

NEW ORLEANS NOSTALGIA

Remembering New Orleans History, Culture and Traditions

By Ned Hémard

Quotable New Orleans, Part 2

Back in 2008, gentle reader, I provided “a few noteworthy quotes” by a panoply of notable characters on some of the intriguing aspects of our beloved Crescent City. Here are a few more.

To all men whose desire only is to live a short life but a merry one, I have no hesitation in recommending New Orleans.

- HENRY BRADSHER FEARON, British visitor to New Orleans in 1819

There are only two things: love, all sorts of love, with pretty girls, and the music of New Orleans or Duke Ellington. Everything else ought to go, because everything else is ugly.

- BORIS VIAN, French polymath

The French philosopher René Descartes declared that: “All my life I delighted in the use of reason more than memory....” New Orleans is precisely the opposite, a more subjective place, a city that lives on reminiscences and feeling rather than on the cool and objective analysis of reality. In the American brain, New Orleans represents the right hemisphere, not the left.

- S. FREDERICK STARR

All of us from New Orleans have savored that Proust-bites-into-the-madeleine moment when a stray taste, sound, smell or sight brings remembrances of things past. It happens whenever I hear the badly rhymed but beautifully mournful — now even more so — first few bars of “Do you know what it means to miss New Orleans?” It can even happen with a single chord.

- WALTER ISAACSON

In the spring of 1988, I returned to New Orleans, and as soon as I smelled the air, I knew I was home. It was rich, almost sweet, like the scent of jasmine and roses around our old courtyard. I walked the streets, savoring that long lost perfume.

-ANNE RICE: *Interview with the Vampire*

It's America's classical music ... this becomes our tradition ... the bottom line of any country in the world is what did we contribute to the world? ... we contributed Louis Armstrong.

- TONY BENNETT

Everything in New Orleans is a good idea. Bijou Temple-type cottages and lyric cathedrals side by side. Houses and mansions, structures of wild grace. Italianate, Gothic, Romanesque, Greek Revival standing in a long line in the rain. Roman Catholic art. Sweeping front porches, turrets, cast-iron balconies, colonnades — 30-foot columns, gloriously beautiful — double pitched roofs, all the architecture of the whole wide world and it doesn't move.

- BOB DYLAN

But the feel of New Orleans doesn't have reference in a *single* Old World culture. New Orleans will always feel Creole.

- JOE LOGSDON

The fact is I am quite happy in a movie, even a bad movie. Other people, so I have read, treasure memorable moments in their lives...

- WALKER PERCY: *The Moviegoer*

I was born in New Orleans, and I wasn't allowed to go to the movies.

- KITTY CARLISLE

I suppose when I was a kid, and I went to movies, and later went to some plays on my own when I got a little older, in New Orleans, where I was living then, I zeroed in on the actor.

- RAY WALSTON

New Orleans. Born and raised. I lived there until I was 19.

- PATRICIA CLARKSON

I certainly wanted to write a book that was honest about New Orleans without explaining it to death, so much so that the first draft contained references absolutely incomprehensible to anyone who hasn't lived here for several years.

- POPPY Z. BRITE

And you find as a writer there are certain spots on the planet where you write better than others, and I believe in that. And New Orleans is one of them.

- JIMMY BUFFETT

Mardi Gras is the love of life. It is the harmonic convergence of our food, our music, our creativity, our eccentricity, our neighborhoods, and our joy of living. All at once.

- CHRIS ROSE: *1 dead in attic*

If I had grown up in any place but New Orleans, I don't think my career would have taken off. I wouldn't have heard the music that was around this town. There was so much going on when I was a kid.

- PETE FOUNTAIN

To get to New Orleans you don't pass through anywhere else. That geographical location, being aloof, lets it hold onto the ritual of its own pace more than other places that have to keep up with the progress.

- ALLEN TOUSSAINT

The principles of the constitution and government of the United States are a guarantee to you that it will be preserved to you, sacred and inviolate, and that your institution will be permitted to govern itself according to its own voluntary rules, without interference from the civil authority.

- THOMAS JEFFERSON: *Letter to the Ursuline nuns of New Orleans, May 15, 1804*

Times are not good here. The city is crumbling into ashes. It has been buried under taxes and frauds and maladministrations so that it has become a study for archaeologists ... but it is better to live here in sackcloth and ashes than to own the whole state of Ohio.

- LAFCADIO HEARN: *Inventing New Orleans: Writings of Lafcadio Hearn*

The wacky, disheveled would-be scientific genius Dr. Momus Alexander Morgus and his runaway ego toiling in his lab above the Old City Icehouse in the French Quarter, inventing the Morgussal Perpetual Cardiomachine on his "House of Shock" TV show and writing books like "New Hope for the Dead" is one for the ages.

- ANGUS LIND

The oyster was an animal worthy of New Orleans, as mysterious and private and beautiful as the city itself. If one could accept that oysters build their houses out of their lives, one could imagine the same of New Orleans, whose houses were similarly and resolutely shuttered against an outside world that could never be trusted to show proper sensitivity toward the oozing delicacies within.

- TOM ROBBINS: *Jitterbug Perfume*

Stay with Al Scramuzza and you'll never be a loozah, 1826 North Broad!

- AL SCRAMUZZA

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