

Great Quotations

"Fiction is written not so much to inform as to find out, and if you force yourself into a mode of informing when you haven't yet found out, you're likely to end up pontificating or lying some other way." -- Janet Burroway

"I considered making (the movie) Kill Bill like climbing Mount Everest...That was a big mountain that I created and I climbed it and I taught myself how to climb as I climbed it." -- Quentin Tarantino

"Seventy percent of a first draft is garbage and 30 percent is gold, but you have to write 100 percent to get that 30." -- Laurell K. Hamilton

"Books aren't written - they're rewritten. Including your own. It is one of the hardest things to accept, especially after the seventh rewrite hasn't quite done it." --- Michael Crichton

"If animals could speak, the dog would be a blundering outspoken fellow; but the cat would have the rare grace of never saying a word too much." -- Mark Twain

"I take rejection as someone blowing a bugle in my ear to wake me up and get going, rather than retreat." -- Sylvester Stallone

"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view - until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."
-- Atticus Finch to Scout in Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird

"We explain to the reader exactly how to read the story. In doing so we smother any subtlety in the piece and insult the reader. We're so afraid that he or she will miss the point or that the story isn't good enough to make the point on it's own that we throw in the "here's the moral" section toward the end."

-- Kimberly Culbertson, "Helicopter Authoring"

"It may be unfair to celebrate a writer for being so publicly rejected and railed against, but 40 years' perspective should allow us to credit Styron for taking the risk of writing "The Confessions" and to appreciate the courage of the 10 writers who dissected it in searing detail. Their confrontation helped shatter the idea that there can or should be one version of "how slavery was"; now we have a hundred different versions – some omnipresent, some long silenced, some real, some fictional – telling a messier, trickier, less comforting story. This may not be the "common history" James Baldwin spoke of, but at least it's a step in the right direction."

Jess Row, "Styron's Choice"

"The arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice."

-- Dr. Martin Luther King

"...there is not a liberal America and a conservative America -- there is the United States of America. There is not a Black America and a White America and Latino America and Asian America -- there's the United States of America.

The pundits, the pundits like to slice-and-dice our country into Red States and Blue States; Red States for Republicans, Blue States for Democrats. But I've got news for them, too. We worship an "awesome God" in the Blue States, and we don't like federal agents poking around in our libraries in the Red States. We coach Little League in the Blue States and yes, we've got some gay friends in the Red States. There are patriots who opposed the war in Iraq and there are patriots who supported the war in Iraq. We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes, all of us defending the United States of America."

-- Barack Obama, 2004 Democratic National Convention Keynote Address, "The Audacity of Hope"

“Above all, a query letter is a sales pitch and it is the single most important page an unpublished writer will ever write. It's the first impression and will either open the door or close it. It's that important, so don't mess it up. Mine took 17 drafts and two weeks to write.”

-- Nicholas Sparks

“Not bad, but PUFFY. You need to revise for length. Formula: 2nd Draft = 1st Draft - 10%. Good luck.”

Stephen King quoting an editor's comment on a rejected short story, *On Writing*