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Quotes about Names

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Proper names are poetry in the raw. Like all poetry they are untranslatable.

- Auden, W. H.

Miss: A title with which we brand unmarried women to indicate that they are in the market. Miss, Misses (Mrs.) and Mister (Mr.) are the three most distinctly disagreeable words in the language, in sound and sense. Two are corruptions of Mistress, the other of Master. If we must have them, let us be consistent and give one to the unmarried man. I venture to suggest Mush, abbreviated to MH.

- Bierce, Ambrose

You should never name an animal which is not yours to keep, or which you intend to eat.

- Boehm, Deborah Boliver

In England, I'm a horror movie director. In Germany, I'm a filmmaker. In the US, I'm a bum.

- Carpenter, John

I know there's a Derby out there with my name on it.

- Day, Pat

Don't call me an icon. I'm just a mother trying to help.

- Diana, Princess of Wales

Any child can tell you that the sole purpose of a middle name is so he can tell when he's really in trouble.

- Frakes, Dennis

Nicknames stick to people, and the most ridiculous are the most adhesive.

- Haliburton, Thomas C.

The invisible thing called a Good Name is made up of the breath of numbers that speak well of you.

- Halifax, Edward F.

In real life, unlike in Shakespeare, the sweetness of the rose depends upon the name it bears. Things are not only what they are. They are, in very important respects, what they seem to be.

- Humphrey, Hubert H.

These names: gay, queer, homosexual are limiting. I would love to finish with them. We're going to have to decide which terms to use and where we use them. For me to use the word queer is a liberation; it was a word that frightened me, but no longer.

- Jarman, Derek

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

I think a child should be allowed to take his father's or mother's name at will on coming of age. Paternity is a legal fiction.

- Joyce, James

I shall write a book some day about the appropriateness of names. Geoffrey Chaucer has a ribald ring, as is proper and correct, and Alexander Pope was inevitably Alexander Pope. Colley Cibber was a silly little man without much elegance and Shelley was very Percy and very Bysshe.

- Joyce, James

Once you label me you negate me.

- Kierkegaard, Soren

In its purest sense, nicknaming is an elitist ritual practiced by those who cherish hierarchy. For preppies it's a smoke signal that allows Bunny to tell Pooky that they belong to the same tribe, while among the good old boys it serves the cause of masculine dominance by identifying Bear and Wrecker as Alpha males.

- King, Florence

We don't know when our name came into being or how some distant ancestor acquired it. We don't understand our name at all, we don't know its history and yet we bear it with exalted fidelity, we merge with it, we like it, we are ridiculously proud of it as if we had thought it up ourselves in a moment of brilliant inspiration.

- Kundera, Milan

I don't like your miserable lonely single front name. It is so limited, so meager; it has no versatility; it is weighted down with the sense of responsibility; it is worn threadbare with much use; it is as bad as having only one jacket and one hat; it is like having only one relation, one blood relation, in the world. Never set a child afloat on the flat sea of life with only one sail to catch the wind.

- Lawrence, D. H.

To live in mankind is far more than to live in a name.

- Lindsay, Vachel

I sometimes think I was born to live up to my name. How could I be anything else but what I am having been named Madonna? I would either have ended up a nun or this.

- Madonna

How could I have been anything else but what I am, having been named Madonna. I would either have ended up a nun or this.

- Madonna

The name of a man is a numbing blow from which he never recovers.

- McLuhan, Marshall

I came to live in a country I love; some people label me a defector. I have loved men and women in my life; I've been labeled the bisexual defector in print. Want to know another secret? I'm even ambidextrous. I don't like labels. Just call me Martina.

- Navratilova, Martina

The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right names.

- Proverb, Chinese

Sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me.

- Proverb, English

Names, once they are in common use, quickly become mere sounds, their etymology being buried, like so many of the earth's marvels, beneath the dust of habit.

- Rushdie, Salman

What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

- Shakespeare, William

If the fairest features of the landscape are to be named after men, let them be the noblest

and worthiest men alone.

- Thoreau, Henry David

A name pronounced is the recognition of the individual to whom it belongs. He who can pronounce my name aright, he can call me, and is entitled to my love and service.

- Thoreau, Henry David

Better to see the face than to hear the name.

- Unknown, Source

It is a sad truth, but we have lost the faculty of giving lovely names to things. Names are everything. I never quarrel with actions. My one quarrel is with words. The man who could call a spade a spade should be compelled to use one. It is the only thing he is fit for.

- Wilde, Oscar

I don't like giving names to generations. It's like trying to read the song title on a record that's spinning.

- Williams, Ian

Labels are for filing. Labels are for clothing. Labels are not for people.

- Navratilova, Martina



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