

The History Club at Ann's Choice
Quotes on History
compiled by Fred Antil, Ed.D.

It isn't so much that [people] are ignorant. It is just that they know so many things that aren't so. -- *Ronald Reagan*

In history, one gathers clues like a detective, tries to present an honest account of what most likely happened, and writes a narrative according to what we know and, where we aren't absolutely sure, what might be most likely to have happened, within the generally accepted rules of evidence and sources.--*Victor Davis Hanson*

By looking into more details of American history, we can make more sense of what's happening today.--*Christopher Waltz*

Without history we are the prisoners of the accident of where and when we were born. *Donald Kagan*

Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it. -- *George Santayana*

History repeats itself, and that's one of the things that's wrong with history.
Clarence Darrow

If history repeats itself, and the unexpected always happens, how incapable must Man be of learning from experience. -- *George Bernard Shaw*

Books are the carriers of civilization. Without books, history is silent, literature dumb, science crippled, thought and speculation at a standstill. -- *Barbara Tuchman*

History is not a burden on the memory but an illumination of the soul. -- *Lord Acton*

Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is God's gift, that's why we call it the present. -- *Joan Rivers*

I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past. -- *Thomas Jefferson*

History never really says goodbye. History says, 'See you later.' -- *Eduardo Galeano*

A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots. -- *Marcus Garvey*

Men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better -- *Harry S Truman*

History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce. -- *Karl Marx*

History is a narrative, not an essay -- *Ken Burns*

From Jefferson to Jackson to Lincoln to FDR to Reagan, every great president inspires enormous affection and enormous hostility. We'll all be much saner, I think, if we remember that history is full of surprises and things that seemed absolutely certain one day are often unimaginable the next. -- *Jon Meacham*

History is the story of events, with praise or blame. -- *Cotton Mather*

History is a pack of lies about events that never happened told by people who weren't there. -- *George Santayana*

History serves as a model not only of who and what we are to be, we learn what to champion and what to avoid. -- *Steve Berry*

History had its own way of explaining things. The way historians explain things is by telling a story. -- *Donald Kagan*

Anyone who believes you can't change history has never tried to write his memoirs.
David Ben-Gurion

History: Gossip well told. -- *Elbert Hubbard*

If you don't know History you don't know anything. You were a leaf that didn't know it was part of a tree. --
Michael Crichton

History is Herstory too. -- *Author Unknown*

History is the sum total of things that could have been avoided.-- *Konrad Adenauer*

People are trapped in history and history is trapped in them.-- *James A. Baldwin*

The past is malleable and flexible, changing as our recollection interprets and re-explains what has happened. -- *Peter Berger*

History is an account, mostly false, of events, mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers, mostly knaves, and soldiers, mostly fools. -- *Ambrose Bierce*

History is the version of past events that people have decided to agree upon.
Napoleon Bonaparte

The past actually happened but history is only what someone wrote down. -- *A. Whitney Brown*

History, a distillation of rumour.-- *Thomas Carlyle*

History will be kind to me for I intend to write it. -- *Winston Churchill*

History is written by the victors. -- *Winston Churchill*

History is a gallery of pictures in which there are few originals and many copies.
Alexis de Tocqueville

History is more or less bunk. -- *Henry Ford*

History never looks like history when you are living through it. -- *John W. Gardner*

History is the interpretation of the significance that the past has for us. -- [Johan Huizinga](#)

Who has fully realized that history is not contained in thick books but lives in our very blood?
[Carl Jung](#)

We are not makers of history. We are made by history. -- [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

History is the only true teacher, the revolution the best school for the proletariat.
[Rosa Luxemburg](#)

The very ink with which history is written is merely fluid prejudice. -- [Mark Twain](#)

History is a race between education and catastrophe. -- [H. G. Wells](#)

All humanity is passion; without passion, religion, history, novels, art would be ineffectual.
[Honore de Balzac](#)

If good history is dispassionate history, it must naturally wait until the passions of the period subside. --
[James Buchan](#)

To study history means submitting to chaos and nevertheless retaining faith in order and meaning. --
[Hermann Hesse](#)

The past always seems somehow more golden, more serious, than the present. We tend to forget the partisanship of yesteryear, preferring to re-imagine our history as a sure and steady march toward greatness. -- [Jon Meacham](#)

Imagination is always the fabric of social life and the dynamic of history. The influence of real needs and compulsions, of real interests and materials, is indirect because the crowd is never conscious of it. --
[Simone Weil](#)

History does not merely touch on language, but takes place in it. -- [Theodor Adorno](#)

In a sense, words are encyclopedias of ignorance because they freeze perceptions at one moment in history and then insist we continue to use these frozen perceptions when we should be doing better. -- [Edward de Bono](#)

Language is an archaeological vehicle... the language we speak is a whole palimpsest of human effort and history. -- [Russell Hoban](#)

History takes time. History makes memory. -- [Gertrude Stein](#)

History is mostly guessing; the rest is prejudice. -- [Will Durant](#)

Poetry is finer and more philosophical than history; for poetry expresses the universal, and history only the particular. -- [Aristotle](#)

History develops, art stands still. -- *E. M. Forster*

Literature overtakes history, for literature gives you more than one life. It expands experience and opens new opportunities to readers. -- *Carlos Fuentes*

It takes a great deal of history to produce a little literature. *Henry James*

If history were taught in the form of stories, it would never be forgotten. -- *Rudyard Kipling*

Historian: an unsuccessful novelist. -- *H. L. Mencken*

Poetry is nearer to vital truth than history. -- *Plato*

The artist's job is to be a witness to his time in history. -- *Robert Rauschenberg*

History books that contain no lies are extremely dull. -- *Anatole France*

History is indeed little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind.
Edward Gibbon

World history is a court of judgment. -- *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel*

That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons of history. -- *Aldous Huxley*

Thanks to television, for the first time the young are seeing history made before it is censored by their elders. -- *Margaret Mead*

History is, strictly speaking, the study of questions; the study of answers belongs to anthropology and sociology. -- *W. H. Auden*

You have to look at history as an evolution of society. -- *Jean Chretien*

History is not everything, but it is a starting point. History is a clock that people use to tell their political and cultural time of day. It is a compass they use to find themselves on the map of human geography. It tells them where they are but, more importantly, what they must be.
John Henrik Clarke

Psychology keeps trying to vindicate human nature. History keeps undermining the effort.
Mason Cooley

Governments have never learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it.
Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

History offers us vicarious experience. It allows the youngest student to possess the ground equally with his elders; without a knowledge of history to give him a context for present events, he is at the mercy of every social misdiagnosis handed to him. -- *Hilary Mantel*

History is a guide to navigation in perilous times. History is who we are and why we are the way we are. -

- *David McCullough*

Newspapers are the second hand of history. This hand, however, is usually not only of inferior metal to the other hands, it also seldom works properly. -- *Arthur Schopenhauer*

History is Philosophy teaching by example. -- *Thucydides*

History should be written as philosophy. -- *Voltaire*

We have our own history, our own language, our own culture. But our destiny is also tied up with the destinies of other people – history has made us all South Africans. -- *Mangosuthu Buthelezi*

God cannot alter the past, though historians can.-- *Samuel Butler*

History is a vision of God's creation on the move. -- *Arnold J. Toynbee*

Nostalgia is like a grammar lesson: You find the present tense and the past perfect. - Unknown