



The Call of the Weird: Travels in American Subcultures

By Louis Theroux

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For ten years Louis Theroux has been making programmes about off-beat characters on the fringes of US society. Now he revisits America and the people who have most fascinated him to try to discover what motivates them, why they believe the things they believe, and to find out what has happened to them since he last saw them. Along the way Louis thinks about what drives him to spend so much time among weird people, and considers whether he's learned anything about himself in the course of ten years working with them. Has he manipulated the people he's interviewed, or have they manipulated him? From his Las Vegas base, Louis revisits the assorted dreamers and outlaws who have been his TV feeding ground. Attempting to understand a little about himself and the workings of his own mind, Louis considers questions such as: What is the difference between pathology and 'normal' weirdness? Is there something particularly weird about Americans? What does it mean to be weird, or 'to be yourself'? And do we choose our beliefs or do our beliefs choose us?

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The Call of the Weird: Travels in American Subcultures By Louis Theroux Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Ten years after hosting a BBC series on weird American subcultures, Theroux decided to make a "Reunion Tour" and write a book about how his interviewees' lives had changed. Theroux's weird Americans were UFO enthusiasts, porn stars, Aryan Nation white supremacists, brothel prostitutes, gangsta rappers, become-a-millionaire scammers, Heaven's Gate survivors and, strangely, Ike Turner. Theroux (son of writer Paul Theroux) likes them because he believes they use weirdness to feel "alive," and that's "more important than telling the truth." Apart from that, what they have in common, 10 years later, is their unavailability—the porn star had become a computer programmer, the UFOer was inhabiting a different reality, and the prostitute was either born-again or doing drugs, hard to say. So Theroux settled for talking to others in their communities. Although he sometimes criticizes himself for botching things (trying unsuccessfully to attend the Millionaires seminar as the guest of a blacklisted former adherent), Theroux never criticizes his subjects, confining himself to what he hopes will be inoffensive questions—like, have you "ever thought of trying to be less racist?" As their rants become repetitious, these "weird" subjects become surprisingly boring. By the end, readers may wonder why Theroux still finds these people so "alive," so interesting. (*Feb.*)
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Review

"Alternately fascinating and sad." -- (*Kirkus Reviews*, 11/15/2006)

"An artful piece of work." -- *Boston Sunday Globe*, 2/11/07

"An engaging read for enthusiasts of examining the fringes." -- *Miami Herald*, 3/13/07

"Easy and enjoyable to read (Theroux's writing light, clever, and witty)...Convey[s] the beauty, absurdity, and pathos of life." -- *Alarm*, December 2006

"From time to time, Mr. Theroux does come up with a nice, fat fish to shoot at in his barrel. He is a facile, amusing writer." -- *The New York Times*, 2/7/07

"Marvelous collection of oddballs, fanatics and true believers...Wittily skeptical, breezily sardonic yet strangely fascinating." -- *Providence Journal*, 3/11/07

"Pure, voyeuristic entertainment. Theroux writes with a dry, witty sense of humor." -- *Columbia Daily Spectator* (Columbia University), 3/5/07

"Theroux writes in an enjoyable, well-paced fashion." -- *BlogCritics.org*, 2/19/07

Review

Curled Up with a Good Book, 8/08

"It's a fun read, but even more so, it's an interesting one. You'll have trouble putting it down...Theroux presents the humanity in his subjects without necessarily sympathizing with them, walking the fine line between their extreme views and the normalcy of everyday life... Alternately funny and disturbing...An excellent read."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Patricia Cockrell:

Reading a publication tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With studying you can get a lot of information which will give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world can share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. Many author can inspire their particular reader with their story as well as their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the guides. But also they write about the information about something that you need case in point. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your kids, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors these days always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write to the book. One of them is this The Call of the Weird: Travels in American Subcultures.

Kimberly Franks:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them household or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read any book. It is really fun in your case. If you enjoy the book that you just read you can spent the entire day to reading a book. The book The Call of the Weird: Travels in American Subcultures it is rather good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. In case you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy typically the e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book offers high quality.

Mary Banks:

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Vikki Maynard:

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appropriate ways for you.

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