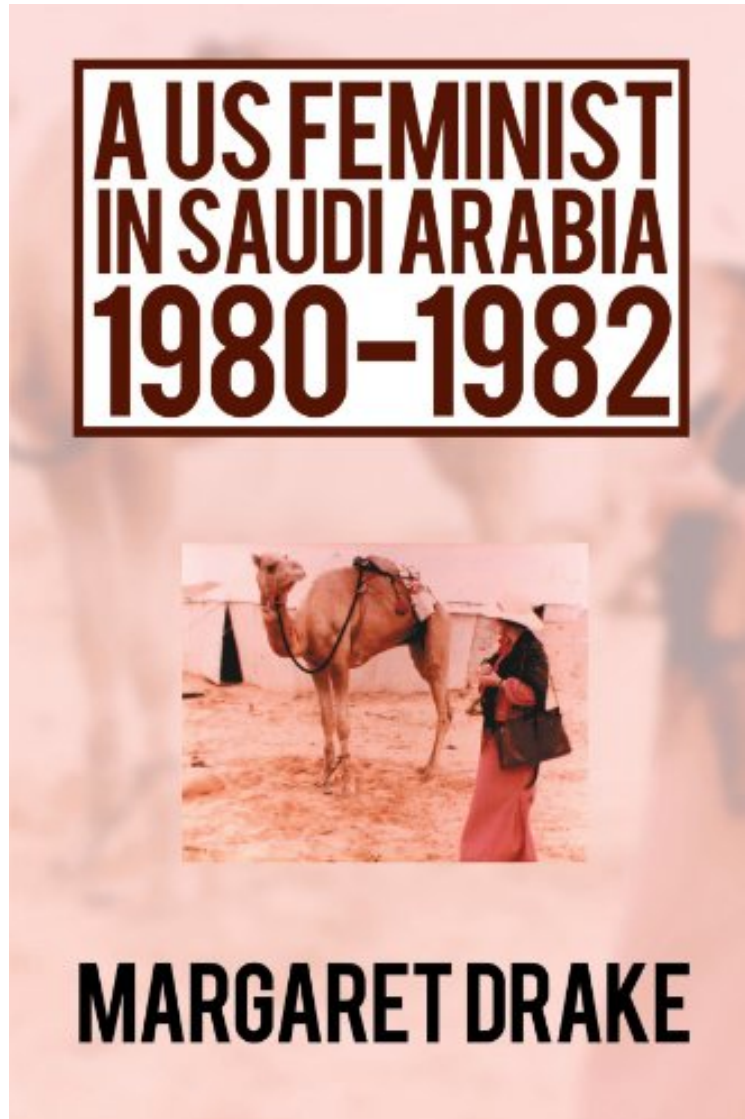


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A US Feminist in Saudi Arabia

Margaret Drake

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Margaret Drake : A US Feminist in Saudi Arabia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A US Feminist in Saudi Arabia:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Everyday erspectives on economic, social and health effects of Saudi gender fixation.By Bonnie GoodellMs. Drake details how daily life for women and men is complicated and disabled by the obsession with sex in Saudi Arabia. She taught there at the opening of medical schools for women, in 1981-82, and her experience reveals things that the view from afar cannot comprehend: the daily mangling of life when it takes the time of two people for any woman to make any transaction. From her description, you can really understand how

oil wealth has crippled this culture. From Bedouin who needed to protect their hard-working women herders from kidnapping, to sequestering women into uselessness as a sign of wealth, to institutionalization of a mandate that feminine honor is equated with helplessness and uselessness where being a burden to your male relatives is required to accomplish anything. The result is that the economy is stifled, health is harmed, and the sexes don't trust each other, so unknowable have they become to each other. Now, 30 years later, things are changing rapidly for women the world over, aided by technology. The still-unadmitted, but evident slide of Saudi oil production past peak brings into stark focus the question of how will the Saudis - who sopped up their oil wealth by decommissioning half their population and paying foreigners to perform their ADLs (activities of daily living) - be able to take care of themselves, post-oil. The Saudis and many foreign workers Ms. Drake describes, men and women, who are determined to keep the lights on, training health workers patiently around the expensive obstacle course, give hope. She includes an Epilogue commenting on the small but significant steps taken since she was there to free women to become, once again, partners in Saudi life.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The proverbial eye-opener
By Marianna S. Scheffer
Writing about her experiences in Saudi in the early 80's, Ms. Drake gives us an unvarnished picture of a tribal people who have struck it rich but are not modernizing. (How this might be different today I don't know.) Her feminist views, which are moderate, were too much for Saudi men to deal with. She left after two years with a wealth of information, which we now can read at last. These days we may know more about the oppression of Saudi women than we did once, but her on the ground experience at that time has historical and topical importance. She is filling in an important gap in our knowledge of life in Saudi during the time she was there.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A US Feminist in Saudi Arabia 1980-1982
By JALA totally useless book. Waste of money. Limited content, dated and not entertaining. I was hoping that will exercise some quality control. Drake was there for 2 years 30 years ago. Senility took its toll.....
A US Feminist in Saudi Arabia: 1980-1982

The book describes the experiences of a single American woman teaching in a university in Saudi Arabia between 1980 and 1982, just as the Islamic world was experiencing a reversal of previously achieved steps toward women's rights. The loosening of restrictions on women which had occurred during the 1970s was overturned when the fear of the rulers was heightened after the attempted take-over of the Grand Mosque in Mecca. The author takes us there with her while the Epilogue brings us up to today in Saudi Arabia.

About the Author
Margaret Drake is a retired occupational therapist, and art therapist. Born and raised in Iowa, attaining higher education in California, she was able to observe the transitions from the beat generation to the hippies to women's liberation. The early part of her career was spent as an elementary teacher in California Hawaii. After two marriages and two divorces and no children, she retrained as an occupational therapist. She lived and worked in Saudi Arabia in 1980-1982 teaching in a university. This life-changing experience influenced much of the rest of her life, both personal and professional. After finishing her doctorate, she taught in four other universities, one of which was in Taiwan. Currently, she lives in Hawaii and writes historical novels.