan Huizinga

A new culture can only grow up in the soil of a purged humanity.

~Johan Huizinga

History, as the study of the past, makes the coherence of what happened comprehensible by reducing events to a dramatic pattern and seeming them in a simple form.

~Johan Huizinga

In Europe art has to a large degree taken the place of religion. In America it seems rather to be science.

~Johan Huizinga

Do you know anything that in all its innocence is more humiliating than the funny pages of a Sunday newspaper in America?

~Johan Huizinga

Barbarisation may be defined as a cultural process whereby an attained condition of high value is gradually overrun and superseded by elements of lower quality.

~Johan Huizinga

The awareness of the all-surpassing importance of social groups is now general property in America.

~Johan Huizinga

It is the goal of the American university to be the brains of the republic.

~Johan Huizinga

Most thoughtful Americans of today seem to have forgotten how strongly their own and immediate predecessors, Emerson, Hawthorne and Whitman, were still preoccupied with the essence behind things.

~Johan Huizinga

No other discipline has its portals so wide open to the general public as history.

~Johan Huizinga

The content of the ideal is a desire to return to the perfection of an imaginary past.

~Johan Huizinga

Whatever our creed or belief, we all know that there is no way back, that we must fight our way through.

~Johan Huizinga

Culture means control over nature.

~Johan Huizinga

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