

Paul Theroux

Keynote Speaker

The Jack London Society Symposium

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas,
October 11–14, 2018



The 14th Biennial Jack London Society Symposium will be held at **The University of Nevada, Las Vegas, October 11–14, 2018**. The general focus of the symposium will be **Jack London, the West, and the Environment**, and the organizers also welcome papers and panel submissions on any aspect of Jack London's life and work. Innovative formats such as roundtables or teaching presentations are encouraged, especially those that connect London with other writers and artists. Please email 200–300 word abstract proposals (noting any audio/visual requests) along with complete contact information to Kenneth K. Brandt at kbrandt@scad.edu. **Proposal deadline is June 30, 2018**. Visit the Jack London Society Website for member registration and symposium updates: <http://jacklondonsociety.org/>

“Theroux may be one of our most prolific travel writers, but he is also one of our best. The reason for this, I think, is his ability to convey the optimism of travel while refusing to tell lies about what he encounters. You feel hopeful when you read him, and you feel that you’re being told the truth, and that’s a good enough reason to stay with him.”

—Carolyn Sylge, *The New Statesman*

Paul Theroux is described by writer and friend Jonathan Raban as “utterly American, possessing all of those democratic, Yankee, can-do qualities.” These traits have served him well on explorations around the world for over fifty years, pen in hand, always with an eye for the odd, compelling details.

Readers depend on his uncompromising, sometimes brazen reportage; audiences remember him for his witty, acerbic asides and the tremendous breadth of literature he brings to bear. Theroux is an avid, impassioned reader and literary scholar. His relentless enthusiasm for the pursuit of new discoveries and an abiding respect and affection for his readers and audience are abundantly evident in person. “It’s like a friendship [with the reader],” Theroux says; “a bond develops if you write a lot of books.”

Half a lifetime ago, Paul Theroux virtually invented the modern travel narrative by recounting his grand tour by train through Asia. In the four decades since, the world he recorded in *The Great Railway Bazaar* has undergone phenomenal change, and no one has better captured the texture and meaning of that changing landscape than Theroux himself. His highly acclaimed travel books include *Riding the Iron Rooster*, *Dark Star Safari*, *Ghost Train to the Eastern Star*, and *The Last Train to Zona Verde*. After decades of travelling to the farthest corners of the world, Theroux decided to train his eye stateside.

His first US-based travelogue, *Deep South*, explores the overlooked corners of the American South 50 years after the Civil Rights Movement. Theroux is also the author of many novels, including *Picture Palace*, *The Mosquito Coast*, *Hotel Honolulu*, *Blinding Light*, and, most recently, *Mother Land*, about the imposing matriarch of a large Cape Cod family. In May 2018, he published *Figures in a Landscape: People and Places*, which *Publisher's Weekly* praised in a starred review as “a magisterial grouping of intimate remembrances, globe-trotting adventures, and incisive literary critiques.” Theroux is a recipient of a Royal Medal from the Royal Geographic Society. His stories and essays appear regularly in a variety of magazines, including *Time*, *Harper's*, *The Atlantic*, *The New Yorker*, *GQ*, and *Esquire*. Theroux's next book, out in fall 2018, will be about the cultures on both sides of the US-Mexico border.

<http://www.lyceumagency.com/speakers/paul-theroux/>

