

Nat Hentoff

Quotes

*People, Thinking, Book, Country, Years, Writing, Bills, Government, Rights,
New York, Men, Mean, President, Voice, Kids, Editors, School, Believe, Barack,
Want*

I always wanted to be a lawyer, but I certainly never wanted to be a trapeze performer.

~Nat Hentoff

There is a seamless web to life.. all life is sacred.

~Nat Hentoff

I think Obama is possibly the most dangerous and destructive president we have ever had

~Nat Hentoff

A lot of people in the adult population have a very limited idea as to why they are Americans, why we have a First Amendment or a Bill of Rights.

~Nat Hentoff

Do not categorize about music. You take each musician at the time and open yourself to that musician.

~Nat Hentoff

I was introduced to jazz, and that's become a basic concern and passion of mine ever since.

~Nat Hentoff

My parents were Orthodox Jews but not very regular Orthodox Jews. I was bar mitzvahed and all that. But God was hardly ever mentioned in my family. Franklin D. Roosevelt was.

~Nat Hentoff

The media ignores what is really going on.

~Nat Hentoff

I would bet there is no place in the United States where the First Amendment would survive intact.

~Nat Hentoff

What we have now in America is a surveillance society.

~Nat Hentoff

In England, you have what I would call government-imposed euthanasia

~Nat Hentoff

We live in the village. We have a summer place in Westport, Connecticut. We don't spend a lot on all kinds of things. But I have no complaints.

~Nat Hentoff

A particular moment - and I'm not, to this day, quite sure how I feel about it - I had always wanted to be in the law books - you know, Hentoff vs. something or other.

~Nat Hentoff

We are going to have a long period where people are accustomed or conditioned to what's going on now with the raping of the Fourth Amendment.

~Nat Hentoff

Fortune ought to be a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master.

~Nat Hentoff

The need for education for the individual student should be recognized... home, neighborhood. But instead of that, we have the future being determined by standardized testing.

~Nat Hentoff

Every life is different; being pro-life is not only about saving the fetus, being pro-life is about all the stages of life.

~Nat Hentoff

Liberalism isn't quite as liberal as it pretends to be. And it goes through my adventures with the FBI during the anti-war period and the civil rights period.

~Nat Hentoff

This is a dishonest administration, because it is becoming clear that the unemployment statistics of the [Barack] Obama administration are not believable.

~Nat Hentoff

As usual, the people who are poorest - the blacks, Hispanics and disabled people - are going to suffer more than anyone else under the [Barack] Obama administration.

~Nat Hentoff

The general unemployment rate is going to continue for a long time and for all of us. I have never heard so many heart-wrenching stories of all kinds of people all across the economic spectrum.

~Nat Hentoff

Even on the cable network MSNBC, some of the strongest proponents of [Barack] Obama are now beginning to question, if I may use their words, their "deity."

~Nat Hentoff

[George W.] Bush was led astray and we were led astray.

~Nat Hentoff

[Barack Obama to be] much worse [than George W. Bush].

~Nat Hentoff

[Barack Obama's] only principle is his own aggrandizement. This is a

very dangerous mindset for a president to have.

~Nat Hentoff

[Barack] Obama seems to have no firm principles that I can discern that he will adhere to.

~Nat Hentoff

Throughout [Barack] Obama's career, he promised to limit the state secrets doctrine which the Bush-Cheney administration had abused enormously.

~Nat Hentoff

[Barack Obama] pledged to end torture, but he has continued the CIA renditions where you kidnap people and send them to another country to be interrogated.

~Nat Hentoff

In terms of the Patriot Act, and all the other things he has pledged he would do, such as transparency in government, [Barack] Obama has reneged on his promises.

~Nat Hentoff

However, I never thought that [George W.] Bush himself was, in any sense, "evil."

~Nat Hentoff

I am hesitant to say this about [Barack] Obama. Obama is a bad man in terms of the Constitution.

~Nat Hentoff

[Left] are very hesitant to criticize [Barack] Obama, but that is beginning to change.

~Nat Hentoff

I am an atheist, although I very much admire and have been influenced by many traditionally religious people.

~Nat Hentoff

He has absolutely no judicial supervision of all of this [invasions of privacy]. So all in all, [Barack] Obama is a disaster.

~Nat Hentoff

The NSA has the capacity to keep track of everything we do on the phone and on the internet.[Barack] Obama has done nothing about that.

~Nat Hentoff

I've I call [Cardinal John O'Connor] from time to time and he calls me. And when I think there's something he ought to think about doing, I call him and he usually does it.

~Nat Hentoff

Counting the ones I've co-edited, I guess about 28 or 29 [books I've written].

~Nat Hentoff

I wish [my wife] would [work] because - especially now the kind of - I mean, honesty is hardly the word. She writes with a ferocity of clarity that - nobody else around has now.

~Nat Hentoff

[My wife] has some investments and stuff.

~Nat Hentoff

I'm working on "Living the Bill of Rights," and it's about people - well, it starts with Brennan and Douglas as people who not only live the Bill of Rights, but try to shape the reason for that.

~Nat Hentoff

Bill Clinton outshines John Adams in that regard.

~Nat Hentoff

At least they [people] showed the world we could elect a black president.

~Nat Hentoff

[People] felt good even though they didn't really know much about [Barack Obama] and may have had some doubts.

~Nat Hentoff

A good many people voted for [Barack] Obama, and I'm not only talking about the black vote. A lot of people voted for Obama because of our history of racial discrimination in this country.

~Nat Hentoff

[Barack Obama] is a man who is causing us and will cause us a great deal of harm constitutionally and personally.

~Nat Hentoff

You see that in his foreign policy [Barack] Obama lacks a backbone - both a constitutional backbone and a personal backbone.

~Nat Hentoff

The present Stimulus Bill sets up the equivalent commission in the United States similar to that which is in England.

~Nat Hentoff

Under the British healthcare system, there is a commission that decides whether or not, based on your age and physical condition, the government should continue to pay for your health.

~Nat Hentoff

That [race] is still part of what [Barack Obama] is riding on. Except that,

too, is diminishing.

~Nat Hentoff

Trotsky found out about him - Leon Trotsky - because A.J.[Muste] worked. He was an activist. And he organized the first sit-in strike in Toledo in a factory. And Trotsky was very impressed with that.

~Nat Hentoff

You have an electorate [in America] that wants to see people who are not tough on crime.

~Nat Hentoff

A.J.[Muste] died in the late '60s, I think. He was 81, something like that.

~Nat Hentoff

It's perfectly within [Martin Peretz] rights [to fire a journalist]. It's a private - you know, th - it's not censorship. The First Amendment doesn't come into play because it's a private magazine.

~Nat Hentoff

[I wanted] to play the clarinet well so I could be in Duke Ellington's band, but that's now impossible.

~Nat Hentoff

I went to school at a place that also shaped my life, Boston Latin School.

~Nat Hentoff

I say personally because I am 84 years old, and [Barack Obama's] is the first administration that has scared me in terms of my lifespan.

~Nat Hentoff

My father had always been a traveling salesman - New England, the

South, whatever.

~Nat Hentoff

I once did a - the first piece on Malcolm X that anyone had ever seen in the - white press.

~Nat Hentoff

I don't like to feel intimidated by where I make a living.

~Nat Hentoff

I went to the library as soon as I could walk. So the training came from reading all kinds of people, from fairy tales and later on to - I don't know why - Schweitz's "Life of Christ."

~Nat Hentoff

I felt better about myself that I did it [calling Max Askeli Commander Askeli], rather than have - rather than thinking it and not writing it for being afraid of what might happen to me.

~Nat Hentoff

My chronology is terrible. [Work with William Shawn] must have some ago. It was after he was fired by Newhouse. After New - when Newhouse bought The New Yorker, he said in one of those grand press

~Nat Hentoff

I've never met anybody quite like [Bill Shawn]. He created - and I'm sure it was conscious - an aura about him of quietude.

~Nat Hentoff

The person who has the strong ownership of free speech is the one who owns the press.

~Nat Hentoff

Inside that quietude there was the firmest of wills. [Bill Shawn] knew exactly what he wanted to do.

~Nat Hentoff

I'd pick - my father would bring home about six newspapers. We had 10 in Boston at the time.

~Nat Hentoff

A reporter is never put off by somebody not wanting to be interviewed.

~Nat Hentoff

I really envy, in some respects, some of the people of faith I've known - A.J.[Muste], for example.

~Nat Hentoff

[A.J. Muste] was - he - I don't know what he finally came out believing in, but it was some kind of higher being.

~Nat Hentoff

The ACLU sees the separation of church and state as so absolute that not a single religious word must be allowed to pass a schoolhouse door.

~Nat Hentoff

Martin Williams persistently gets at essences, and that is why he has contributed so much to the very small body of authentic jazz criticism.

~Nat Hentoff

We disagree heavily on abortion [with Margot Hentoff].

~Nat Hentoff

The Voice has been politically correct in many of its aspects since before that term was ever used.

~Nat Hentoff

[Margot Hentoff] was an editor there for a time as well as a writer.

~Nat Hentoff

William Shawn was the editor of The New Yorker and for whom I worked for, God, 27 years; a man I respected enormously because of what he did, - what the magazine was about.

~Nat Hentoff

As Harry Blackmun said when he wrote Roe v. Wade, 'Once a child is born, the child has basic constitutional rights: due process, equal protection of the laws.'

~Nat Hentoff

Margot [Hentoff] dislikes Bill Clinton because he's totally untrustworthy, and you really ought to have some faith in whoever's going to be your president.

~Nat Hentoff

Allen Ginsberg was a remarkable guy. He was himself. He was an original.

~Nat Hentoff

I met [my wife Margot] on Fire Island when I had a house there many years ago.

~Nat Hentoff

Now that is dangerous, when the people don't know what's happening to their Constitution.

~Nat Hentoff

[My wife Margot] was the - I guess, the coordinator or the production manager [of The Jazz Review], and we got to know each other and we married.

~Nat Hentoff

[Bill Clinton] has called for expanded wiretaps for the FBI.

~Nat Hentoff

He - A.J.[Muste] never got much credit, never got much attention. For example, I wrote a biography of him and nobody ever heard of it.

~Nat Hentoff

[A.J. Muste] was very influenced - in - influential in the peace movement, in the civil rights movement.

~Nat Hentoff

[My father] was very impressed when he saw "Death of a Salesman," I must say. He recognized himself to some extent.

~Nat Hentoff

Fortunately most of the people who were involved in anti-Vietnam activity did not con themselves into being like the violent people they didn't want.

~Nat Hentoff

The main jobs would be The New Yorker, The Village Voice, The Washington Post and - I'm thinking of The Reporter when Max Askeli was there, but I got fired from The Reporter.

~Nat Hentoff

Young people get very excited when they hear why they are Americans. It is not hard to do.

~Nat Hentoff

[Barack] Obama has little, if any, principles except to aggrandize and make himself more and more important.

~Nat Hentoff

The people I admire are those who keep on producing and working and

going on.

~Nat Hentoff

We need to keep trying to rescue the Constitution from the President.

~Nat Hentoff

Being pro-life is an essential part of being a writer.

~Nat Hentoff

Abortion happens because of economic circumstances.

~Nat Hentoff

Duke Ellington had a song, "What Am I Here For?" - this is what being pro-life is.

~Nat Hentoff

Being pro-life is a basic perspective of everything I do.

~Nat Hentoff

The need for a pro-life point of view undergirds everything you do.

~Nat Hentoff

I read like everybody - like every other writer.

~Nat Hentoff

I was in the back of the book [in the The Reporter] doing music.

~Nat Hentoff

I've been reading since I could read, which was about four or five years old.

~Nat Hentoff

[Max Askeli] started this very good magazine [The Reporter]. In fact, Meg Greenfield, who's now the editorial page editor of The Washington

Post, was one of the star reporters there.

~Nat Hentoff

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