

Say Hello to
your very own book of
Quotes



QuotationsBook

Quotes by Ballard, J. G.

from QuotationsBook.com

James Graham Ballard (born November 15, 1930 in Shanghai) is a British writer. He was a prominent member of the New Wave in science fiction. His best known books are the controversial *Crash*, and the autobiographical novel *Empire of the Sun*, both of which have been adapted to film.

The adjective "Ballardian", defined as "resembling or suggestive of the conditions described in JG Ballard's novels and stories, especially dystopian modernity, bleak man-made landscapes and the psychological effects of technological, social or environmental developments", has been included in the Collins English Dictionary.

We live in a world ruled by fictions of every kind -- mass merchandising, advertising, politics conducted as a branch of advertising, the instant translation of science and technology into popular imagery, the increasing blurring and intermingling of identities within the realm of consumer goods, the preempting of any free or original imaginative response to experience by the television screen. We live inside an enormous novel. For the writer in particular it is less and less necessary for him to invent the fictional content of his novel. The fiction is already there. The writer's task is to invent the reality.

- Ballard, J. G.

I would sum up my fear about the future in one word: boring. And that's my one fear: that everything has happened; nothing exciting or new or interesting is ever going to happen

again... the future is just going to be a vast, conforming suburb of the soul.

- Ballard, J. G.

A car crash harnesses elements of eroticism, aggression, desire, speed, drama, kinesthetic factors, the stylizing of motion, consumer goods, status -- all these in one event. I myself see the car crash as a tremendous sexual event really: a liberation of human and machine libido (if there is such a thing).

- Ballard, J. G.

The American Dream has run out of gas. The car has stopped. It no longer supplies the world with its images, its dreams, its fantasies. No more. It's over. It supplies the world with its nightmares now: the Kennedy assassination, Watergate, Vietnam...

- Ballard, J. G.

Hell is out of fashion -- institutional hells at any rate. The populated infernos of the 20th century are more private affairs, the gaps between the bars are the sutures of one's own skull. A valid hell is one from which there is a possibility of redemption, even if this is never achieved, the dungeons of an architecture of grace whose spires point to some kind of heaven. The institutional hells of the present century are reached with one-way tickets, marked Nagasaki and Buchenwald, worlds of terminal horror even more final than the grave.

- Ballard, J. G.

Pop artists deal with the lowly trivia of possessions and equipment that the present

generation is lugging along with it on its safari into the future.

- Ballard, J. G.

In a completely sane world, madness is the only freedom!

- Ballard, J. G.

I thought it was a wonderfully conceptual act actually, to fire a replica pistol at a figurehead -- the guy could have been working for Andy Warhol!

- Ballard, J. G.

The car as we know it is on the way out. To a large extent, I deplore its passing, for as a basically old-fashioned machine, it enshrines a basically old-fashioned idea: freedom. In terms of pollution, noise and human life, the price of that freedom may be high, but perhaps the car, by the very muddle and confusion it causes, may be holding back the remorseless spread of the regimented, electronic society.

- Ballard, J. G.

What our children have to fear is not the cars on the highways of tomorrow but our own pleasure in calculating the most elegant parameters of their deaths.

- Ballard, J. G.

A widespread taste for pornography means that nature is alerting us to some threat of extinction.

- Ballard, J. G.

Given that external reality is a fiction, the writer's role is almost superfluous. He does not need to invent the fiction because it is already there.

- Ballard, J. G.

Everything is becoming science fiction. From the margins of an almost invisible literature has sprung the intact reality of the 20th century.

- Ballard, J. G.

I believe that organic sex, body against body, skin area against skin area, is becoming no longer possible, simply because if anything is to have any meaning for us it must take place in terms of the values and experiences of the media landscape. What we're getting is a whole new order of sexual fantasies, involving a different order of experiences, like car crashes, like travelling in jet aircraft, the whole overlay of new technologies, architecture, interior design, communications, transport, merchandising. These things are beginning to reach into our lives and change the interior design of our sexual fantasies. We've got to recognize that what one sees through the window of the TV screen is as important as what one sees through a window on the street.

- Ballard, J. G.

People nowadays like to be together not in the old-fashioned way of, say, mingling on the piazza of an Italian Renaissance city, but, instead, huddled together in traffic jams, bus queues, on escalators and so on. It's a new kind of togetherness which may seem totally alien, but it's the togetherness of modern technology.

- Ballard, J. G.

Science and technology multiply around us. To an increasing extent they dictate the languages in which we speak and think. Either we use those languages, or we remain mute.

- Ballard, J. G.

The geometry of landscape and situation seems to create its own systems of time, the sense of a dynamic element which is cinematizing the events of the canvas, translating a posture or ceremony into dynamic terms. The greatest movie of the 20th century is the Mona Lisa, just as the greatest novel is Gray's Anatomy.

- Ballard, J. G.

The marriage of reason and nightmare which has dominated the 20th century has given birth to an ever more ambiguous world. Across the communications landscape move the specters of sinister technologies and the dreams that money can buy. Thermonuclear weapons systems and soft drink commercials coexist in an overlit realm ruled by advertising and pseudo-events, science and pornography. Over our lives preside the great twin leitmotifs of the 20th century -- sex and paranoia.

- Ballard, J. G.

Perhaps violence, like pornography, is some kind of an evolutionary standby system, a last-resort device for throwing a wild joker into the game?

- Ballard, J. G.

Electronic aids, particularly domestic computers, will help the inner migration, the opting out of reality. Reality is no longer going to be the stuff out there, but the stuff inside your head. It's going to be commercial and nasty at the same time.

- Ballard, J. G.



QuotationsBook