

Truisms – Jenny Holzer

a little knowledge can go a long way

a lot of professionals are crackpots

a man can't know what it is to be a mother

a name means a lot just by itself

a positive attitude means all the difference in the world

a relaxed man is not necessarily a better man

a sense of timing is the mark of genius

a sincere effort is all you can ask

a single event can have infinitely many interpretations

a solid home base builds a sense of self

a strong sense of duty imprisons you

absolute submission can be a form of freedom

abstraction is a type of decadence

abuse of power comes as no surprise

action causes more trouble than thought

alienation produces eccentrics or revolutionaries

all things are delicately interconnected

ambition is just as dangerous as complacency

ambivalence can ruin your life

an elite is inevitable

anger or hate can be a useful motivating force

animalism is perfectly healthy

Truisms – Jenny Holzer

any surplus is immoral

anything is a legitimate area of investigation

artificial desires are despoiling the earth

at times inactivity is preferable to mindless functioning

at times your unconsciousness is truer than your conscious mind

automation is deadly

awful punishment awaits really bad people

bad intentions can yield good results

being alone with yourself is increasingly unpopular

being happy is more important than anything else

being judgmental is a sign of life

being sure of yourself means you're a fool

believing in rebirth is the same as admitting defeat

boredom makes you do crazy things

calm is more conducive to creativity than is anxiety

categorizing fear is calming

change is valuable when the oppressed become tyrants

chasing the new is dangerous to society

children are the most cruel of all

children are the hope of the future

class action is a nice idea with no substance

class structure is as artificial as plastic

Truisms – Jenny Holzer

confusing yourself is a way to stay honest

crime against property is relatively unimportant

decadence can be an end in itself

decency is a relative thing

dependence can be a meal ticket

description is more important than metaphor

deviants are sacrificed to increase group solidarity

disgust is the appropriate response to most situations

disorganization is a kind of anesthesia

don't place too much trust in experts

drama often obscures the real issues

dreaming while awake is a frightening contradiction

dying and coming back gives you considerable perspective

dying should be as easy as falling off a log

eating too much is criminal

elaboration is a form of pollution

emotional responses are as valuable as intellectual responses

enjoy yourself because you can't change anything anyway

ensure that your life stays in flux

even your family can betray you

every achievement requires a sacrifice

everyone's work is equally important

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everything that's interesting is new

exceptional people deserve special concessions

expiring for love is beautiful but stupid

expressing anger is necessary

extreme behavior has its basis in pathological psychology

extreme self-consciousness leads to perversion

faithfulness is a social not a biological law

fake or real indifference is a powerful personal weapon

fathers often use too much force

fear is the greatest incapacitator

freedom is a luxury not a necessity

giving free rein to your emotions is an honest way to live

go all out in romance and let the chips fall where they may

going with the flow is soothing but risky

good deeds eventually are rewarded

government is a burden on the people

grass roots agitation is the only hope

guilt and self-laceration are indulgences

habitual contempt doesn't reflect a finer sensibility

hiding your emotions is despicable

holding back protects your vital energies

humanism is obsolete

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humor is a release

ideals are replaced by conventional goals at a certain age

if you aren't political your personal life should be exemplary

if you can't leave your mark give up

if you have many desires your life will be interesting

if you live simply there is nothing to worry about

ignoring enemies is the best way to fight

illness is a state of mind

imposing order is man's vocation for chaos is hell

in some instances it's better to die than to continue

inheritance must be abolished

it can be helpful to keep going no matter what

it is heroic to try to stop time

it is man's fate to outsmart himself

it is a gift to the world not to have babies

it's better to be a good person than a famous person

it's better to be lonely than to be with inferior people

it's better to be naive than jaded

it's better to study the living fact than to analyze history

it's crucial to have an active fantasy life

it's good to give extra money to charity

it's important to stay clean on all levels

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it's just an accident that your parents are your parents

it's not good to hold too many absolutes

it's not good to operate on credit

it's vital to live in harmony with nature

just believing something can make it happen

keep something in reserve for emergencies

killing is unavoidable but nothing to be proud of

knowing yourself lets you understand others

knowledge should be advanced at all costs

labor is a life-destroying activity

lack of charisma can be fatal

leisure time is a gigantic smoke screen

listen when your body talks

looking back is the first sign of aging and decay

loving animals is a substitute activity

low expectations are good protection

manual labor can be refreshing and wholesome

men are not monogamous by nature

moderation kills the spirit

money creates taste

monomania is a prerequisite of success

morals are for little people

Truisms – Jenny Holzer

most people are not fit to rule themselves

mostly you should mind your own business

mothers shouldn't make too many sacrifices

much was decided before you were born

murder has its sexual side

myth can make reality more intelligible

noise can be hostile

nothing upsets the balance of good and evil

occasionally principles are more valuable than people

offer very little information about yourself

often you should act like you are sexless

old friends are better left in the past

opacity is an irresistible challenge

pain can be a very positive thing

people are boring unless they are extremists

people are nuts if they think they are important

people are responsible for what they do unless they are insane

people who don't work with their hands are parasites

people who go crazy are too sensitive

people won't behave if they have nothing to lose

physical culture is second best

planning for the future is escapism

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playing it safe can cause a lot of damage in the long run

politics is used for personal gain

potential counts for nothing until it's realized

private property created crime

pursuing pleasure for the sake of pleasure will ruin you

push yourself to the limit as often as possible

raise boys and girls the same way

random mating is good for debunking sex myths

rechanneling destructive impulses is a sign of maturity

recluses always get weak

redistributing wealth is imperative

relativity is no boon to mankind

religion causes as many problems as it solves

remember you always have freedom of choice

repetition is the best way to learn

resolutions serve to ease our conscience

revolution begins with changes in the individual

romantic love was invented to manipulate women

routine is a link with the past

routine small excesses are worse than then the occasional debauch

sacrificing yourself for a bad cause is not a moral act

salvation can't be bought and sold

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self-awareness can be crippling

self-contempt can do more harm than good

selfishness is the most basic motivation

selflessness is the highest achievement

separatism is the way to a new beginning

sex differences are here to stay

sin is a means of social control

slipping into madness is good for the sake of comparison

sloppy thinking gets worse over time

solitude is enriching

sometimes science advances faster than it should

sometimes things seem to happen of their own accord

spending too much time on self-improvement is antisocial

starvation is nature's way

stasis is a dream state

sterilization is a weapon of the rulers

strong emotional attachment stems from basic insecurity

stupid people shouldn't breed

survival of the fittest applies to men and animals

symbols are more meaningful than things themselves

taking a strong stand publicizes the opposite position

talking is used to hide one's inability to act

Truisms – Jenny Holzer

teasing people sexually can have ugly consequences

technology will make or break us

the cruelest disappointment is when you let yourself down

the desire to reproduce is a death wish

the family is living on borrowed time

the idea of revolution is an adolescent fantasy

the idea of transcendence is used to obscure oppression

the idiosyncratic has lost its authority

the most profound things are inexpressible

the mundane is to be cherished

the new is nothing but a restatement of the old

the only way to be pure is to stay by yourself

the sum of your actions determines what you are

the unattainable is invariable attractive

the world operates according to discoverable laws

there are too few immutable truths today

there's nothing except what you sense

there's nothing redeeming in toil

thinking too much can only cause problems

threatening someone sexually is a horrible act

timidity is laughable

to disagree presupposes moral integrity

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to volunteer is reactionary

torture is barbaric

trading a life for a life is fair enough

true freedom is frightful

unique things must be the most valuable

unquestioning love demonstrates largesse of spirit

using force to stop force is absurd

violence is permissible even desirable occasionally

war is a purification rite

we must make sacrifices to maintain our quality of life

when something terrible happens people wake up

wishing things away is not effective

with perseverance you can discover any truth

words tend to be inadequate

worrying can help you prepare

you are a victim of the rules you live by

you are guileless in your dreams

you are responsible for constituting the meaning of things

you are the past present and future

you can live on through your descendants

you can't expect people to be something they're not

you can't fool others if you're fooling yourself

Truisms – Jenny Holzer

you don't know what's what until you support yourself

you have to hurt others to be extraordinary

you must be intimate with a token few

you must disagree with authority figures

you must have one grand passion

you must know where you stop and the world begins

you can understand someone of your sex only

you owe the world not the other way around

you should study as much as possible

your actions are pointless if no one notices

your oldest fears are the worst ones