

Samuel R. Delany

Quotes

*Thinking, People, Art, Ideas, Trying, Artist, Writing, Men, Three, Cities, Fiction,
Eye, Important, Country, Pain, Hands, Running, Hunting, Children, Attitude*

The only important elements in any society are the artistic and the criminal, because they alone, by questioning the society's values, can force it to change.

~Samuel R. Delany

It's a very new, not to mention vulgar, idea that the spectator's experience should be identical to, or even have anything to do with, the artist's.

~Samuel R. Delany

The problem isn't to learn to love humanity, but to learn to love those members of it who happen to be at hand.

~Samuel R. Delany

Babes, I am so bored here that I don't think, since I've come, I've ever been more than three minutes away from some really astonishing act of violence.

~Samuel R. Delany

The truth is always multiplex.

~Samuel R. Delany

Apocalypse has come and gone. We're just grubbing in the ashes.

~Samuel R. Delany

Ambition like a liquid ruby stains.

~Samuel R. Delany

The pleasures of love are really quite wonderful--though I suspect they are rather a luxury and require a certain level of socioeconomic stability to be anything other than a mode of suffering.

~Samuel R. Delany

In myths things always turn into their opposites as one version

supersedes the next.

~Samuel R. Delany

Don't go chattering to the stars if you're going to do it with your eyes closed.

~Samuel R. Delany

It is easier to argue that something nobody believes in actually exists than it is to argue that something everybody believes in is unreal.

~Samuel R. Delany

It's only ... when we're stripped of purpose that we know who we are.

~Samuel R. Delany

I am in terror of the infinity before me, having come through the one behind bringing no knowledge I can take on.

~Samuel R. Delany

Breathing is a fascinating thing to watch in a woman.

~Samuel R. Delany

The past is what makes now like now makes tomorrow.

~Samuel R. Delany

Good writing is clear. Talented writing is energetic. Good writing avoids errors. Talented writing makes things happen in the reader's mind -
-vividly, forcefully.

~Samuel R. Delany

Everyone in a position of authority is hysterical, and everyone else is pretending to be asleep.

~Samuel R. Delany

If you are to stay in the good graces of the powerful, you had best,

however unobtrusively, please the servants of the powerful.

~Samuel R. Delany

Power is all. Another falsification; I do not tell how I gain or maintain it. I only record the ginger stroll through the vaguely fetid garden of its rewards.

~Samuel R. Delany

Human beings being what they are, order spreads, given half a chance, almost as fast as confusion.

~Samuel R. Delany

The General Public is a statistical fiction created by a few exceptional men to make the loneliness of being exceptional a little easier to bear.

~Samuel R. Delany

It's frightening for one artist to see another one, any other one turn away from art.

~Samuel R. Delany

A number of things in Dhalgren are just meant to function as mysteries. They're mysteries when the book begins, and they're mysteries when the book ends.

~Samuel R. Delany

As a prose writer, I work with language; and those who work with language turn to poetry for renewal.

~Samuel R. Delany

I took my writing seriously, and it seemed to pay off.

~Samuel R. Delany

Reality must prove itself again and again to questioners ... it is the fantasy which goes on without contradiction, without having to prove

itself.

~Samuel R. Delany

Spending practically every minute of your day on pure survival is an absolutely boring life.

~Samuel R. Delany

Discourse says, 'You are.' Rhetoric preserves the freedom to say, 'I am not.'

~Samuel R. Delany

I suspect most of life takes place in the interstices of what's already been articulated.

~Samuel R. Delany

Suggestion is a literary strategy.

~Samuel R. Delany

The emblem of a philosophy is not that it contains a set of specific thoughts , but that it generates a way of thinking.

~Samuel R. Delany

Like contemporary poetry, philosophy is one of those things, especially at the beginning stages, most people would rather do than study - which is why most of what gets done is so impoverished.

~Samuel R. Delany

Honesty is the best policy ; a policy is, after all, a strategy for living in the polis in the city.

~Samuel R. Delany

How we treat our invalids - our mad, our physically or mentally compromised family members - does tell you something about who we are politically, historically, culturally.

~Samuel R. Delany

Ah, well, during the Middle Ages, religion was often able to redeem art. Today, however, art is about the only thing that can redeem religion, and the clerics will never forgive us for that.

~Samuel R. Delany

The strange machinery by which a reputation precedes its source we all know is faulty. Yet how much faith we put in it!

~Samuel R. Delany

I suppose the problem ... is that we have an inside and an outside. We've got problems both places, but it's so hard to tell where the one stops and the other takes up.

~Samuel R. Delany

There are three types of actions : purposeful, habitual, and gratuitous. Characters , to be immediate and apprehensible, must be presented by all three.

~Samuel R. Delany

What you are will make you what you will become.

~Samuel R. Delany

There is a sense of decency that's like a barometer to a man's or a country's health.

~Samuel R. Delany

Endings to be useful must be inconclusive.

~Samuel R. Delany

Linguistics is very much a science. It's a human science, one of the human sciences. And it's one of the more interesting human sciences.

~Samuel R. Delany

I think of myself as a very lazy writer, though other people see it differently.

~Samuel R. Delany

The idea that certain things in life - and in the universe - don't yield up their secrets is something that requires a slightly more mature reader to accept.

~Samuel R. Delany

The rich are always enamored of the ancient.

~Samuel R. Delany

Clouds out of control decoct anticipation. What use can any of us have for two moons? The miracle of order has run out and I am left in an unmiraculous city where anything may happen.

~Samuel R. Delany

I was a kid who liked art and theater and dance and music, but if you lived in Harlem, high culture was somewhere else, and it wasn't black.

~Samuel R. Delany

Pain ... after you've lived with it long enough, isn't pain anymore. It's something else.

~Samuel R. Delany

All too often, when creative people pick out someone else's creative work as an inspiration, what they end up with is very, very far from the original.

~Samuel R. Delany

From 1968 on, I was pretty much the black, gay SF writer.

~Samuel R. Delany

Topologically, men and women are identical. Some things are just

larger and more developed in one than the other and positioned differently.

~Samuel R. Delany

A sentence has meaning in the sense that a train has a track, not that a train has a passenger.

~Samuel R. Delany

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