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Quotes by Jong, Erica

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Advice is what we ask for when we already know the answer but wish we didn't.

- Jong, Erica

Every country gets the circus it deserves. Spain gets bullfights. Italy gets the Catholic Church. America gets Hollywood.

- Jong, Erica

In a bad marriage, friends are the invisible glue. If we have enough friends, we may go on for years, intending to leave, talking about leaving --instead of actually getting up and leaving.

- Jong, Erica

Men have always detested women's gossip because they suspect the truth: their measurements are being taken and compared.

- Jong, Erica

Gossip is the opiate of the oppressed.

- Jong, Erica

Where is Hollywood located? Chiefly between the ears. In that part of the American brain lately vacated by God.

- Jong, Erica

Perhaps all artists were, in a sense, housewives: tenders of the earth household.

- Jong, Erica

Jealousy is all the fun you think they had...

- Jong, Erica

Do you want me to tell you something really subversive? Love is everything it's cracked up to be. That's why people are so cynical about it. It really is worth fighting for, being brave for, risking everything for. And the trouble is, if you don't risk anything, you risk even more.

- Jong, Erica

Bigamy is having one husband too many. Monogamy is the same.

- Jong, Erica

There is a rhythm to the ending of a marriage just like the rhythm of a courtship --only backward. You try to start again but get into blaming over and over. Finally you are both worn out, exhausted, hopeless. Then lawyers are called in to pick clean the corpses. The

death has occurred much earlier.

- Jong, Erica

Men and women, women and men; it will never work.

- Jong, Erica

Friends love misery, in fact. Sometimes, especially if we are too lucky or too successful or too pretty, our misery is the only thing that endears us to our friends.

- Jong, Erica

To name oneself is the first act of both the poet and the revolutionary. When we take away the right to an individual name, we symbolically take away the right to be an individual. Immigration officials did this to refugees; husbands routinely do it to wives.

- Jong, Erica

Oh Doris Lessing, my dear -- your Anna is wrong about orgasms. They are no proof of love -- any more than that other Anna's fall under the wheels of that Russian train was a proof of love. It's all female shenanigans, cultural mishegoss, conditioning, brainwashing, male mythologizing. What does a woman want? She wants what she has been told she ought to want. Anna Wulf wants orgasm, Anna Karenina, death. Orgasm is no proof of anything. Orgasm is proof of orgasm. Someday every woman will have orgasms -- like every family has color TV -- and we can all get on with the real business of life.

- Jong, Erica

If sex and creativity are often seen by dictators as subversive activities, it's because they lead to the knowledge that you own your own body (and with it your own voice), and that's the most revolutionary insight of all.

- Jong, Erica

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- Jong, Erica

I can live without it all -- love with its blood pump, sex with its messy hungers, men with their peacock strutting, their silly sexual baggage, their wet tongues in my ear.

- Jong, Erica

Back in the days when men were hunters and chest beaters and women spent their whole lives worrying about pregnancy or dying in childbirth, they often had to be taken against their will. Men complained that women were cold, unresponsive, frigid. They wanted their women wanton. They wanted their women wild. Now women were finally learning to be wanton and wild -- and what happened? The men wilted.

- Jong, Erica

Solitude is un-American.

- Jong, Erica

No one to blame! That was why most people led lives they hated, with people they hated. How wonderful to have someone to blame! How wonderful to live with one's nemesis! You may be miserable, but you feel forever in the right. You may be fragmented, but you feel absolved of all the blame for it. Take your life in your own hands, and what happens? A terrible thing: no one to blame.

- Jong, Erica

Take your life in your own hands and what happens? A terrible thing: no one is to blame.

- Jong, Erica

Everyone has talent. What is rare is the courage to follow the talent to the dark place where it leads.

- Jong, Erica

There is simply no dignified way for a woman to live alone. Oh, she can get along financially perhaps (though not nearly as well as a man), but emotionally she is never left in peace. Her friends, her family, her fellow workers never let her forget that her husbandlessness, her childlessness -- her selfishness, in short -- is a reproach to the American way of life.

- Jong, Erica

Growing up female in America. What a liability! You grew up with your ears full of cosmetic ads, love songs, advice columns, whoreoscopes, Hollywood gossip, and moral

dilemmas on the level of TV soap operas. What litanies the advertisers of the good life chanted at you! What curious catechisms!

- Jong, Erica

Isn't that the problem? That women have been swindled for centuries into substituting adornment for love, fashion (as it were) for passion? All the cosmetics names seemed obscenely obvious to me in their promises of sexual bliss. They were all firming or uplifting or invigorating. They made you tingle. Or glow. Or feel young. They were prepared with hormones or placentas or royal jelly. All the juice and joy missing in the lives of these women were to be supplied by the contents of jars and bottles. No wonder they would spend twenty dollars for an ounce of face makeup or thirty for a half-ounce of hormone cream. What price bliss? What price sexual ecstasy?

- Jong, Erica

A book burrows into your life in a very profound way because the experience of reading is not passive.

- Jong, Erica



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