

On Society and Solitude, Liberty and Civilization



The inventors of genius hasten the march of civilization. The fanatics and hallucinated create history.

—*Gustave Le Bon*, 1895

Indeed history is nothing more than a tableau of crimes and misfortunes.

—*Voltaire*, 1767

I know no study which is so unutterably saddening as that of the evolution of humanity, as it is set forth in the annals of history.

—*Thomas Henry Huxley*, 1889

Happy is the people whose annals in history books are blank.

—*Montesquieu*¹

History [...] is a struggle between ignorance and injustice.

—*Mikhail Zhvanetsky*, 2010

History teaches us that men and nations behave wisely once they have exhausted all other alternatives.

—*Abba Eban*, 1970

In the modern world the intelligence of public opinion is the one indispensable condition for social progress.

—*Charles William Eliot*, 1869

No one in this world, so far as I know [...] has ever lost money by underestimating the intelligence of the great masses of the plain people.

—*H. L. Mencken*, 1926

¹Apparently first quoted, without a date, by Thomas Carlyle in 1864.

Few people are capable of expressing with equanimity opinions which differ from the prejudices of their social environment. Most people are even incapable of forming such opinions.

—*Albert Einstein*, 1954

There is no nonsense so gross that society will not, at some time, make a doctrine of it and defend it with every weapon of communal stupidity.

—*Robertson Davies*, 1994

Wherever you come near the human race, there's layers and layers on nonsense.

—*Thornton Wilder*, 1938

The fact that an opinion has been widely held is no evidence whatever that it is not utterly absurd; indeed in view of the silliness of the majority of mankind, a widespread belief is more likely to be foolish than sensible.

—*Bertrand Russell*, 1929

The voice of majority is no proof of justice.

—*Friedrich von Schiller*, 1800

A foolish cry, though taken by thirty-six millions of voices, does not cease to be foolish.

—*Anatole France*, 1908²

Fallacies [...] do not cease to be fallacies because they become fashions.

—*G. K. Chesterton*, 1930

Public opinion, a vulgar, impertinent, anonymous tyrant who deliberately makes life unpleasant for anyone who is not content to be the average man.

—*Dean Inge*, 1919

Public opinion is a chaos of superstition, misinformation, and prejudice.

—*Gore Vidal*, 1965

The pretence of collective wisdom is the most palatable of all impostures.

—*William Godwin*, 1793

A collection of a hundred Great Brains makes one big fathead.

—*Carl Jung*, 1964

A committee can make a decision that is dumber than any of its members.

—*Anonymous*³

One man alone can be pretty dumb sometimes, but for real bona fide stupidity, there ain't nothing can beat teamwork.

—*Edward Abbey*, 1975

²A later paraphrase of this statement by W. Somerset Maugham (with the corresponding adjustment of the number :-)) is also frequently quoted.

³In several collections, this wisdom is attributed to some David B. Coblitz, but I could not find a reliable confirmation of this authorship.

Insanity in individuals is something rare - but in groups, parties, nations and epochs, it is the rule.

—*Friedrich Nietzsche*, 1888

Men [...] go mad in herds, while they only recover their senses slowly, and one by one.

—*Charles Mackay*, 1841

When one goose drinks, all drink.

—*German proverb*

When people are free to do as we please, they usually imitate each other.

—*Eric Hoffer*, 1955

Where all men think alike, no one thinks very much.

—*Walter Lippmann*, 1915

You cannot make a man by standing a sheep on its hind-legs. But by standing a flock of sheep in that position you can make a crowd of men.

—*Max Beerbohm*, 1911

He who has earned no name,
Nor strives for noble things,
Belongs just to the elements...

—*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*, 1831⁴

What men call social virtues, good fellowship, is commonly but the virtue of pigs in a litter, which lie close together to keep each other warm.

—*Henry David Thoreau*, 1854

In an absolutely corrupt age, such as the one we are living in, the safest course is to do as the others do.

—*Marquis de Sade*, 1795

Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.

—*Thomas Gray*, 1742

To respect a sick age is to be in contempt of eternity.

—*John Ciardi*, 1962

It is no measure of health to be well-adjusted to a profoundly sick society.

—*Jiddu Krishnamurti*, 1975

He who has an opinion of his own, but depends on the opinion and tastes of others is a slave.

—*Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock*, 1774

⁴From Part 2 of his *Faust*. (Translation by Walter Arndt).

Wherever there is authority, there is a natural inclination to disobedience.

—*Thomas Chandler Haliburton*, 1853

If they give you ruled paper, write the other way.⁵

—*Juan Ramón Jiménez*, 1953

A gentleman is always in the minority, it's his privilege.

—*Richard Aldington*, 1933

In a nation of sheep, one brave man forms a majority.

—*Edward Abbey*, 1990

Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted.

—*Martin Luther King Jr.*, 1963

Whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1841

In this age, the mere example of nonconformity, the mere refusal to bend the knee to custom, is itself a service.

—*John Stuart Mill*, 1859

There is a level of cowardice lower than that of the conformist. It is the fashionable non-conformist.

—*Ayn Rand*, 1971

To think is to differ.

—*Clarence Darrow*, 1925

When we lose the right to be different, we lose the privilege to be free.

—*Charles Evans Hughes*, 1925

A person does not have to be turned into a puppet jerked by social controls. The solution is to gradually become free of societal rewards and learn how to substitute for them rewards that are under one's own powers.

—*Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi*, 1990

We are more wicked together than separately. If you are forced to be in a crowd, then most of you should withdraw into your self.

—*Seneca*, ~65 AD

The best things and best people rise of their separateness.

—*Robert Frost*⁶

⁵Ray Bradbury used this line as the epigraph for his famous *Fahrenheit 451*.

⁶As quoted, without a date, in many collections, starting not later than 1980.

Content thyself to be obscurely good.
When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,
The post of honor is a private station.

—*Joseph Addison*, 1713

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1840

I never found companion that was so companionable as solitude.

—*Henry David Thoreau*, 1854

What is necessary, after all, is only this: solitude, vast inner solitude.

—*Rainer Maria Rilke*, 1929

The world is a prison in which solitary confinement is preferable.

—*Jiddu Krishnamurti*, 1971⁷

Do not rely completely on any other human being, however dear. We meet all life's greatest tests alone.

—*Agnes Macphail*, 1924

The strongest man in the world is the man who stands alone.

—*Henrik Ibsen*, 1882

The heroes, the saints and sages – they are those who face the world alone.

—*Norman Douglas*, 1917

To be alone is the fate of all great minds – a fate deplored at times, but still always chosen as the less grievous of two evils.

—*Arthur Schopenhauer*, 1851

To be alone is to be different, to be different is to be alone.

—*Suzanne Gordon*, 1976

To be an adult is to be alone.

—*Jean Rostand*, 1954

All our evils come from not being able to be on our own.

—*Jean de la Bruyère*, 1688

If you are afraid of being lonely, don't try to be right.

—*Jules Renard*⁸

⁷Sometimes misattributed to Karl Kraus, who arranged the 1971 publication of J. Krishnamurti's work, and sometimes quoted him.

⁸As quoted, without a date, in a few generally reliable collections, starting not later than 1977.

Every man is like the company he loves to keep.

—*Euripides*, ~410 BC

Every man is known by the company he avoids.

—*Anonymous*⁹

Love your neighbor as thyself, but choose your neighborhood.

—*Anonymous*¹⁰

Love your neighbor, yet pull not down your hedge.

—*George Herbert*, 1640

The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because they are generally the same people.

—*G. K. Chesterton*, 1910

People with courage and character always seem sinister to the rest.

—*Hermann Hesse*, 1919

Excellence makes people nervous.

—*Shana Alexander*, 1970

Every thinker puts some portion of an apparently stable world in peril.

—*John Dewey*, 1929

Ours is the age that is proud of machines that think and suspicious of men who try to.

—*Howard Mumford Jones*, 1951

When a true genius appears in this world you may know him from this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him.

—*Jonathan Swift*, 1706

Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.

—*Albert Einstein*, 1940

The artist and the multitude are natural enemies.

—*Robert Altman*, 1976

Great innovators and original thinkers and artists attract the wrath of mediocrities as lightning rods draw the flashes.

—*Theodor Reik*, 1963

⁹I have seen this twist of Euripides' aphorism in a book published as early as in 1915—without a reference.

¹⁰I have seen this extension of a Bible's commandment (*Leviticus* 19:18) attributed to some Louise Beal (could that be Louise Lester Beal, 1867-1952?), but could not find a reliable confirmation of this authorship.

In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.

—*Erasmus*, 1500¹¹

In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is stoned to death.

—*Joan D. Vinge*, 1998¹²

When an individual endeavors to lift himself above his fellows, he is dragged down by the mass, either by means of ridicule or of calamity.

—*Heinrich Heine*, 1830

The nail that sticks out gets hammered down.

—*Japanese proverb*

If you stand tall, you'll be shot at. If you stoop down, you'll be stepped on.

—*Jess Keating*, 2014¹³

When a man is down, everybody runs over him.

—*German proverb*

When people have no other tyrant, their own public opinion becomes one.

—*Edward Bulwer-Lytton*, 1872

You may talk about the tyranny of Nero and Tiberias, but the real tyranny is the tyranny of your next-door neighbor.

—*Walter Bagehot*, 1889

Tyranny and despotism can be exercised by many - more rigorously, and more severely, than by one.

—*Andrew Johnson*, 1866

Whatever crushes individuality is despotism, by whatever name it may be called.

—*John Stuart Mill*, 1859

The crowd plays the tyrant, when it is not in fear.

—*Baruch Spinoza*, 1677

Public is a ferocious beast: one must chain it up or flee from it.

—*Voltaire*, 1748

Public opinion, because of the tremendous urge to conformity in gregarious animals, is less tolerant than any system of laws.

—*George Orwell*, 1946

¹¹This is a shorter paraphrase of a maxim from *Genesis Rabbah*, circa the 4th or 5th century BC.

¹²This aphorism may serve as a summary of a (wonderful) much earlier story by H. G. Wells.

¹³I have seen a similar quote attributed to some Carlos A. Urbizo, without a date, but could not confirm his authorship or even identify this person.

When we lose our individual independence in the corporateness of a mass movement, we find a new freedom – freedom to hate, bully, lie, torture, murder, and betray without shame and remorse.

—Eric Hoffer, 1980

Every numerous assembly is *mob*, let the individuals who compose it be what they will.

—Lord Chesterfield, 1751

A mob is a society of bodies voluntarily bereaving themselves of reason.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1841

There's a whiff of the lynch mob or the lemming migration about any overlarge concentration of like-thinking individuals, no matter how virtuous their cause.

—P. J. O'Rourke, 1991

Much of America's intelligentsia has become a mob.

—George Will, 2020

I want men to be free as much from mobs as kings.

—Lord Byron, 1821

Evil draws men together.

—Aristotle¹⁴

I am a member of a party of one, and I live in an age of fear.

—E. B. White, 1947

Woods have ears and fields have eyes.

—European proverb

There is no defense against reproach but obscurity.

—Joseph Addison, 1711

In an expanding universe, time is on the side of an outcast.

—Quentin Crisp, 1968

An effective way to deal with predators is to taste terrible.

—Anonymous¹⁵

There is no safety in numbers, or in anything else.

—James Thurber, 1939¹⁶

¹⁴From his *Rhetoric* (written in 4th century BC).

¹⁵This maxim is frequently misattributed to A. Blanchard et al., who used it in the title of their 2016 paper, but I have seen it published earlier as an anonymous joke.

¹⁶The expression “safety in numbers” may be traced back at least to a Latin saying, “*Defendit Numerus*”.

Sometimes I get the feeling the whole world is against me, but deep down I know that's not true. Some smaller countries are neutral.

—*Robert Orben*, 2008

Men are not against you; they are merely for themselves.

—*Gene Fowler*, 1961

Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to my conscience, above all liberties.

—*John Milton*, 1644

Liberty [...] is the sovereignty of the individual.

—*Josiah Warren*, 1846

Individuality is the aim of political liberty.

—*James Fenimore Cooper*, 1848

The right to be left alone is indeed the beginning of all freedom.

—*William O. Douglas*, 1952¹⁷

A free society is a society where it is safe to be unpopular.

—*Adlai E. Stevenson*, 1952

[Freedom from fear] may be said to sum up the whole philosophy of human rights.

—*Dag Hammarskjöld*, 1956

If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.

—*George Orwell*, 1972

Liberty consists in the power to do anything that does not injure others.

—*French National Assembly*, 1789

Your right to swing your fist ends where my nose begins.

—*Anonymous*¹⁸

I detest what you write, but I would give my life to make it possible for you to continue to write.

—*Voltaire*, 1770¹⁹

¹⁷From his dissenting opinion in the US Supreme Court.

¹⁸This aphorism, based on a longer joke by John B. Finch (circa 1882) is sometimes misattributed to Abraham Lincoln, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., and John Stewart Mill.

¹⁹A more popular, later (circa 1906) paraphrase of this sentence, "I disapprove of what you say, but will defend to the death your right to say so", belongs to Evelyn Beatrice Hall (under the pen name Stephen G. Tallentyre).

Liberty, as well as honor, man ought to preserve at the hazard of his life, for without it, life is unsupportable.

—*Miguel de Cervantes*, 1615

Freedom cannot be bought for nothing. If you hold it precious, you must hold all else of little value.

—*Seneca*, ~65 AD

Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.

—*Benjamin Franklin*, 1755

If a nation values anything more than freedom, it will lose its freedom.

—*W. Somerset Maugham*, 1941

The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance.

—*John Philpot Curran*, 1790²⁰

He only earns his freedom and existence
Who daily conquers them anew.

—*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*, 1832²¹

God grants liberty only to those who love it and are always ready to guard and defend it.

—*Daniel Webster*, 1834

There is only one basic human right, the right to do as you damn well please. And with it comes the only basic human duty, the duty to take the consequences.

—*P. J. O'Rourke*, 1993

Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it.

—*George Bernard Shaw*, 1903

A hero as someone who understands the degree of responsibility that comes with his freedom.

—*Bob Dylan*, 1985

Man is tormented by no greater anxiety than to find someone quickly to whom he can hand over that great gift of freedom with which the ill-fated creature is born.

—*Fyodor Dostoevsky*, 1880

²⁰A shorter paraphrase of this statement, "The price for freedom is eternal vigilance," is frequently attributed to Thomas Jefferson (starting from 1834), but I am not aware of any reliable confirmation of his authorship.

²¹From Part 2 of his *Faust*. (Translation by Walter Arndt.)

The average man's love of liberty is nine-tenth imaginary, exactly like his love of sense, justice, and truth.

—*H. L. Mencken*, 1923

In our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them.

—*Mark Twain*, 1897

He was jeopardizing his traditional rights of freedom and independence by daring to exercise them.

—*Joseph Heller*, 1961

Since people will never cease trying to interfere with the liberties of others in pursuing their own, the State can never wither away.

—*W. H. Auden*, 1946

Society is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness.

—*Thomas Paine*, 1776

If men were angels, no government would be necessary.

—*James Madison*, 1788

Why has government been instituted at all? Because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice, without constraint.

—*Alexander Hamilton*, 1788

The only use of government is to repress the vices of man.²²

—*Percy Bysshe Shelley*, 1812

It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me, but it can stop him from lynching me, and I think that's pretty important.

—*Martin Luther King Jr.*, 1964

Those who fear men like laws.

—*Luc de Clapiers*, 1746

The most desirable state of mankind, is that which maintains general security, with the smallest encroachment upon individual independence.

—*William Godwin*, 1793

The most powerful factors in the world are clear ideas in the minds of energetic men of good will.

—*Arthur Thomson*, 1922

²²For more on government, see the next section.

Sentiment without action is the ruin of the soul.

—*Edward Abbey*, 1990

Action is but coarsened thought.

—*Henri-Frédéric Amiel*, 1850

Action is [...] the enemy of thought and the friend of flattering illusions.

—*Joseph Conrad*, 1904

The people I distrust most are those who want to improve our lives but have only one course of action in mind.

—*Frank Herbert*, 1981

God save me from the man of one book.

—*Italian proverb*

The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

—*European proverb*²³

Human beings are perhaps never more frightening than when they are convinced beyond doubt that they are right.

—*Laurens van der Post*, 1958

The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well meaning but without understanding.

—*Louis D. Brandeis*, 1928

Convictions are more dangerous enemies of truth than lies.

—*Friedrich Nietzsche*, 1878

Nearly all our disasters come of a few fools having the ‘courage of their convictions’.

—*Coventry Patmore*, 1895

One person with a belief is a social power equal to ninety-nine who have only interests.

—*John Stuart Mill*, 1861

A blind man leads a crowd.

—*Japanese proverb*

An invasion of armies can be resisted; an invasion of ideas cannot be resisted.

—*Victor Hugo*, 1852²⁴

Man is ready to die for an idea, provided that this idea is not very clear for him.

—*Paul Eldridge*, 1963

²³This proverb, frequently misattributed to Samuel Johnson, is apparently based on the 1605 maxim “Hell is full of good intentions or desires” by Francis de Sales.

²⁴Numerous later paraphrases of this line frequently included the qualifier “the ideas whose time has come”.

To be willing to die for an idea is to set a rather high price upon a conjecture.

—*Anatole France*, 1914

I would never die for my beliefs because I might be wrong.

—*Bertrand Russell*, 1961

The main dangers in this life are the people who want to change everything - or nothing.

—*Nancy Astor*²⁵

To go beyond is as wrong as to fall short.

—*Confucius*, fifth century BC

All movements go too far.

—*Bertrand Russell*, 1950

I feel uneasy at the very idea of a Movement. I see every insight degenerating into a dogma, and fresh thoughts freezing into lifeless party line.

—*I. F. Stone*, 1969

There is no belief, however foolish, that will not gather its faithful adherents who will defend it to the death.

—*Isaac Asimov*, 1974

The more fantastic an ideology or theology, the more fanatic its adherents.

—*Edward Abbey*, 1990

Fanaticism consists in redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim.

—*George Santayana*, 1905

Usually, terrible things that are done under the excuse that progress requires them are not really the progress at all, but just terrible things.

—*Russell Baker*, 1970

What we call 'Progress' is the exchange of one Nuisance for another Nuisance.²⁶

—*Havelock Ellis*, 1914

What the world turns to, when it has been cured of one error, is usually simply another error, and maybe one worse than the first one.

—*H. L. Mencken*, 1922

²⁵As quoted, without a date, by many, including several reliable sources, starting not later than 1992.

²⁶This aphorism (just as the next three quotes) is essentially a twist of the famous Goethe's characterization (in Part 2 of his *Faust*) of the perennial "struggles for liberation" as the replacements of one enslavement with another enslavement. (Sorry, I could not find a fair poetic English translation of that verse).

Revolution, *n.* In politics, an abrupt change in the form of misgovernment.

—*Ambrose Bierce*, 1911

Revolutions have never lightened the burden of tyranny: they only shifted it to another shoulder.

—*George Bernard Shaw*, 1903

Revolution is a trivial shift in the emphasis of suffering: the capacity for self-indulgence changes hands.

—*Tom Stoppard*, 1966

Revolution evaporates, and leaves behind only the slime of a new bureaucracy.

—*Franz Kafka*, 1920

It is doubtful if the oppressed ever fight for freedom. They fight for pride and power – power to oppress others.

—*Eric Hoffer*, 1951

The urge to save humanity is almost always only a false-face for the urge to rule it. Power is what all messiahs really seek: not the chance to serve.

—*H. L. Mencken*, 1949

Constant experience shows us that every man invested with power is apt to abuse it.

—*Montesquieu*, 1748

Watch out for the fellow who talks about putting things in order! Putting things in order always means getting other people under your control.

—*Denis Diderot*, 1796

The psychopaths are always around. In calm times we study them, but in times of upheaval, they rule over us.

—*Ernst Kretschner*, 1963

He who fights with monsters should be careful to not become one.

—*Friedrich Nietzsche*, 1886

Every revolutionary ends up as an oppressor or a heretic.

—*Albert Camus*, 1951

The revolution, like Saturn, will successively devour its children, and finally produce despotism.

—*Pierre Vergniaud*, 1793²⁷

Whether a revolution succeeds or miscarries, men of great hearts will always be the victims.

—*Heinrich Heine*, 1834

The unselfish and the intelligent may begin a movement – but it passes away from them. They are not the leaders of the revolution. They are its victims.

—*Joseph Conrad*, 1911

²⁷This prediction was confirmed, in just a few months, by author's own fate.

Saints are usually killed by their own people.

—*Eric Sevareid*, 1968

The most radical revolutionary will become a conservative the day after the revolution.

—*Hannah Arendt*, 1970

Not to be a republican at twenty is proof of want of heart; to be one at thirty is proof of want of head.

—*François Guizot*, mid-1800 s²⁸

I never dared to be radical when young
For fear it would make me conservative when old.

—*Robert Frost*, 1936

Most of the change we think we see in life
Is due to truths being in and out of favor.

—*Robert Frost*, 1914

If it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change.

—*Lucius Cary, 2nd Viscount Falkland*, 1641

All human situations have their inconveniences. We feel those of the present but neither see nor feel those of the future, and hence we often make troublesome changes without amendment, and frequently for the worse.

—*Benjamin Franklin*, 1780

The art of progress is to preserve order amid change, and to preserve change amid order.

—*Alfred North Whitehead*, 1929

From barbarism to civilization requires a century; from civilization to barbarism just a day.

—*Will Durant*, 1957

A society can be progressive only if it conserves its traditions.

—*Walter Lippmann*, 1955

Everyone thinks of changing humanity, but nobody thinks of changing himself.

—*Leo Tolstoy*, 1900

I never expect to see a perfect work from imperfect man.

—*Alexander Hamilton*, 1788

²⁸Later this statement was rephrased, among others, by George Bernard Shaw, Benjamin Disraeli, and Otto von Bismarck. Perhaps the most popular of its forms is “If you are not a revolutionary at twenty, you are a rascal; if you are not a conservative at thirty, you are a fool”.

The belief, not only of Socialists but also of those so-called Liberals who are diligently preparing the way for them, is that by due skill an ill-working humanity may be framed in well-working institutions. It is a delusion.

—*Herbert Spencer*, 1884

You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals.

—*Marie Curie*, 1923

The important work of moving the world forward does not wait to be done by perfect men.

—*George Eliot*, 1858

The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.²⁹

—*George Bernard Shaw*, 1903

Adapt or perish, now as ever, is Nature's inexorable imperative.

—*H. G. Wells*, 1945

Natural selection determined the evolution of cultures in the same manner as it did that of species.

—*Konrad Lorenz*, 1966

The history of man is a graveyard of great cultures that came to catastrophic ends because of their incapacity for planned, rational, voluntary reaction to challenge.

—*Erich Fromm*, 1962

We civilizations now know ourselves mortal.

—*Paul Valéry*, 1919

The end of the human race will be that it will eventually die of civilization.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1870

The chief obstacle to the progress of the human race is the human race.

—*Don Marquis*, 1927

The people that once bestowed commands, consulships, legions, and all else, now meddles no more, and longs eagerly for just two things - bread and circuses!

—*Juvenal*, 2nd century AD

We used to build civilizations. Now we build shopping malls.

—*Bill Bryson*, 1991³⁰

Civilizations die by suicide, not by murder.

—*Arnold J. Toynbee*, 1947

²⁹A popular (anonymous?) extension of this quote is: "...this becomes evident if you watch that 'progress' for a while".

³⁰Note the date; by now we have stopped doing even that – besides those in computer games.

Civilization begins with order, grows with liberty, and dies with chaos.

—*Will Durant*, 1926

Expansion means complexity, and complexity decay.

—*C. Northcote Parkinson*, 1962

To accept civilization as it is practically means accepting decay.

—*George Orwell*, 1968

Civilization, like an airplane in flight, survives only if it keeps going forward.

—*Edward Abbey*, 1990

We need to be bold and adventurous in our thinking to survive.

—*William O. Douglas*, 1952