

Why Say It?

It's important to understand when and why certain things are said. Often this information helps make the quote clearer. Read the descriptions below to learn about the meaning of these quotes.

1. *"Are you going to let your emotional life be run by Time Magazine?"* The poetry of Allen Ginsberg was a popular source of inspiration for the 1960s generation. It articulated discontent with mainstream America and proposed a liberating alternative. Ginsberg and his fellow Beats emphasized public performance—reading their work as musical rants.

2. *"I am waiting for my number to be called/and I am waiting/for the living end/and I am waiting/for dad to come home/his pockets full/of irradiated silver dollars/and I am waiting..."* A member of the Beat movement, Lawrence Ferlinghetti published the colloquial poem "I Am Waiting" in *A Coney Island of the Mind* (1958) and later experimented with surrealism.

3. *"I have plans to burn my drum,/move out/and civilize this hair. See my nose?/I smash it/straight for you. These teeth? I/ scrub my teeth/away with stones. I know you help/me now I matter./And I—I come to you, head down,/ bleeding from my smile,/happy for the snow clean hands of/you, my friends."* James Welch, a Native American poet and novelist, wrote "Plea to Those Who Matter."

4. *"To make people free is the aim of art, therefore art for me is the science of freedom."* Joseph Beuys was a member of the neo-Dada group Fluxus during the early 1960s, and pioneered performance art.

5. *"Strange new problems are being reported in the growing generations of children whose mothers were always there, driving them around, helping them with their homework—an inability to endure pain or discipline or pursue any self-sustained goal of any sort, a devastating boredom with life."* Betty Friedan wrote *The Feminine Mystique* as a critique of women's narrow role in society and the larger impact of such restriction. Friedan helped found the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966.

6. *"Chaos is a friend of mine."* Bob Dylan defined his musical style in the 1960s.

7. *"What the world needs now, is love, sweet love, it's the only thing that there's just too little of."* Gaining fame in the 1960s, Jackie De Shannon was one of the first female singer-songwriters of the rock 'n' roll era. Her recording of "What the World Needs Now Is Love" was her first #1 hit.

8. *"The old law about 'an eye for an eye' leaves everybody blind."* Baptist minister Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. King became recognized for his efforts to desegregate city bus lines and became the voice for the Civil Rights movement.

9. *"Few men are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential, vital quality for those who seek to change a world which yields most painfully to change."* Attorney general in his brother JFK's administration, Robert F. Kennedy made this comment in a 1966 speech. During his run for the Democratic presidential nomination, Kennedy was assassinated by Sirhan Sirhan, who felt betrayed by Kennedy's support for Israel in the Six-Day War.

10. *"We hold the rock!"* On November 9, 1969, Mohawk Richard Oakes made this speech during a siege of the island Alcatraz. Oakes used humor to highlight the grotesque inheritance of white civilization. The occupation of Alcatraz lasted 19 months and marked the emergence of the American Indian movement.

