

Walter Lippmann

Quotes

Men, Thinking, People, War, Ideas, Government, Real, Order, Law, Liberty, Democracy, Genius, Rights, Self, Class, World, Freedom, Honesty, Soul, Moral

It requires wisdom to understand wisdom: the music is nothing if the audience is deaf.

~Walter Lippmann

The radical novelty of modern science lies precisely in the rejection of the belief... that the forces which move the stars and atoms are contingent upon the preferences of the human heart.

~Walter Lippmann

He has honor if he holds himself to an ideal of conduct though it is inconvenient, unprofitable, or dangerous to do so.

~Walter Lippmann

When all think alike, then no one is thinking

~Walter Lippmann

There can be no liberty for a community which lacks the means by which to detect lies.

~Walter Lippmann

The press does not tell us what to think, it tells us what to think about.

~Walter Lippmann

The news and the truth are not the same thing.

~Walter Lippmann

The present crisis of Western democracy is a crisis in journalism.

~Walter Lippmann

It is often very illuminating...to ask yourself how you got at the facts on which you base your opinion. Who actually saw, heard, felt, counted, named the thing, about which you have an opinion?

~Walter Lippmann

To create a minimum standard of life below which no human being can fall is the most elementary duty of the democratic state.

~Walter Lippmann

There can be no higher law in journalism than to tell the truth and to shame the devil.

~Walter Lippmann

All achievement should be measured in human happiness.

~Walter Lippmann

The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on.

~Walter Lippmann

The thinker dies, but his thoughts are beyond the reach of destruction. Men are mortal; but ideas are immortal.

~Walter Lippmann

Our conscience is not the vessel of eternal verities. It grows with our social life, and a new social condition means a radical change in conscience.

~Walter Lippmann

The opposition is indispensable. A good statesman, like any other sensible human being, always learns more from his opposition than from his fervent supporters.

~Walter Lippmann

We say that the truth will make us free. Yes, but that truth is a thousand truths which grow and change.

~Walter Lippmann

No amount of charters, direct primaries, or short ballots will make a

democracy out of an illiterate people.

~Walter Lippmann

Democracy is much too important to be left to public opinion.

~Walter Lippmann

When everyone thinks alike, no one thinks very much.

~Walter Lippmann

Only the very rarest of princes can endure even a little criticism, and few of them can put up with even a pause in the adulation.

~Walter Lippmann

We are all captives of the picture in our head - our belief that the world we have experienced is the world that really exists.

~Walter Lippmann

While the right to talk may be the beginning of freedom, the necessity of listening is what makes that right important.

~Walter Lippmann

Before you can begin to think about politics at all, you have to abandon the notion that there is a war between good men and bad men.

~Walter Lippmann

Robinson Crusoe, the self-sufficient man, could not have lived in New York city.

~Walter Lippmann

The study of error is not only in the highest degree prophylactic, but it serves as a stimulating introduction to the study of truth.

~Walter Lippmann

Leaders are the custodians of a nation's ideals, of the beliefs it

cherishes, of its permanent hopes, of the faith which makes a nation out of a mere aggregation of individuals.

~Walter Lippmann

A rational man acting in the real world may be defined as one who decides where he will strike a balance between what he desires and what can be done.

~Walter Lippmann

Corrupt, stupid grasping functionaries will make at least as big a muddle of socialism as stupid, selfish and acquisitive employers can make of capitalism.

~Walter Lippmann

Very few established institutions, governments and constitutions ...are ever destroyed by their enemies until they have been corrupted and weakened by their friends.

~Walter Lippmann

Every fairly intelligent person is aware that the price of respectability is a muffled soul bent on the trivial and the mediocre.

~Walter Lippmann

There is nothing so bad but it can masquerade as moral.

~Walter Lippmann

Brains, you know, are suspect in the Republican Party.

~Walter Lippmann

Only the consciousness of a purpose that is mightier than any man and worthy of all men can fortify and inspire and compose the souls of men.

~Walter Lippmann

There are at least two distinct selves, the public and regal self, the

private and human.

~Walter Lippmann

The genius of a good leader is to leave behind him a situation which common sense, without the grace of genius, can deal with successfully.

~Walter Lippmann

What we call a democratic society might be defined for certain purposes as one in which the majority is always prepared to put down a revolutionary minority.

~Walter Lippmann

The consent of the governed" is more than a safeguard against ignorant tyrants: it is an insurance against benevolent despots as well.

~Walter Lippmann

Unless the reformer can invent something which substitutes attractive virtues for attractive vices, he will fail.

~Walter Lippmann

Men are mortal, but ideas are immortal.

~Walter Lippmann

A really good diplomat does not go in for victories, even when he wins them.

~Walter Lippmann

Many a time I have wanted to stop talking and find out what I really believed.

~Walter Lippmann

Happiness cannot be the reward of virtue; it must be the intelligible consequence of it.

~Walter Lippmann

In a free society the state does not administer the affairs of men. It administers justice among men who conduct their own affairs.

~Walter Lippmann

Social movements are at once the symptoms and the instruments of progress. Ignore them and statesmanship is irrelevant; fail to use them and it is weak.

~Walter Lippmann

There is no arguing with the pretenders to a divine knowledge and to a divine mission. They are possessed with the sin of pride, they have yielded to the perennial temptation.

~Walter Lippmann

Ignore what a man desires and you ignore the very source of his power.

~Walter Lippmann

The great social adventure of America is no longer the conquest of the wilderness but the absorption of fifty different peoples.

~Walter Lippmann

Industry is a better horse to ride than genius.

~Walter Lippmann

When everyone thinks the same, nobody is thinking.

~Walter Lippmann

The tendency of the casual mind is to pick out or stumble upon a sample which supports or defies its prejudices, and then to make it the representative of a whole class.

~Walter Lippmann

The first principle of a civilized state is that power is legitimate only when it is under contract.

~Walter Lippmann

Nothing is easier than to simplify life and then make a philosophy about it. The trouble is that the resulting philosophy is true only of that simplified life.

~Walter Lippmann

Almost always tradition is nothing but a record and a machine-made imitation of the habits that our ancestors created.

~Walter Lippmann

The people who really matter in social affairs are neither those who wish to stop short like a mule, or leap from crag to crag like a mountain goat.

~Walter Lippmann

You cannot endow even the best machine with initiative; the jolliest steamroller will not plant flowers.

~Walter Lippmann

Once you touch the biographies of human beings, the notion that political beliefs are logically determined collapses like a pricked balloon.

~Walter Lippmann

The true speech of man is idiomatic, if not of the earth and sky, then at least of the saloon and the bleachers.

~Walter Lippmann

What a myth never contains is the critical power to separate its truth from its errors.

~Walter Lippmann

The best servants of the people, like the best valets, must whisper unpleasant truths in the master's ear. It is the court fool, not the foolish courtier, whom the king can least afford to lose.

~Walter Lippmann

Success makes men rigid and they tend to exalt stability over all the other virtues; tired of the effort of willing they become fanatics about conservatism.

~Walter Lippmann

The effort to calculate exactly what the voters want at each particular moment leaves out of account the fact that when they are troubled the thing the voters most want is to be told what to want.

~Walter Lippmann

To keep a faith pure, man had better retire to a monastery.

~Walter Lippmann

It is easier to develop great power than it is to know how to use it wisely.

~Walter Lippmann

Private property was the original source of freedom. It still is its main bulwark.

~Walter Lippmann

People who are tremendously concerned about their identification, their individuality, their self-expression, or their sense of humor, always seem to be missing the very things they pursue.

~Walter Lippmann

Creative ideas come to the intuitive person who can face up to the insecurity of looking beyond the obvious.

~Walter Lippmann

Whenever we accept an idea as authority instead of as instrument, an idol is set up. We worship the plough, and not the fruit.

~Walter Lippmann

Most men, after a little freedom, have preferred authority with the consoling assurances and the economy of effort it brings.

~Walter Lippmann

When men can no longer be theists, they must, if they are civilized, become humanists.

~Walter Lippmann

Men fall into a routine when they are tired and slack: it has all the appearance of activity with few of its burdens.

~Walter Lippmann

The self-evident truth which makes men invincible is that inalienably they are inviolable persons.

~Walter Lippmann

It is all very well to talk about being the captain of your soul. It is hard, and only a few heroes, saints, and geniuses have been the captains of their souls for any extended period of their lives.

~Walter Lippmann

The search for moral guidance which shall not depend upon external authority has invariably ended in the acknowledgment of some new authority.

~Walter Lippmann

A man cannot sleep in his cradle: whatever is useful must in the nature of life become useless.

~Walter Lippmann

Every man whose business it is to think knows that he must for part of the day create about himself a pool of silence.

~Walter Lippmann

Politicians tend to live "in character" and many a public figure has come to imitate the journalism that describes him.

~Walter Lippmann

Football strategy does not originate in a scrimmage: it is useless to expect solutions in a political campaign.

~Walter Lippmann

Lovers who have nothing to do but love each other are not really to be envied; love and nothing else very soon is nothing else.

~Walter Lippmann

The public must be put in its place, so that it may exercise its own powers, but no less and perhaps even more, so that each of us may live free of the trampling and the roar of a bewildered herd.

~Walter Lippmann

In places where men are used to differences they inevitably become tolerant.

~Walter Lippmann

It is at the cross-roads that skepticism is born, not in a hermitage.

~Walter Lippmann

Unless our ideas are questioned, they become part of the furniture of eternity.

~Walter Lippmann

Behind innocence there gathers a clotted mass of superstition, of twisted and misdirected impulse; clandestine flirtation, fads, and

ragtime fill the unventilated mind.

~Walter Lippmann

A more conscious life is one in which a man is conscious not only of what he sees, but of the prejudices with which he sees it.

~Walter Lippmann

Love endures when the lovers love many things together And not merely each other.

~Walter Lippmann

A free press is not a privilege but an organic necessity in a great society. ... A great society is simply a big and complicated urban society.

~Walter Lippmann

Men who are orthodox when they are young are in danger of being middle-aged all their lives.

~Walter Lippmann

Ages when custom is unsettled are necessarily ages of prophecy. The moralist cannot teach what is revealed; he must reveal what can be taught. He has to seek insight rather than to preach.

~Walter Lippmann

This is one of the paradoxes of the democratic movement - that it loves a crowd and fears the individuals who compose it - that the religion of humanity should have no faith in human beings.

~Walter Lippmann

The simple opposition between the people and big business has disappeared because the people themselves have become so deeply involved in big business.

~Walter Lippmann

In the blood of the martyrs to intolerance are the seeds of unbelief

~Walter Lippmann

A long life in journalism convinced me many presidents ago that there should be a large air space between a journalist and the head of a state.

~Walter Lippmann

A man who has humility will have acquired in the last reaches of his beliefs the saving doubt of his own certainty.

~Walter Lippmann

The prophecy of a world moving toward political unity is the light which guides all that is best, most vigorous, most truly alive in the work of our time.

~Walter Lippmann

Men command fewer words than they have ideas to express, and language, as Jean Paul said, is a dictionary of faded metaphors.

~Walter Lippmann

It seems like topsy-turvyland to make reason serve the irrational. Yet that is just what it has always done, and ought always to do.

~Walter Lippmann

The common interests very largely elude public opinion entirely, and can be managed only by a specialised class.

~Walter Lippmann

The facts we see depend on where we are placed and the habits of our eyes.

~Walter Lippmann

To understand is not only to pardon, but in the end to love.

~Walter Lippmann

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