

# Vivian Gornick

## Quotes

*Writing, Self, People, Science, Feminism, Heart, Girl, Pain, Believe, Fiction,  
Stories, Literature, Mean, Husband, Ideas, Produce, Baby, Reading, Art,  
Political*

Papa's love did indeed have wondrous properties: it not only compensated for her boredom and anxiety, it was the cause of her boredom and anxiety.

~Vivian Gornick

That's the hardest thing to do-to stay with a sentence until it has said what it should say, and then to know when that has been accomplished.

~Vivian Gornick

Psychoanalysis showed me that I might be neurotic because I was a girl but, as Chekhov might have put it, I alone had to squeeze the slave out of myself, drop by drop.

~Vivian Gornick

What Independence Has Come to Mean to Me: The Pain of Solitude.  
The Pleasure of Self-Knowledge

~Vivian Gornick

Love can't be a metaphor anymore. If you try to make literature out of it, it doesn't work.

~Vivian Gornick

The older I grow, the more I realize how unfit we are for relationships. We are all such antagonists. It's part of the human condition to be deeply unfaithful to constancy. I do believe that.

~Vivian Gornick

Scientists do what writers do. They also live with an active interiority, only the ongoing speculation in their heads is about relations in the physical world rather than the psychological one.

~Vivian Gornick

Science, like art, religion, political theory, or psychoanalysis - is work

that holds out the promise of philosophic understanding, excites in us the belief that we can 'make sense of it all.

~Vivian Gornick

You are the instrument of your own illumination.

~Vivian Gornick

We cannot depend on change, but we can depend on surprise. However, we cannot always depend on surprise either. This keeps us on our toes.

~Vivian Gornick

When I work I feel more alive than under any other circumstances. There's not an 'I love you' in the world that can match it. I feel safe, excited, at peace, erotic, centered. Nothing can touch me.

~Vivian Gornick

for me, the beauty of feminism is that it is a social and political movement that has redefined the power and obligation of the self: self-possession and self-regulation as a tool for social reform.

~Vivian Gornick

in New York there's such diversity that there's no one central identity; everyone is marginal.

~Vivian Gornick

For the integrated human being there is no past: there is only the continual transformation of original experience.

~Vivian Gornick

The desire for narration keeps on reasserting itself, so that since modernism and fiction brought narration to an end, it is sought in memoirs.

~Vivian Gornick

I don't know if memoirs can produce literary work of the first order. But I do know that novels are doing it only rarely.

~Vivian Gornick

Sex is the killer. Sexual love makes you feel more vulnerable than any other kind of love. That's one reason that people are so thorny and so vulnerable and so easily wounded when in love.

~Vivian Gornick

Feminism gave me a way to see myself in culture, in society, in history, and that was very important.

~Vivian Gornick

They say writers sell everybody out. What can you do? You know only the people you know.

~Vivian Gornick

It seems that fiction no longer produces work that makes one feel the human condition deeply.

~Vivian Gornick

What feminism did was make clear for me how much I longed for clarity. I got married twice, each time in a fog. I had so many complicated feelings I couldn't understand.

~Vivian Gornick

You can't reduce an actual human being; you're just writing! You're not doing anything to another person.

~Vivian Gornick

I was never an activist, in the sense that I didn't really join a lot of organizations. I wasn't out in the streets. But what I did become was a writer. My activism was in writing.

~Vivian Gornick

Emotional sympathies just dry up and die as we change, and they are as mysterious in friendship as in love. It's a relationship like any other.

~Vivian Gornick

I may cause someone to feel badly, not because I'm doing something to them, but because the way in which I see might cause pain. But I am not doing the hurting.

~Vivian Gornick

What happened to the writer is not what matters; what matters is the large sense that the writer is able to make of what happened.

~Vivian Gornick

What you feel when you're writing is the relief of thinking: if you write the sentence correctly, you're clarifying. If you write the right sentence, nothing feels as good.

~Vivian Gornick

Everyone longs for expressiveness. That's why love carries so much weight. Because so many lives are without other means of expressiveness.

~Vivian Gornick

Of course love is a force in life. People will go on falling in love forever. And more important, sexual infatuation will enrapture everyone. Otherwise, no babies!

~Vivian Gornick

self-possession is the ability to face without fear life in all its contradictions.

~Vivian Gornick

**Related Links:**

- Writing Quotes
- Self Quotes
- People Quotes
- Science Quotes
- Feminism Quotes
- Heart Quotes
- Girl Quotes
- Pain Quotes
- Believe Quotes
- Fiction Quotes
- Stories Quotes
- Literature Quotes
- Mean Quotes
- Husband Quotes
- Ideas Quotes
- Produce Quotes
- Baby Quotes
- Reading Quotes
- Art Quotes
- Political Quotes