

# Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel Quotes

*Literature, Men, Philosophy, Art, Artist, Philosophical, Poetry, Religion, Ideas,  
Thinking, Spirit, Education, Self, Writing, Would Be, Beautiful, Criticism, World,  
Views, Genius*

An aphorism ought to be entirely isolated from the surrounding world like a little work of art and complete in itself like a hedgehog.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Irony is a clear consciousness of an eternal agility, of the infinitely abundant chaos.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Versatility of education can be found in our best poetry, but the depth of mankind should be found in the philosopher.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Aphorisms are the true form of the universal philosophy.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Nothing truly convincing - which would possess thoroughness, vigor, and skill - has been written against the ancients as yet; especially not against their poetry.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Strictly speaking, the idea of a scientific poem is probably as nonsensical as that of a poetic science.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Novels are the Socratic dialogues of our time. Practical wisdom fled from school wisdom into this liberal form.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Wit as an instrument of revenge is as infamous as art is as a means of sensual titillation.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

The main thing is to know something and to say it.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Every uneducated person is a caricature of himself.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

When reason and unreason come into contact, an electrical shock occurs. This is called polemics.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

A priest is he who lives solely in the realm of the invisible, for whom all that is visible has only the truth of an allegory.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Publication is to thinking as childbirth is to the first kiss.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

A family can develop only with a loving woman as its center.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

The genuine priest always feels something higher than compassion.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Man is free whenever he produces or manifests God, and through this he becomes immortal.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Women do not have as great a need for poetry because their own essence is poetry.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

An artist is he for whom the goal and center of life is to form his mind.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

All men are somewhat ridiculous and grotesque, just because they are men; and in this respect artists might well be regarded as man multiplied by two. So it is, was, and shall be.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Mysteries are feminine; they like to veil themselves but still want to be seen and divined.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Where there is politics or economics, there is no morality.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Nothing is more witty and grotesque than ancient mythology and Christianity; that is because they are so mystical.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Morality without a sense of paradox is mean.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Gracefulness is a correct life: sensuality which contemplates and forms itself.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Wit is an explosion of the compound spirit.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Combine the extremes, and you will have the true center.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Beauty is that which is simultaneously attractive and sublime.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

As the ancient commander addressed his soldiers before battle, so should the moralist speak to men in the struggle of the era.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Religion is absolutely unfathomable. Always and everywhere one can

dig more deeply into infinities.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

What is called good society is usually nothing but a mosaic of polished caricatures.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

One of two things is usually lacking in the so-called Philosophy of Art: either philosophy or art.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Set religion free, and a new humanity will begin.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Only he who possesses a personal religion, an original view of infinity, can be an artist.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Art and works of art do not make an artist; sense and enthusiasm and instinct do.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

What is lost in the good or excellent translation is precisely the best.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

The surest method of being incomprehensible or, moreover, to be misunderstood is to use words in their original sense; especially words from the ancient languages.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

A classification is a definition comprising a system of definitions.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Many works of the ancients have become fragments. Many works of

the moderns are fragments at the time of their origin.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Since philosophy now criticizes everything it comes across, a critique of philosophy would be nothing less than a just reprisal.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Reason is mechanical, wit chemical, and genius organic spirit.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Every good man progressively becomes God. To become God, to be man, and to educate oneself, are expressions that are synonymous.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Duty is for Kant the One and All. Out of the duty of gratitude, he claims, one has to defend and esteem the ancients; and only out of duty has he become a great man.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Wit is the appearance, the external flash, of fantasy. Hence its divinity and the similarity to the wit of mysticism.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Irony is the form of paradox. Paradox is what is good and great at the same time.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

No idea is isolated, but is only what it is among all ideas.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Religion can emerge in all forms of feeling: here wild anger, there the sweetest pain; here consuming hatred, there the childlike smile of serene humility.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

About no subject is there less philosophizing than about philosophy.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Eternal life and the invisible world are only to be sought in God. Only within Him do all spirits dwell. He is an abyss of individuality, the only infinite plenitude.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Form your life humanly, and you have done enough: but you will never reach the height of art and the depth of science without something divine.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Think of something finite molded into the infinite, and you think of man.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

The difference between religion and morality lies simply in the classical division of things into the divine and the human, if one only interprets this correctly.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Religion must completely encircle the spirit of ethical man like his element, and this luminous chaos of divine thoughts and feelings is called enthusiasm.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Laziness is the one divine fragment of a godlike existence left to man from paradise.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Every complete man has his genius. True virtue is genius.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

The German national character is a favorite subject of character

experts, probably because the less mature a nation, the more she is an object of criticism and not of history.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

There are writers in Germany who drink the Absolute like water; and there are books in which even the dogs make references to the Infinite.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

The essential point of view of Christianity is sin.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Considered subjectively, philosophy always begins in the middle, like an epic poem.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Novels tend to end as the Paternoster begins: with the kingdom of God on earth.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Good drama must be drastic.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Women are treated as unjustly in poetry as in life. The feminine ones are not idealistic, and the idealistic not feminine.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Many a witty inspiration is like the surprising reunion of befriended thoughts after a long separation.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Mathematics is, as it were, a sensuous logic, and relates to philosophy as do the arts, music, and plastic art to poetry.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel



Religion is not only a part of education, an element of humanity, but the center of everything else, always the first and the ultimate, the absolutely original.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Whoever does not philosophize for the sake of philosophy, but rather uses philosophy as a means, is a sophist.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

A critic is a reader who ruminates. Thus, he should have more than one stomach.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

All artists are self-sacrificing human beings, and to become an artist is nothing but to devote oneself to the subterranean gods.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

All the classical genres are now ridiculous in their rigorous purity.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

How many authors are there among writers? Author means originator.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

One has only as much morality as one has philosophy and poetry.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

If you want to see mankind fully, look at a family. Within the family minds become organically one, and for this reason the family is total poetry.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Poetry should describe itself, and always be simultaneously poetry and the poetry of poetry.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

It is peculiar to mankind to transcend mankind.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Poetry and philosophy are, according to how you take them, different spheres, different forms, or factors of religion. Try to really combine both, and you will have nothing but religion.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Witty inspirations are the proverbs of the educated.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

In every good poem everything must be both deliberate and instinctive. That is how the poem becomes ideal.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

With respect to ingenious subconsciousness, I think, philosophers might well rival poets.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Both in their origins and effects, boredom and stuffy air resemble each other. They are usually generated whenever a large number of people gather together in a closed room.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Kant introduced the concept of the negative into philosophy. Would it not also be worthwhile to try to introduce the concept of the positive into philosophy?

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

A classical work doesn't ever have to be understood entirely. But those who are educated and who are still educating themselves must desire to learn more and more from it.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

He who does not become familiar with nature through love will never know her.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

He who has religion will speak poetry. But philosophy is the tool with which to seek and discover religion.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

You wanted to destroy philosophy and poetry in order to make room for religion and morality which you misunderstood: but you were able to destroy only yourself.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

If you want to penetrate into the heart of physics, then let yourself be initiated into the mysteries of poetry.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Sense (for a particular art, science, human being, and so forth) is divided spirit; self-restraint is consequently the result of self-creation and self-destruction.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Life is writing. The sole purpose of mankind is to engrave the thoughts of divinity onto the tablets of nature.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

One can only become a philosopher, but not be one. As one believes he is a philosopher, he stops being one.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

The poetry of this one is called philosophical, of that one philological, of a third rhetorical, and so on. Which is then the poetic poetry?

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Ideas are infinite, original, and lively divine thoughts.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

When ideas become gods, consciousness of harmony becomes devotion, humility, and hope.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

The historian is a prophet looking backward.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

From what the moderns want, we must learn what poetry should become; from what the ancients did, what poetry must be.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

All the great truths are basically trivial and so we have to find new ways, preferably paradoxical ways, of expressing them, in order to keep them from falling into oblivion.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

It is as deadly for a mind to have a system as to have none. Therefore it will have to decide to combine both.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

God is each truly and exalted thing, therefore the individual himself to the highest degree. But are not nature and the world individuals?

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Honor is the mysticism of legality

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Can we expect the redemption of the world from scholars? I doubt it. But the time has come for all artists to join together as a confederation in an eternal league.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Philosophy still moves too much straight ahead, and is not yet cyclical enough.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Whoever could properly characterize Goethe's Meister would have actually expressed what is the timely trend in literature. He would be able, as far as literary criticism is concerned, to rest.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

Like Leibniz's possible worlds, most men are only equally entitled pretenders to existence. There are few existences.

~Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel

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