

Phillip Lopate

Quotes

*Writing, Essays, Lonely, People, Example, Pain, Party, Fun, Suicide, Suicidal,
Brain, Lying, Enough, Able, Firsts, Expectations, Stress, Conflict, Rational,
Appreciation*

The prospect of a long day at the beach makes me panic. There is no harder work I can think of than taking myself off to somewhere pleasant, where I am forced to stay for hours and 'have fun'.

~Phillip Lopate

Hedonism can be a rational response to a difficult life.

~Phillip Lopate

The essay must be artistically rendered: You must keep the reader engaged, whether with wit, conflict, mischief, and/or yes, with honesty.

~Phillip Lopate

Until people see poetry as springing from all of life, they will isolate it in a creativity corner and treat it like a mascot.

~Phillip Lopate

Most good essays are conversations with yourself - not just your decided thoughts but your dilemmas.

~Phillip Lopate

The trick is to realize that one is not important, except insofar as one's example can serve to elucidate a more widespread human trait and make readers feel a little less lonely and freakish.

~Phillip Lopate

A personal essay often includes some or a lot of personal confession. That makes the reader feel less lonely in their confusion and darkness.

~Phillip Lopate

Have fun writing, because it enhances both the writer's and reader's experience.

~Phillip Lopate

Confession makes you a more trustworthy narrator.

~Phillip Lopate

In new work, we need to see the shadow, however faint, of previous literary effort.

~Phillip Lopate

I am apt to be harsh in my secret judgments of others, seeing them as defective because they are not enough like me.

~Phillip Lopate

I like the freedom that comes with lowered expectations.

~Phillip Lopate

Think of a dinner party as a club of revolutionaries, a technocratic elite whose social interactions that night are a dry run for some future takeover of the state.

~Phillip Lopate

Indeed, at times it's best to shut up.

~Phillip Lopate

The dinner party is a suburban form of entertainment. Its spread in our big cities represents an insidious Fifth Column suburbanization of the metropolis.

~Phillip Lopate

My wife and daughter have accused me of being too silent at breakfast but I don't want to talk when I don't have much to say.

~Phillip Lopate

It bothers me when I can't, for example, remember a name. I don't know if it's pre-senility or whether there are too many names packed in our brains.

~Phillip Lopate

The knowledge that my discriminations are skewed and not always universally desirable doesn't stop me in the least from making them.

~Phillip Lopate

I'm fortunate in being able to find great satisfaction in my work.

~Phillip Lopate

The essay is a wonderful medium. I might mention that some writers who longed to be novelists were better as essayists: Sontag, Baldwin, Vidal, Mary McCarthy, Mailer.

~Phillip Lopate

I really do like to write and when I'm not, I think, "Okay, I'll be a good citizen now" but fact is, that's secondary.

~Phillip Lopate

If someone in my family is getting emotionally bent out of shape, I've had to learn to adapt.

~Phillip Lopate

My other work, teaching, also is satisfying because I can be with people but in controlled circumstances, which aren't as likely to yield the pain of dealing with family.

~Phillip Lopate

Contradictory strands create an essay that's richly ambivalent.

~Phillip Lopate

You must read a lot of personal essays - you needn't reinvent the wheel.

~Phillip Lopate

I've had an enduring appreciation of psychology.

~Phillip Lopate

For most of my life, I have wanted broad impact but now, at 72, I'm not so sure that's always my first priority.

~Phillip Lopate

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