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Sandstorms: Days and Nights in Arabia

Peter Theroux

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Peter Theroux : Sandstorms: Days and Nights in Arabia before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sandstorms: Days and Nights in Arabia:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By P Flynn Arrived in good condition. 20 of 22 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful taste of contemporary Arabia By A Customer Theroux has a particularly valuable vantage point: he has spent more than 7 years in this region as a journalist. In this book which serves as a memoir, Theroux splendidly tells of this little understood region and its people. In an age when we hear of nothing but the fanaticism of this race of people and their intense religiosity, Theroux, I feel, manages to bridge the gap and bring a sense of humanism into his observations. Theroux systematically and humorously deconstructs our hostile stereotypes of Arabs and casts them in a light that is much more realistic and much more interesting to read. Throughout this book, which reads very smoothly and very effectively, he shows us the cultural and social elements of Arab life that few of us have bothered to consider. And, through this, one is able to understand the perceived fanaticism of the Arabs in a more appreciable way. I found that his observations were, while precise, still very evocative. I wonder if being a journalist is particularly suited to this style of imagery. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Unconventional View By A Customer This book is entertaining, and also offers a different perspective about the political climate in the Middle East. It was written when the Iran/Iraq war was the big issue, before Desert Storm in 1991. Interesting to see that the Saudi attitudes toward the US haven't changed much, and a read of this book should serve to describe culture in a long-term perspective. Highly recommended for anyone that wishes to learn a little more about the differences in our modern cultures.

As a journalist stationed in the insular Arabian capital of Riyadh, Theroux sharply etches what it is like to be an American when speaking Arabic virtually brands one a spy and reading Saudi novels is a forbidden pleasure. A colorful picture of a complex society teeming with contradictions.

.com Peter Theroux's fascination with the Arab culture goes back to his student days, when he won a fellowship to study in Cairo. Drawn initially to the Middle East by the West's romantic notions of it, Theroux stayed on, learning the language and eventually reporting on the region from his base in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. In *Sandstorms* he debunks some of the West's most cherished myths about the Arab world, at the same time putting a human face on a region long misunderstood. As Theroux mentions in his preface, much of his time in the Middle East was spent researching the 1978 disappearance of a Lebanese imam, Moussa Sadr. By the end of *Sandstorms*, Theroux has still not solved the riddle, but he has painted a remarkable portrait of the times, the people, and the politics of that volatile region. From *Library Journal* Theroux recounts his experiences in the Middle East of the 1980s. The author went to Egypt to teach English and wound up chronicling the disappearance of Lebanon's Shia Imam Moussa Sadr. But *Sandstorms* is the human side of an American in Arabia: swapping dirty jokes, drinking till all hours in dirty cafes, reading Saudi literature to try to touch the Arabian soul, looking back at American literature with loathing after reading Uris's *The Haj*, wending his way to the Damascus airport through a massive jam of manic Syrian drivers--and hoping the traffic would last. Theroux's Arabia is rough but undeniably real, poignant and elemental. Those who have lived in the Middle East for a time will hear echoes of their sojourn, and those who want to know what it's like will learn from *Sandstorms*. Strongly recommended for most libraries. For another view of the same area, see Christopher Dickey's *Expats: Travels in Arabia, from Tripoli to Tehran*, reviewed in this issue, above.--Ed.--David P. Snider, Casa Grande P . L . , Ariz. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. Theroux scorns the clichés about Arabia. His reporting is accurate and enriched by a strong sense of irony. - Washington Post Book World *Sandstorms* is a wonderful book, written with humor, verve, and sensitivity. It is alive with the images and voices of a mysterious land Theroux came to understand well. - David Lamb, author of *The Arabs*