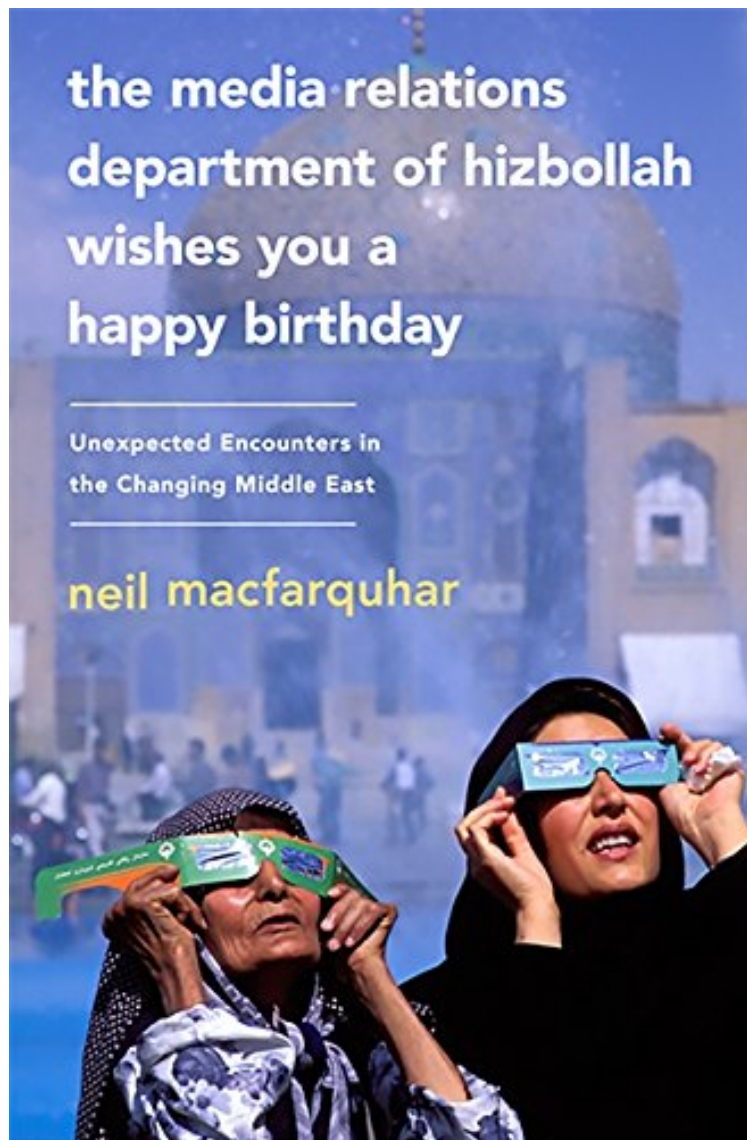


(Ebook free) The Media Relations Department of Hizbollah Wishes You a Happy Birthday: Unexpected Encounters in the Changing Middle East

The Media Relations Department of Hizbollah Wishes You a Happy Birthday: Unexpected Encounters in the Changing Middle East

Neil MacFarquhar

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Neil MacFarquhar : The Media Relations Department of Hizbollah Wishes You a Happy Birthday: Unexpected Encounters in the Changing Middle East before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Media Relations Department of Hizbollah Wishes You a Happy Birthday: Unexpected Encounters in the Changing Middle East:

19 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Best book on the Middle East I have read
By C. M. Peterson
I am an American and have travelled extensively in the Middle East since 2006. I must say that The Media Relations Department book is the most illuminating treatment of what is happening and not happening in the Middle East that I have ever read. Neil's travels take him from Morocco to Iran. Along the way, he finds the potential change agents in the different countries - those who resist governmental oppression and continue to speak out for needed changes in societies burdened by autocratic regimes. Neil interviews these heroes for human dignity and allows the reader to understand the human dimension of the current dramas in Middle Eastern countries. Neil's explanations about the 1967 Israeli victory in the Six-Day War as being the start of Muslim fundamentalism's rise throughout the Middle East is very useful for understanding how things moved to where they are now in most Middle Eastern countries. Neil's explanation of how the mukhabarat - the security services - in Middle Eastern countries have taken on unprecedented power in each country for defending the status quo is extremely valuable. Neil provides numerous encounters with these security services. As a result, I now feel that I have gained an awareness for a dimension of life in Middle Eastern countries that I did not have when I was a tourist or occasional sojourner in the Middle East. I now better appreciate what citizens of Middle Eastern countries must think about on an ongoing basis - whether one's actions or words will prompt an "invitation" to come speak with the mukhabarat. The book moves fast and includes humorous episodes (in the midst of daunting circumstances). I would recommend this book highly to those who are just beginning a relationship with the Middle East, those that want to know if there is hope for the Middle East, and those who have years of direct experience with the Middle East. The scope of Neil's coverage would help any veteran of the Middle East know about what is happening across the thousands of miles of this region.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. . "...Hezbollah Wishes You a Happy Birthday
By Daily Walker
Excellent read. This particular book was required reading for my undergraduate college program in international affairs. "...Hezbollah Wishes You a Happy Birthday.." gave insight in to the politics, cultural, and religious aspects on the Mid-East region of the globe.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Varied balanced, entertaining
By kidtree
So many books about the Mideast show a narrow point of view, from someone who spent a few years in one or two countries. Mr. MacFarquhar's experience begins when he was a young boy living in the fenced compound of American oil workers in Libya. His life centered around swimming and sailing in the Mediterranean, with the odd (and they were often quite odd) contact with the locals. It was years later, while studying in California, he decided he had to return to the Mideast, and as a journalist. He traveled and lived in countries from one end of the Mediterranean to the other, and his writing makes it clear that each nation has its own unique history and personality. He introduces us to local friends he'd known over years of work and new acquaintances, royalty, dissidents, journalists, and the workers he encounters. All have their opinions and experiences. It isn't a powder-puff treatment; he tells of the Saudi religious police and their insane demands and power, and of another government that tired of maintaining a prison crammed with political prisoners, so they simply massacred the inmates and left the empty shell in the desert. He tells of educated, peaceful, middle-class women imprisoned and molested for the crime of driving a car. There are shocking cases here of brutality, but many more encounters with normal people going about their lives, trying to support their kids. There is some danger to his life of world travel, of course, and his work is interrupted by severe injury - near death, in fact - when he's run down by a bus... in New York City. After reading this book I gave it to my 17-year-old son; he's enjoying it. It's light enough to be interesting to an educated teenager, and will greatly balance and expand his impressions of the Mideast. Whatever he hears from his friends, teachers, or coworkers, he'll never be able to accept any claim that all Mideastern countries or all Muslims can be lumped into any common stereotype.

Since his boyhood in Qadhafi 's Libya, and later as a reporter for more than thirteen years in cities stretching from Tehran to Marrakesh, Neil MacFarquhar has developed a counterintuitive sense that the Middle East, despite all the bloodshed in its contemporary history, is a place of warmth, humanity, and generous eccentricity. In The Media Relations Department of Hizbollah Wishes You a Happy Birthday MacFarquhar shares a lesser known side of the region, the story he always wanted to file. MacFarquhar shows the daily lives and attitudes of people frequently obscured behind the curtain of violence: the stories of chefs and sex therapists, bloggers and academics struggling to reform on their own terms.

From Publishers Weekly
Starred . While a glut of recent books on the Middle East have addressed Western perspectives on the region, this excellent book emphasizes questions Arabs ask themselves. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Iranian revolution serve as backdrops, but veteran Mideast correspondent MacFarquhar (The Sand Caf) focuses primarily on Arab nations and a grab bag of Saudi teachers, Moroccan dissidents broken by their years in prison, individuals searching for political freedom and Muslims struggling to sustain their faith in the face of violence from within and without. MacFarquhar's approach is well-rounded; he includes less palatable facts (those who argue that the word [jihad] contains no implication of violence are glossing over the fact that for some zealots, jihad means only one thing) and facts often overlooked (when most Arabs talk about reform, they usually mean curbing rampant corruption). If America is to overcome Arabs' deep distrust, MacFarquhar suggests, it must abandon policies too often

based on expediency and listen, not to its own domestic politics but to the concerns of the people in [Arabs'] own countries. (May) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Drawing on his many years as a journalist in the Mideast, including work as Cairo bureau chief for the New York Times, American MacFarquhar starts with a detailed discussion about fatwa, jihad, Al-Jazeera, and other front-page political topics and then talks to people today in Jordan, Bahrain, Morocco, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Libya, where he spent time as a child. He admits that his interviews focus on dissidents, diplomats, and government officials, while neglecting ordinary citizens. But he speaks Arabic, and the openness and immediacy of his on-site reporting reveals the diversity in country and culture as he explores current Arab attitudes toward the U.S., the oppression of women, the power of the Internet and satellite TV, the stifling control of the secret police, and much more. The professor forbidden to pluck her eyebrows sums it up: They focus on the trivial . . . so we don't worry about the big things. Those big things will grab American readers, from religions blocking of science to U.S. expediency in backing the powerful and, always, to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. --Hazel Rochman "'While a glut of recent books on the Middle East have addressed Western perspectives on the region, this excellent book emphasizes questions Arabs ask themselves.' (Publisher's Weekly) '(An)engaging and fact-filled reporter's memoir.' (New York Times Book) '(H)e offers a broad cultural and personal investigation into the region. The result is an intelligent and fascinating romp full of anecdotes, acid asides and conversations with everyone from dissidents to diplomats and liberal religious sheikhs, and even a Kuwaiti woman with a sex-advice column.' (The Washington Post)"