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Quotes about Civilization

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Civilization is the lamb's skin in which barbarism masquerades.

- Aldrich, Thomas B.

Each new generation is a fresh invasion of savages.

- Allen, Hervey

The skylines lit up at dead of night, the air-conditioning systems cooling empty hotels in the desert and artificial light in the middle of the day all have something both demented and admirable about them. The mindless luxury of a rich civilization, and yet of a civilization perhaps as scared to see the lights go out as was the hunter in his primitive night.

- Baudrillard, Jean

We are born princes and the civilizing process makes us frogs.

- Berne, Eric

The three great elements of modern civilization, Gun powder, Printing, and the Protestant religion.

- Carlyle, Thomas

People sometimes tell me that they prefer barbarism to civilization. I doubt if they have given it a long enough trial. Like the people of Alexandria, they are bored by civilization; but all the evidence suggests that the boredom of barbarism is infinitely greater.

- Clark, Kenneth, Lord

Civilization is an active deposit which is formed by the combustion of the present with the past. Neither in countries without a Present nor in those without a Past is it to be encountered. Proust in Venice, Matisse's birdcages overlooking the flower market at Nice, Gide on the seventeenth-century quais of Toulon, Lorca in Granada, Picasso by Saint-Germain-des-Près: there lies civilization and for me it can exist only under those liberal regimes in which the Present is alive and therefore capable of assimilating the Past.

- Connolly, Cyril

The civilized are those who get more out of life than the uncivilized, and for this we are not likely to be forgiven.

- Connolly, Cyril

The test of civilization is its estimate of women.

- Curtis, George William

Increased means and increased leisure are the two civilizers of man.

- Disraeli, Benjamin

Civilization is a stream with banks. The stream is sometimes filled with blood from people killing, stealing, shouting and doing the things historians usually record, while on the banks, unnoticed, people build homes, make love, raise children, sing songs, write poetry and even whittle statues. The story of civilization is the story of what happened on the banks. Historians are pessimists because they ignore the banks for the river.

- Durant, William J.

I think there are only three things America will be known for 2, 000 years from now when they study this civilization: the Constitution, jazz music and baseball.

- Early, Gerald

Is civilization only a higher form of idolatry, that man should bow down to a flesh-brush, to flannels, to baths, diet, exercise, and air?

- Eddy, Mary Baker

All civilization has from time to time become a thin crust over a volcano of revolution.

- Ellis, Havelock

As long as our civilization is essentially one of property, of fences, of exclusiveness, it will be mocked by delusions. Our riches will leave us sick; there will be bitterness in our laughter; and our wine will burn our mouth. Only that good profits, which we can taste with all doors open, and which serves all men.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sunday is the core of our civilization, dedicated to thought and reverence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Civilization depends on morality.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Civilization is a process in the service of Eros, whose purpose is to combine single human individuals, and after that families, then races, peoples and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind. Why this has to happen, we do not know; the work of Eros is precisely this.

- Freud, Sigmund

Civilization...is a matter of imponderables, of delight in the things of the mind, of love of beauty, of honor, grace, courtesy, delicate feeling. Where imponderables, are things of first importance, there is the height of civilization, and, if at the same time, the power of art exists unimpaired, human life has reached a level seldom attained and very seldom surpassed.

- Hamilton, Edith

The ultimate tendency of civilization is towards barbarism.

- Hare, David

Civilization today reminds me of an ape with a blowtorch playing in a room full of dynamite. It looks like the monkeys are about to operate the zoo, and the inmates are

taking over the asylum.

- Havner, Vance

Without winners, there wouldn't even be any civilization.

- Hayes, Woody

The path of civilization is paved with tin cans.

- Hubbard, Elbert

One might enumerate the items of high civilization, as it exists in other countries, which are absent from the texture of American life, until it should become a wonder to know what was left.

- James, Henry

Every new stroke of civilization has cost the lives of countless brave men, who have fallen defeated by the dragon, in their efforts to win the apples of the Hesperides, or the fleece of gold. Fallen in their efforts to overcome the old, half sordid savagery of the lower stages of creation, and win the next stage.

- Lawrence, D. H.

Civilization is just a slow process of learning to be kind.

- Lucas, Charles L.

The word civilization to my mind is coupled with death. When I use the word, I see civilization as a crippling, thwarting thing, a stultifying thing. For me it was always so. I don't believe in the golden ages, you see... civilization is the arteriosclerosis of culture.

- Miller, Henry

Civilization is drugs, alcohol, engines of war, prostitution, machines and machine slaves, low wages, bad food, bad taste, prisons, reformatories, lunatic asylums, divorce, perversion, brutal sports, suicides, infanticide, cinema, quackery, demagoguery, strikes, lockouts, revolutions, putsches, colonization, electric chairs, guillotines, sabotage, floods, famine, disease, gangsters, money barons, horse racing, fashion shows, poodle dogs, chow dogs, Siamese cats, condoms, peccaries, syphilis, gonorrhoea, insanity, neuroses, etc., etc.

- Miller, Henry

Civilization -- a heap of rubble scavenged by scrawny English Lit. vultures.

- Muggeridge, Malcolm

To accept civilization as it is practically means accepting decay.

- Orwell, George

A civilized man is one who will give a serious answer to a serious question. Civilization itself is a certain sane balance of values.

- Pound, Ezra

Civilization is the making of civil persons.

- Ruskin, John

A civilization is built on what is required of men, not on that which is provided for them.

- Saint-Exupery, Antoine De

A civilization is a heritage of beliefs, customs, and knowledge slowly accumulated in the course of centuries, elements difficult at times to justify by logic, but justifying themselves as paths when they lead somewhere, since they open up for man his inner distance.

- Saint-Exupery, Antoine De

Civilization must be destroyed. The hairy saints of the North have earned this crumb by their complaints.

- Stevens, Wallace

The human race has improved everything, but the human race.

- Stevenson, Adlai E.

To be able to fill leisure intelligently is the last product of civilization.

- Toynbee, Arnold

Civilizations die from suicide, not by murder.

- Toynbee, Arnold

Civilization is a movement and not a condition, a voyage and not a harbor.

- Toynbee, Arnold

Civilization is a limitless multiplication of unnecessary necessities.

- Twain, Mark

The civilized savage is the worst of all savages.

- Weber, C. J.

If Germany, thanks to Hitler and his successors, were to enslave the European nations and destroy most of the treasures of their past, future historians would certainly pronounce that she had civilized Europe.

- Weil, Simone

Civilization is not by any means an easy thing to attain to. There are only two ways by which man can reach it. One is by being cultured, the other by being corrupt.

- Wilde, Oscar



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