

Diversity Quotations

collected by Lee Mun Wah

It is my belief that when we value others for their uniqueness and differences, then we enhance the possibilities for our children and ourselves. To me, that is what community is truly all about—when it is practiced and realized in our daily lives with those we love and with those we have been taught to fear.

-Lee Mun Wah

Only curiosity about the fate of others, the ability to put ourselves in their shoes, and the will to enter their world through the magic of imagination, creates this shock of recognition. Without this empathy there can be no genuine dialogue, and we as individuals and nations will remain isolated and alien, segregated and fragmented.

-Azar Nafisi

Such is the irresistible nature of truth that all it asks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing.

-Thomas Paine

We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are.

-Anais Nin

It is the place of feeling that binds us or frees us.

-Jack Kornfield

Everything now, we must assume, is in our hands; we have no right to assume otherwise. If we do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world.

-James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (Vintage, 1963)

We hate each other because we fear each other. And we fear each other because we do not know each other. And we do not know each other because we are separated from each other.

-Martin Luther King

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Curiosity is the gateway to empathy.

-Buddhist saying

I am an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allen Poe; nor am I one of your Hollywood-movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids—and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me.

-Ralph Ellison, *The Invisible Man*, (1952, p3)

The American people have this to be learned. That where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, and ignorance prevails, where any class of people are made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to rob, oppress, and degrade them, neither persons or property will be safe. Hungry men will eat, desperate men will commit crimes, outraged men will seek revenge.

-Frederick Douglass

If you would stop being white I could afford to stop being black.

-James Baldwin

I too, sing America. I am the darker brother. They send me to eat in the kitchen when company comes, but I laugh, and eat well, and grow strong. Tomorrow, I'll be at the table when company comes. Nobody'll dare say to me, 'eat in the kitchen,' then. Besides, they'll see how beautiful I am and be ashamed—I, too, am America.

-Langston Hughes

Infinite diversity in infinite combinations...symbolizing the elements that create truth and beauty.

-Commander Spock, Star Trek

Ultimately, America's answer to the intolerant man is diversity, the very diversity which our heritage of religious freedom has inspired.

-Robert F. Kennedy

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America is not like a blanket- one piece of unbroken cloth. America is more like a quilt—many patches, many pieces, many colors, many sizes, all woven together by a common thread.

-Rev. Jesse Jackson

Real peace is not the absence of conflict. It has always been the presence of justice.

-Martin Luther King

*No single tradition monopolizes the truth.
We must glean the best values of all traditions
and work together to remove the tensions between traditions
in order to give peace a chance.*

-Thich Nhat Hanh

In order to have a conversation with someone you must reveal yourself.

-James Baldwin

Tolerance and understanding won't 'trickle down' in our society any more than wealth does.

-Muhammad Ali

What will be remembered is not the words of our enemies, but the silences of our friends.

-Martin Luther King

There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.

-Maya Angelou

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