

November 2019

Along with gossip and wine, humor can sustain social relationships. Amidst worrying about, and studying society's problems, let alone facing the challenges of daily personal and professional life, humor, like art, offers a diverting respite and (if subtle enough) can be a safe means of expressing anger, jealousy and criticism, not to mention just having fun.

All of the above were on my plate in 1987-88 during a fellowship year in California. Consistent with Emile Durkheim's ideas about the role of rituals in creating social solidarity, I suggested that the research center create a T-shirt with social science quips and also give out end-of-the-year awards. My suggestions were not followed, but the efforts were a pleasant diversion from doing real work.

G.T. Marx, Oct. 1987

Social Science Quotes for a T-Shirt Near You + Request for Nominations for Awards

Suggestions for the T-Shirt

I would suggest a small logo in the center of the shirt (the image of the Thinker or a drawing of the Center's entrance or a redwood) with some of the following (or other quotes) printed at various angles on the front and back. I would also appreciate receiving other favorite social science/life quotes and will be glad to share the larger collection from which these were taken.

Quotes

I would like at least that my own intellectual activity should not make things worse or more dangerous...and, preferably, that it would make things by a tiny margin a little bit better, a little bit clearer, a little bit more rational, even a little bit more compassionate.

– **C. C. O'Brien**

“For instance” is not proof.

– **Yiddish expression**

When you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind.

– **Lord Devlin quote adorning Social Science Building, University of Chicago**

There is a danger in clarity, the danger of overlooking the subtleties of truth.

– **A.N. Whitehead**

The mark of the educated person is to be moved by statistics.

– **G.B. Shaw**

What is past is prologue.

– **William Shakespeare**

In the end the counters don't think and it is the thinkers who really count.

– **T.R. Powers**

The blunt fact is [social scientists] know very little. That is no sin. But the pretension to omniscience in the clear awareness of ignorance is very much a sin!

– **R. Nisbet**

What this country needs is more presidents like Ronald Regan with undergraduate degrees in sociology.

– **American Soc. Assoc.**

As long as I'm paying the bills
I'm footin the cost to be the boss.

– **BB King on sex role differentiation**

Politics is more difficult than physics.

– **Einstein**

God is dead. Marx is dead, and I am not feeling too well myself.

– **M. le Bris**

Pointing at his sleeve Franklin D. Roosevelt said to Louis Howe, his chief economics adviser, "I just want you to know where you stand. You see these coatbuttons? They're no damn good, but everybody says I've got to have them, and so I do. It's the same with you."

– **FDR on fashion**

Archaeologists probe deeper.

– **Bumper sticker**

I hate to see all this study, study, study. Let's get moving.

– **Frank Rizzo**

The temptation to form premature theories upon insufficient data is the bane of our profession.

– **Sherlock Holmes on empiricism**

You can observe a lot by watching.

– **Yogi Berra on data collection**

Truth against the world.

– **Family motto of Frank Lloyd Wright**

All the monkeys don't reside in the zoo, every day you know you see quite a few.

– **Primate specialist on field research in advanced industrial societies**

No matter how thin you slice it, it's still baloney.

– **Al Smith on deconstructionism, or... [fill in your favorite misguided academic approach]**

Only connect! That was the whole of her sermon. Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer. Only connect...

– **E. M. Forster**

I cannot bring the world quite round, although I patch it as I can.

– **Wallace Stevens**

Avoid the ecological fallacy!

– **Environmental statistician**

You can tell where a person stands by knowing where s/he sits.

– **Furniture builder on the sociology of knowledge**

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

– **Ibsen**

A man alone ain't got no bloody fuckin chance.

– **Hemingway**

I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.

– **Gandhi**

Don't talk to me of reform. Things are bad enough already.

– **T. McCaully**

Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will.

– **Gramsci**

Those that have the gold make the rules.

– **The Golden Rule**

Had I been present at the Creation, I would have given some useful hints for a better ordering of the universe.

– **King Alfonso the Learned on program design**

Go not to the elves [or social scientists] for counsel, for they will say both yes and no.

– **J.R.R. Tolkien on expert testimony**

There are three kinds of lies; lies, damned lies, and statistics.

– **Disraeli**

I came to find a community of scholars. What I found was a collection of businessmen.

– **European scholar on his year at an Ivy League school**

One thing about intellectuals, they prove you can be absolutely brilliant and have no idea of what's going on.

– **Woody Allen**

...it seems to me a great deal more useful to describe something I have myself experienced than to simulate knowledge independent of the knowing mind, some observation from which the human observer has been banished.

– **P. Valery**

Talk shit, take none.

– **T. Morrison on adaptive mechanisms**

Fight Ignorance! Fill out a questionnaire.

– **American Sociological Association (formerly known as American Sociological Society)**

You can get all As and flunk life.

– **Walker Percy**

Nothing new is ever said, but since no one ever listens, it is always necessary to say it again.

– **A. Gide on scholarly journals**

Those that know don't say. Those that say don't know.

– **Malcolm X on methodology**

This is a good and original paper. Unfortunately the parts that are good aren't original, and the parts that are original aren't good.

– **B. Frieden**

The best way to learn anything is to teach it.

– **F. Demara, the great imposter, on teaching**

He believed most of the [courses in the psychology department were] ...composed in equal parts of common sense and nonsense -- that is of the already obvious and the probably false.

Sociology consists of explanations of the obvious by the devious.

– **A. Luria**

Specialization is for insects.

– **R. Heinlein**

...we trusted intellectuals to tell us what was what, we put up with the invented mental language of their 'authoritative explanations.' But in the end [persons] must master [their] own experience. [We] desperately look for help in books, but it's no good, as Kafka observed, to try to imprison life in a book 'like a songbird in a cage.'

– **Saul Bellow**

I HATE QUOTATIONS. TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW.

– **Emerson on T-shirts**

California and the Quest for the Ideal

Or on a more upbeat note a California logo with the two quotes which follow:

“The cold winter is coming now,” said the Swallow. "I must fly away to warmer lands. Will you come with me? You can sit on my back, and we will fly far away from the ugly mole and his dark house, over the mountains to the warm countries. There the sun shines more brightly than here. There it is always summer and beautiful flowers always bloom."

– **Hans Christian Andersen**

Of journeying, the benefits are many; the freshness it brings to the heart, the seeing and hearing of marvelous things, the delight of beholding cities, the meeting of unknown friends...

– **Sadi**

...or to deepen it a bit include the following:

In pleasant ease and security, how soon the soul of man begins to die.

– **Robinson Jeffers**

I feel an immediate closeness to anyone who loves New York or hates Los Angeles. Either condition is sufficient, but I've found that satisfaction of the one usually entails satisfaction of the other.

– **R. Goldstein**

The intellect of man is forced to choose
Perfection of the life, or of the work.

– **Yeats**

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CENTER FOR THE ADVANCED STUDY OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR
1987-1988

CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
202 Junipero Serra Blvd. • Stanford, California 94305 Telephone (415) 321-2052

May 15, 1988

TO: All Fellows
FROM: Off-Center Staff
RE: Center Awards for 1987-88 Fellowship Year

As a group you have garnered a disproportionate share of the known awards and honors given to social scientists, bringing honor to yourselves, the Center and the nation. In one of those wonderful social processes wherein the privileged become more privileged, we need your help in further bestowing recognition on our colleagues. Please submit nominations to The Director by 5/20/88. Multiple submissions are permitted, as is self-nomination.

CENTER AWARDS

The Rip Van Winkle award to the fellow who has fallen asleep the most times during Wednesday meetings. There are 2 awards here TEST (total elapsed sleeping time) and TNI (total number of incidents)

The recreation award to the fellow able to discover the largest number of distinct center activities to do here apart from scholarly work

The Marilyn Monroe look-alike award

The Helen Keller silence award to the fellow who has gone through an entire year without speaking to anyone

The imperialism award to the most hegemonic social science discipline

The most dishonest volleyball player award

The Federal Express fastest talker award

The Violation of Title 3 award to the most homogeneous Center discussion group

The you-will-never-be-invited-back award to the person who leaked the roster of Center fellows to the American Book Publishers Association

The being-on-leave-they-are-only-paying-half-my-salary-means-I-never-have-to-be-there-absenteeism award. There are two awards here. The fellow absent for the most consecutive days and for the largest number of total days. In the event this is the same person, only one award will be given.

The would-you-rather-not-have-come award to the fellows who complain about having their salary figured on a 1986 basis

The Simon-Legree-cultural-impooverishment-award to the person responsible for prohibiting telephones in the studies and a television set on the premises

The geographical sociability award to the fellow best able to carry on bi-coastal relationships

The hand-eye motor coordination award to the fellow best able to drive a car in reverse without hitting anything

The diminution-of-hot-air-at-the-Center award to the fellow able to pop a volleyball under a van moving at 10 miles an hour from 100 feet away

The aggressiveness award to the social scientist who perpetrated largest number of conversational interruptions

The gender-is-destiny-award to the gender that collectively engaged in the largest number of interruptions

The worst listener award

The best tan award

The April 13, 1988 Award for Distinguished Service on the Volleyball Court when a three-man team composed of the Director, Assistant Director, and a Connecticut Texan were vanquished 15-Love by a two-man team whose combined age and height, though certainly not their skill, was less than half of their opponents'.

The Upjohn Company award for the fellow who has consumed the most tranquilizers

The perpetual optimist award to the fellow making the largest number of trips to the library to see if he/she had any phone messages

The Captain Queeg award to the early lunching fellows who eat up all the strawberries by five after twelve

The fools-names-and-fools-faces-are-always-seen-in-public-places or if-its-popular-it-can't-be-any-good-award to the fellow whose written words and visual image were seen by the largest number of persons

The space shot award

The Gardner Lindzey cleanhead award for the social scientist most in need of a haircut

The ignorance-of-the-law-should-be-an-excuse-award to those social scientists on the verge of bankruptcy as a result of Xerox bills

The social-science-is-not-a-tea-party-award to the fellow able to go through an entire academic year without smiling

The food for thought award for the best kitchen crew in California

The know-your-center award to the fellow able to identify the location of the hidden one-way mirror

The mass communications award for the fellow best able to repeat at lunch what he or she just read in the New York Times (without attribution)

The-my-roots-run-deep-only-good-thing-about-California-is-being-able-to-turn-right-on-red award to the fellow best able to resist the siren call of California

The Kipling-was-wrong-about-the-leopard-award to the fellow who has undergone the largest number of changes this year

The lawn-supplement-award to those fellows changing jobs, in the event that the grass is not greener