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Quotes by Thomas, Lewis

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Lewis Thomas (November 25, 1913 - December 3, 1993) was a physician, poet, etymologist, essayist, administrator, educator, policy advisor, and researcher.

It hurts the spirit, somehow, to read the word environments, when the plural means that there are so many alternatives there to be sorted through, as in a market, and voted on.

- Thomas, Lewis

Sometimes you get a glimpse of a semicolon coming, a few lines farther on, and it is like climbing a steep path through woods and seeing a wooden bench just at a bend in the road ahead, a place where you can expect to sit for a moment, catching your breath.

- Thomas, Lewis

The act of smelling something, anything, is remarkably like the act of thinking.

Immediately at the moment of perception, you can feel the mind going to work, sending the odor around from place to place, setting off complex repertoires through the brain, polling one center after another for signs of re recognition, for old memories and old connection.

- Thomas, Lewis

We are built to make mistakes, coded for error.

- Thomas, Lewis

Music is the effort we make to explain to ourselves how our brains work. We listen to Bach transfixed because this is listening to a human mind.

- Thomas, Lewis

Statistically, the probability of any of us being here is so small that you'd think the mere fact of existing would keep us all in contented dazzlement of surprise.

- Thomas, Lewis

The cloning of humans is on most of the lists of things to worry about from science, along with behavior control, genetic engineering, transplanted heads, computer poetry and the unrestrained growth of plastic flowers.

- Thomas, Lewis

When committees gather, each member is necessarily an actor, uncontrollably acting out the part of himself, reading the lines that identify him, asserting his identity. We are designed, coded, it seems, to place the highest priority on being individuals, and we must do this first, at whatever cost, even if it means disability for the group.

- Thomas, Lewis



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