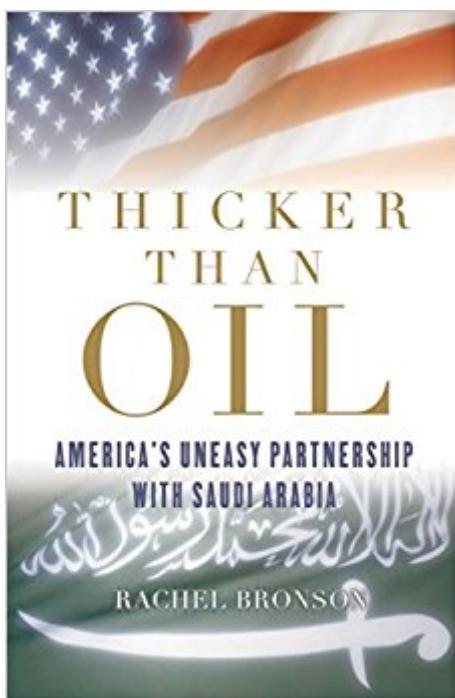


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# Thicker Than Oil: America's Uneasy Partnership With Saudi Arabia



## **Synopsis**

For fifty-five years, the United States and Saudi Arabia were solid partners. Then came the 9/11 attacks, which sorely tested that relationship. In *Thicker than Oil*, Rachel Bronson reveals why the partnership became so intimate and how the countries' shared interests sowed the seeds of today's most pressing problem--Islamic radicalism. Drawing on a wide range of archival material, declassified documents, and interviews with leading Saudi and American officials, and including many colorful stories of diplomatic adventures and misadventures, Bronson chronicles a history of close, and always controversial, contacts. She argues that contrary to popular belief the relationship was never simply about "oil for security." Saudi Arabia's geographic location and religiously motivated foreign policy figured prominently in American efforts to defeat "godless communism." From Africa to Afghanistan, Egypt to Nicaragua, the two worked to beat back Soviet expansion. But decisions made for hardheaded Cold War purposes left behind a legacy that today enflames the Middle East. Looking forward, Bronson outlines the challenges confronting the relationship. The Saudi government faces a zealous internal opposition bent on America's and Saudi Arabia's destruction. Yet from the perspective of both countries, the status quo is clearly unsustainable.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

I have spent over a year of my life in Saudi Arabia over the course of a twenty year career. This book helped me gain understanding and context to the bigger picture of what was going on in SA during my times there in the 80's and 90's. It also provided deep background and details that influenced thinking and decisions through the various crisis's in the region since the 1950's and explains the royal families push for Islam to control it's people and deter communism. Unfortunately the seeds sown through the cold war are now reaping radical Islam fanatics that hate the western world and what we represent. Although a bit long, this book does have detail, and provides some solutions worth reading and keeping.

Missing lots about US intel and big oil Regime building in Saudi Arabia. Arguably that's another book but there should be off-ramps because the Monarchy and these two are like the Hooper Triplets. Overall, however, well worth the kindle price. Nice and useful brief overview of Monarchy from 1740s up to WWI. The Strongest point of this book is it's depiction of US and Saudi intelligence overlapping in what some writers call The Safari Club of late 1970s and how this sowed the seeds of today's plural of ISIS from Africa all the way to Indonesia.

Very informative! This book deserves more attention than it has received. Well written!

Eye opening; it explains a lot of actions taken by our country that were never revealed to the public. Seeing the progression of events succinctly organized in one volume shines a light on a multi-decade partnership by giving the reader answers to questions about the U.S. attempts, for example after 9/11, and why the government worked so hard to try and keep the the fact that most of the terrorists on that fateful day were Saudi nationals. Great book.

Great Book. Rachel Bronson does some great analytics on the various security, economic, and relational aspects of US-Saudi interaction over the last 80 years. It starts where Denny leaves off ("We Fight for Oil" 1928) and leads us through the various twists and turns of US - Saudi relations from the end of WWII and British Empire through the Cold War up to Operation Iraqi Freedom. She

also highlights some of the more blunt realities in that relationship: "The fact that Saudi Arabia controls the largest oil resources in the world gives it a long-term interest in stable and long term prices to dissuade conservation and alternative fuels off the market." The only down side of this book is that Bronson argues strongly that we need Saudi Arabia as a partner but neglects to point out the full ramifications of past outcomes of that pairing. Perhaps we (the US) need to focus more on energy independence from the Middle East rather than how to ensure stability for the current fuel economy?

.the interrelationships between Israel and PALESTINE is very moonlighting. Also the Cold war and communist aggression in the middle east was presented very well. The amount of money that Saudi Arabia spent was new information that I had never heard. I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the Middle east.

Good story and well written. I liked it.

Absolutely essential reading for anyone interested in U.S.-Saudi relations. Well written, balanced, and authoritative. I purchased this work hoping for a better understanding of relations between the Kingdom and the United States and was not disappointed. Those looking for social and cultural points may want to seek additional works as this is largely a political and diplomatic history that is useful in understanding present day relations. Excellent work that flows and keeps the reader, be they an academic or a layman, interested

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