

# Philip Kitcher Quotes

*Philosophy, Thinking, Philosophical, Perspective, Book, Venice, People, Views,  
Ideas, Important, Different, Reading, Writing, Opportunity, Desire, Play, Attitude,  
Fall, Careers, Progress*

It's a very bad idea for scientific conclusions to be accepted because they fit with the political values of a group of researchers.

~Philip Kitcher

I believe that the arts make indispensable contributions to our understanding.

~Philip Kitcher

The "little theme" from Vinteuil, heard by Swann as emblematic of his love for Odette, remains a point of reference for him, as the character of that love changes and as the love eventually fades.

~Philip Kitcher

I'm very suspicious of the idea of a "final theory" in natural science, and the thought of a complete system of ethical rules seems even more dubious.

~Philip Kitcher

Philosophers ought to aspire to know lots of different things and to forge useful synthetic perspectives.

~Philip Kitcher

It may be hyperbolic to declare that Shakespeare teaches us more about being human than all the natural scientists combined.

~Philip Kitcher

Science literacy consists in the ability and the desire to follow reports of new scientific advances, throughout your whole life.

~Philip Kitcher

The theory of evolution explains to us what our ancestry has been. It does not explain away our worth. Why should we be afraid to learn more about what we are?

~Philip Kitcher

In ethics, we don't make progress by discovering pre-existent truths; we do so by solving problems.

~Philip Kitcher

Was Mann himself fully aware of all the facets of his irony? Probably not - any more than Shakespeare was fully aware of all the riches subsequent critics have found in his plays.

~Philip Kitcher

There are many critics whose work I greatly admire. Even though I diverge from T.J. Reed in several important ways, I've learned greatly from his writings on Mann.

~Philip Kitcher

If the research agenda reflects "market forces", the problems of the poor are likely to be even more neglected than they already are.

~Philip Kitcher

I'm very concerned about the increasing distortion of research by the intrusion of the market. Universities are beginning to see science as a means of attracting funds.

~Philip Kitcher

The expert is a midwife. The expert is not someone who has the authority to pronounce the last word on the subject.

~Philip Kitcher

Ethical inquiry has always been motivated by the aim of improving human conduct. It doesn't follow from that that the goal is to produce a complete rule book that would be applicable to all cases.

~Philip Kitcher

In my view, we ought to replace the notion of analytic philosophy by that of synthetic philosophy.

~Philip Kitcher

The more you read the novella, the more you should wonder, I think, which judgments are to be taken as bedrock.

~Philip Kitcher

I don't think readers of Mann have overlooked the fact that he was a great ironist, but they have tended to see the irony in particular parts of the novella, and to miss it in others.

~Philip Kitcher

Any writer who could handle all these different voices would deserve high praise, but to do so without any sense of jarring or incoherence is an extraordinary accomplishment.

~Philip Kitcher

So my methodological approach is to draw on many different features in highlighting different facets of the novella (and the opera and the film).

~Philip Kitcher

I didn't know that Mahler would come to play so large a role, nor that music and literature and philosophy can interanimate one another in the way I've come to think they do in this case.

~Philip Kitcher

For a pragmatist like me, the important issues concern the words we might deploy to achieve our purposes, rather than the language we actually use.

~Philip Kitcher

After the success of *Buddenbrooks*, he married and fathered six children. Yet the surviving diaries tell us of recurrent sexual problems - and of Katia Mann's extremely sympathetic response to them

~Philip Kitcher

Mann's *Death in Venice* actually contains a snippet of philosophy about the second question, when Aschenbach, collapsed in the plaza, engages in his quasi-Socratic, anti-Socratic, ruminations.

~Philip Kitcher

Experiments work when, and only when, they call into action cognitive capacities that might reliably deliver the conclusions drawn.

~Philip Kitcher

I rather stumbled into philosophy. When I began my undergraduate career at Cambridge, I studied mathematics.

~Philip Kitcher

The point of philosophy, as I see it, is to change thinking, and thereby to change the conversation.

~Philip Kitcher

I take the ethical truths to be the stable elements that emerge out of ethical progress and that are retained under further ethical progress.

~Philip Kitcher

Refined religion is aimed at realizing ethical values, including the fostering of human lives and human communities.

~Philip Kitcher

It's not at all a bad idea for scientific questions to be chosen because a democratic deliberation would identify them as important for people's lives.

~Philip Kitcher

One goal of ethical inquiry might be to uncover strategies available for use when values conflict or when rules are incomplete.

~Philip Kitcher

Most influential of all is the philosopher Stanley Cavell, and a younger generation of philosophers who have attempted to follow his pioneering work in thinking about literature philosophically.

~Philip Kitcher

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