

# Studs Terkel

## Quotes

*People, Book, Thinking, Jobs, Want, Cat, Littles, Believe, Country, Years, Curiosity, Talking, Hero, War, Dream, Epitaph, Stories, May, Sound, Trouble*

How come you don't work fourteen hours a day? Your great-great-grandparents did. How come you only work the eight-hour day? Four guys got hanged fighting for the eight-hour day for you.

~Studs Terkel

People are hungry for stories. It's part of our very being. Storytelling is a form of history, of immortality too. It goes from one generation to another. -Studs Terkel

~Studs Terkel

Most of us have jobs that are too small for our spirits.

~Studs Terkel

Perhaps it is this specter that most haunts working men and women: the planned obsolescence of people that is of a piece with the planned obsolescence of the things they make. Or sell.

~Studs Terkel

I want people to talk to one another no matter what their difference of opinion might be.

~Studs Terkel

We are living in the United States of Alzheimer's. A whole country has lost its memory. When it can't remember yesterday, a country forgets what it once wanted to be.

~Studs Terkel

Hope never trickles down. It always springs up.

~Studs Terkel

Ordinary people are capable of doing extraordinary things, and that's what it's all about. They must count.

~Studs Terkel

I've always felt, in all my books, that there's a deep decency in the American people and a native intelligence - providing they have the facts, providing they have the information.

~Studs Terkel

I want, of course, peace, grace, and beauty. How do you do that? You work for it.

~Studs Terkel

I read somewhere that when a person takes part in community action, his health improves. Something happens to him or to her biologically. It's like a tonic.

~Studs Terkel

More and more we are into communications; and less and less into communication.

~Studs Terkel

Work is a search for daily meaning as well as for daily bread.

~Studs Terkel

That's what we're missing. We're missing argument. We're missing debate. We're missing colloquy. We're missing all sorts of things. Instead, we're accepting.

~Studs Terkel

But once you become active in something, something happens to you. You get excited and suddenly you realize you count.

~Studs Terkel

If there is knowledge, it lies in the fusion of the book and the street.

~Studs Terkel

The trouble with censorship is that once it starts it is hard to stop. Just

about every book contains something that someone objects to.

~Studs Terkel

Religion obviously played a role in this book and the previous book, too.

~Studs Terkel

People are hungry for stories. It's part of our very being.

~Studs Terkel

Work is born in us. We take to it kindly or unkindly. The terms may be easy or harsh, but the contract is binding.

~Studs Terkel

I always love to quote Albert Einstein because nobody dares contradict him.

~Studs Terkel

I hope for peace and sanity - it's the same thing.

~Studs Terkel

You happen to be talking to an agnostic. You know what an agnostic is? A cowardly atheist.

~Studs Terkel

To survive the day is triumph enough for the walking wounded among the great many of us.

~Studs Terkel

Don't be an examiner, be the interested inquirer.

~Studs Terkel

All you need in life is truth and beauty and you can find both at the Public Library.

~Studs Terkel

I find labels "liberal" and "conservative" of little meaning. Our language has become perverted along with the thoughts of many of us.

~Studs Terkel

An agnostic is a cowardly atheist.

~Studs Terkel

Ordinary' is a word I loathe. It has a patronizing air. I have come across ordinary people who have done extraordinary things.

~Studs Terkel

Most of us, like the assembly line worker, have jobs that are too small for our spirit. Jobs are not big enough for people.

~Studs Terkel

Chicago is not the most corrupt American city. It's the most theatrically corrupt.

~Studs Terkel

The answer is to say 'No!' to authority when authority is wrong.

~Studs Terkel

I never drove a car. I'm hopeless that way. I press the wrong buttons on the tape recorder. But if the person I'm interviewing helps me out, that person feels needed. People need to feel needed.

~Studs Terkel

If solace is any sort of succor to someone, that is sufficient. I believe in the faith of people, whatever faith they may have.

~Studs Terkel

Never go to bed with someone whose problems are greater than yours.

~Studs Terkel

The issue is jobs. You can't get away from it: jobs. Having a buck or two in your pocket and feeling like somebody.

~Studs Terkel

I want to praise activists through the years. I praise those of the past as well, to have them honored.

~Studs Terkel

Taking life seriously requires taking death seriously.

~Studs Terkel

My epitaph? My epitaph will be, 'Curiosity did not kill this cat'.

~Studs Terkel

I was born in the year the Titanic sank. The Titanic went down, and I came up. That tells you a little about the fairness of life.

~Studs Terkel

Nonetheless, do I have respect for people who believe in the hereafter? Of course I do. I might add, perhaps even a touch of envy too, because of the solace.

~Studs Terkel

For the next century, we've got to put together what we so carelessly tore apart with so little concern for those who were gonna follow us. ... You've got to sound off.

~Studs Terkel

I'd want the human voice expressing grievances, or delight, or whatever it might be. But something real

~Studs Terkel

When it comes to the news, the corporate view is `objective,' all else is propaganda.

~Studs Terkel

We hear the term independent contractors in Iraq. Independent contractors? Mercenaries!

~Studs Terkel

Something was still there, that something that distinguishes an artist from a performer: the revealing of self. Here I be. Not forlong, but here I be. In sensing her mortality, we sensed our own.

~Studs Terkel

I thought, if ever there were a time to write a book about hope, it's now.

~Studs Terkel

I am paraphrasing Einstein. I love to do that: nobody dares contradict me.

~Studs Terkel

You can work next to a guy for months without even knowing his name.

~Studs Terkel

Reading a book should not be a passive exercise, but rather a raucous conversation.

~Studs Terkel

I'm not an optimist. I'm hopeful.

~Studs Terkel

A guy I interviewed for Hard Times says, "What do I remember about the Great Depression? That I was hungry, that's all." Elemental things.

~Studs Terkel

Cannot Hannah Arendt's 'banality of evil' be subject to transposition: the evil of banality?

~Studs Terkel

I'm celebrated for celebrating the uncelebrated.

~Studs Terkel

So how are things going along? Pretty good. Going to be good tomorrow? Hope so.

~Studs Terkel

I said, "Suppose communists come out against cancer, do we have to automatically come out for cancer?" I can't take back that I'm against the poll tax, that I'm against lynching, that I'm for peace.

~Studs Terkel

We're born eventually to die, of course. But what happens between the time we're born and we die? We're born to live. One is a realist if one hopes.

~Studs Terkel

I cannot even picture myself retiring. What would I do? I'll always be doing something, asking somebody questions, even if there weren't a book.

~Studs Terkel

Once you wake up the human animal, you can't put it back to sleep again.

~Studs Terkel

I want a language that speaks the truth.

~Studs Terkel

I guess I was seeking some balance in the wildlife of the city as Rachel

Carson sought it in nature. In unbalanced times, balance is as difficult to come by as Parsifal's Grail.

~Studs Terkel

One of the definitive works on gay life. Through this collective testimony we may come to understand what it is to be 'the other'; in short, the other part of ourselves.

~Studs Terkel

In order for us, black and white, to disentrall ourselves from the harshest slavemaster, racism, we must disinter our buried history.... We are all the Pilgrim, setting out on this journey.

~Studs Terkel

I have a big mouth, and I never met a petition I didn't like, so of course in the McCarthy days I got in trouble.

~Studs Terkel

'Curiosity never killed this cat' â€” that's what I'd like as my epitaph.

~Studs Terkel

I hope that memory is valued - that we do not lose memory.

~Studs Terkel

Marvin Miller, I suspect, is the most effective union organizer since John L. Lewis.

~Studs Terkel

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