

Paul Theroux

Quotes

People, Travel, Writing, Thinking, Book, Home, Men, Reading, Years, Country, Order, Journey, Mind, Funny, Lonely, Art, Ideas, Memories, Eye, Falling In Love

Hawaii is not a state of mind, but a state of grace.

~Paul Theroux

There are probably more annoying things than being hectored about African development by a wealthy Irish rock star in a cowboy hat, but I can't think of one at the moment.

~Paul Theroux

The Australian Book of Etiquette is a very slim volume.

~Paul Theroux

I cannot make my days longer so I strive to make them better.

~Paul Theroux

You go away for a long time and return a different person - you never come all the way back.

~Paul Theroux

You can't save the rhinos and you can't preserve a culture. I'm very pessimistic. Once it's gone, it's over.

~Paul Theroux

All travel is circular. I had been jerked through Asia, making a parabola on one of the planet's hemispheres. After all, the grand tour is just the inspired man's way of heading home.

~Paul Theroux

Travel is an attitude, a state of mind. It is not residence, it is motion.

~Paul Theroux

Railways are irresistible bazaars, snaking along perfectly level no matter what the landscape, improving your mood with speed, and never upsetting your drink.

~Paul Theroux

Tibet has a very proud people but it's culturally gone and overrun ever since the Chinese took over. It's like saving the rhino. When a species is endangered, it's gone.

~Paul Theroux

Travel is at its most rewarding when it ceases to be about your reaching a destination and becomes indistinguishable from living your life

~Paul Theroux

Tourists don't know where they've been, travelers don't know where they're going.

~Paul Theroux

Fiction gives us a second chance that life denies us.

~Paul Theroux

It is usually expensive and lonely to be principled.

~Paul Theroux

Even if I were traveling with you, your trip would not be mine.

~Paul Theroux

When I went to Hong Kong, I knew at once I wanted to write a story set there.

~Paul Theroux

Reading liberates you. You could know about the world through reading.

~Paul Theroux

The people of Hong Kong are criticized for only being interested in business, but it's the only thing they've been allowed to do.

~Paul Theroux

Travel is a state of mind. It has nothing to do with existence or the exotic. It is almost always an inner experience.

~Paul Theroux

Gain a modest reputation for being unreliable and you will never be asked to do a thing.

~Paul Theroux

The amount of hassle involved in travel can be overwhelming.

~Paul Theroux

I like the idea of isolation, I like the idea of solitude. You can be connected and have a phone and still be lonely.

~Paul Theroux

The more you write, the more you're capable of writing.

~Paul Theroux

I am happy being what I am.

~Paul Theroux

I hate vacations. I hate them. I have no fun on them. I get nothing done. People sit and relax, but I don't want to relax. I want to see something.

~Paul Theroux

Cooking requires confident guesswork and improvisation-- experimentation and substitution, dealing with failure and uncertainty in a creative way

~Paul Theroux

Travel is glamorous only in retrospect.

~Paul Theroux

The Japanese have perfected good manners and made them

indistinguishable from rudeness.

~Paul Theroux

Basically, what you find out is the limits of your patience and your strength and your capacity to adapt. You find that out in travel and being alone and being tested. So that's a great thing.

~Paul Theroux

An island is a fixed and finite piece of geography, and usually the whole place has been carved up and claimed.

~Paul Theroux

The measure of civilized behavior is compassion.

~Paul Theroux

Death is an endless night so awful to contemplate that it can make us love life and value it with such passion that it may be the ultimate cause of all joy and all art.

~Paul Theroux

Banks and donors and charities claimed to have had successes in Mozambique. I suspected they invented these successes to justify their existence.

~Paul Theroux

The realization that he is white in a black country, and respected for it, is the turning point in the expatriate's career. He can either forget it, or capitalize on it. Most choose the latter.

~Paul Theroux

The monotony of staying in one place is the best thing for writing a novel. Having regular habits, a kind of security, but especially no big surprises, no shocks.

~Paul Theroux

What I find is that you can do almost anything or go almost anywhere, if you're not in a hurry.

~Paul Theroux

It is almost axiomatic that the worst trains take you through magical places.

~Paul Theroux

Animal lovers often tend to be misanthropes or loners, and so they transfer their affection to the creature in their control.

~Paul Theroux

The long morning shadows lay as still and dark as lakes and patterned the rough ground with straight margins.

~Paul Theroux

I don't think that it's possible to have a truly rewarding experience in travel if it's simple.

~Paul Theroux

You define a good flight by negatives: you didn't get hijacked, you didn't crash, you didn't throw up, you weren't late, you weren't nauseated by the food. So you are grateful.

~Paul Theroux

He regarded himself as an accomplished writer "a clear sign of madness in anyone.

~Paul Theroux

Airplanes have dulled and desensitized us; we are encumbered, like lovers in a suit of armor.

~Paul Theroux

Travel is a vanishing act, a solitary trip down a pinched line of

geography to oblivion.

~Paul Theroux

You think of travellers as bold, but our guilty secret is that travel is one of the laziest ways on earth of passing the time.

~Paul Theroux

It's only when you're alone that you realize where you are. You have nothing to fall back on except your own resources.

~Paul Theroux

There has to be a measure of difficulty or problem-solving in travel for it to be worthwhile.

~Paul Theroux

Travel works best when you're forced to come to terms with the place you're in.

~Paul Theroux

They say that if the Swiss had designed these mountains they'd be rather flatter.

~Paul Theroux

... the grand tour is just the inspired man's way of heading home.

~Paul Theroux

Anything is possible on a train: a great meal, a binge, a visit from card players, an intrigue, a good night's sleep, and strangers' monologues framed like Russian short stories.

~Paul Theroux

Tourists who go to Africa have more of a traditional experience than Africans do. A tourist goes on safari; Africans don't.

~Paul Theroux

In countries where all the crooked politicians wear pin-striped suits, the best people are bare-assed.

~Paul Theroux

Most travel, and certainly the rewarding kind, involves depending on the kindness of strangers, putting yourself into the hands of people you don't know and trusting them with your life.

~Paul Theroux

Friendship is also about liking a person for their failings, their weakness. It's also about mutual help, not about exploitation.

~Paul Theroux

Going slowly [...] was the best way of being reminded that there is a relationship between Here and There, and that travel narrative was the story of There and Back.

~Paul Theroux

Extensive traveling induces a feeling of encapsulation, and travel, so broadening at first, contracts the mind.

~Paul Theroux

For years I felt that being respectable meant maintaining a sinister complacency, and the disreputable freedom I sought helped make me a writer.

~Paul Theroux

Now and then in travel, something unexpected happens that transforms the whole nature of the trip and stays with the traveler.

~Paul Theroux

Loneliness in travel directs you and tells you about yourself. You don't become lonely unless you're alone.

~Paul Theroux

Reading is also a journey. It's a process of discovery.

~Paul Theroux

I don't want to be the honored guest. I want to be the invisible person.

~Paul Theroux

The Peace Corps is a sort of Howard Johnson's on the main drag into maturity.

~Paul Theroux

The lust of the eye. The best photographs were, to me, like an experience of drowning.

~Paul Theroux

It is fatal to know too much at the outcome: boredom comes as quickly to the traveler who knows his route as to the novelist who is over certain of his plot.

~Paul Theroux

Writing is pretty crummy on the nerves.

~Paul Theroux

Travel is only glamorous in retrospect.

~Paul Theroux

I think most serious and omnivorous readers are alike- intense in their dedication to the word, quiet-minded, but relieved and eagerly talkative when they meet other readers and kindred spirits.

~Paul Theroux

One thing about cold weather: it brings out the statistician in everyone.

~Paul Theroux

Everyone had an opinion and no one had a solution.

~Paul Theroux

A French traveler with a sore throat is a wonderful thing to behold, but it takes more than tonsillitis to prevent a Frenchman from boasting.

~Paul Theroux

The journey, not the arrival, matters; the voyage, not the landing.

~Paul Theroux

If you're a misanthrope you stay at home. There are certain writers who really don't like other people. I'm not like that, I don't think.

~Paul Theroux

You must not judge people by their country. In South America, it is always wise to judge people by their altitude.

~Paul Theroux

Winter is a season of recovery and preparation.

~Paul Theroux

My greatest inspiration is memory.

~Paul Theroux

No one has ever described the place where I have just arrived: this is the emotion that makes me want to travel. It is one of the greatest reasons to go anywhere.

~Paul Theroux

The man who is tired of London is tired of looking for a parking space

~Paul Theroux

Ever since childhood, when I lived within earshot of the Boston and Maine, I have seldom heard a train go by and not wished I was on it.

~Paul Theroux

I grew up in an era of thinking of travel as escape. The idea that you could conceivably have a new life, go somewhere, fall in love, have little children under the palm trees.

~Paul Theroux

Although I'm not fluent in sign language by a long way, I could have a fairly decent conversation.

~Paul Theroux

I think I understand passion. Love is something else.

~Paul Theroux

A novel captures essence that is not possible in any other form.

~Paul Theroux

Every country has the writers she requires and deserves, which is why Nicaragua, in two hundred years of literacy, has produced one writer-a mediocre poet.

~Paul Theroux

Fiction writing, and the reading of it, and book buying, have always been the activities of a tiny minority of people, even in the most-literate societies.

~Paul Theroux

I sought trains; I found passengers.

~Paul Theroux

You can't write about a friend, you can only write about a former friend.

~Paul Theroux

Nothing to me is so erotic as a hotel room, and therefore so penetrated with life and death.

~Paul Theroux

It is the simplest fact of Indian life: there are too many Indians.

~Paul Theroux

Indian enterprises seemed to work so well they produced disasters; success made them burst at the seams and the disruption of unprecedented orders led to shortages and finally failure.

~Paul Theroux

Maine is a joy in the summer. But the soul of Maine is more apparent in the winter.

~Paul Theroux

One of the pleasures of reading is seeing this alteration on the pages, and the way, by reading it, you have made the book yours.

~Paul Theroux

I'm not pessimistic about Africa. The cities just seem big and hopeless. But there's still a great green heart where there's possibility. There's hope in the wilderness.

~Paul Theroux

A gun show is about like-minded people who feel as if everything has been taken away from them - jobs, money, pride.

~Paul Theroux

I always found myself in the company of Australians, who were like a reminder that I'd touched bottom.

~Paul Theroux

The Colombians are good-tempered people. They are used to waiting for buses that are late, used to riding buses and trains that do not arrive.

~Paul Theroux

I believe I have a sunny disposition, and am not naturally a grouch. It takes a lot of optimism, after all, to be a traveler.

~Paul Theroux

There are two worlds: the world of the tourist and the world of everyone else. Often they're side by side. But the tourist doesn't actually see how people live.

~Paul Theroux

There's a lot of sensuality that I associate with travel. And that's romance.

~Paul Theroux

All politicians, even the most idealistic ones, are looking for money, sucking up to rich people.

~Paul Theroux

Related Links:

- People Quotes
- Travel Quotes
- Writing Quotes
- Thinking Quotes
- Book Quotes
- Home Quotes
- Men Quotes
- Reading Quotes
- Years Quotes
- Country Quotes
- Order Quotes
- Journey Quotes
- Mind Quotes
- Funny Quotes
- Lonely Quotes
- Art Quotes
- Ideas Quotes
- Memories Quotes
- Eye Quotes
- Falling In Love Quotes