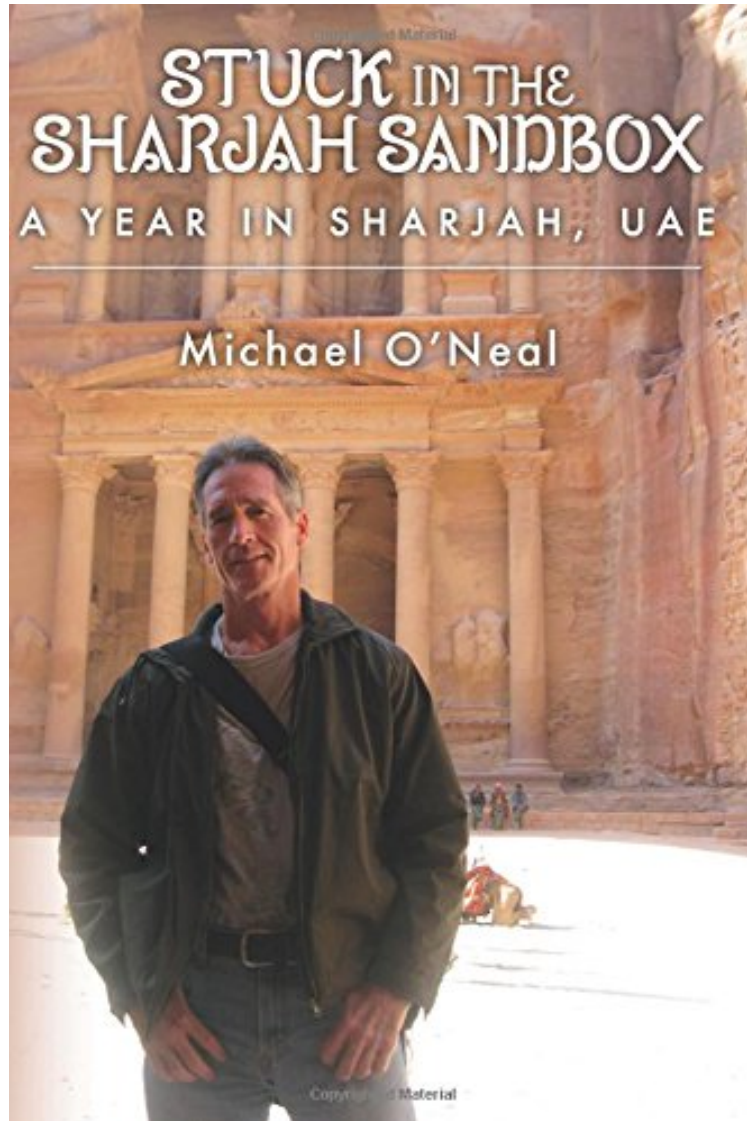


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Stuck in the Sharjah Sandbox: A Year In Sharjah, UAE

Michael O'Neal

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Michael O'Neal : Stuck in the Sharjah Sandbox: A Year In Sharjah, UAE before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stuck in the Sharjah Sandbox: A Year In Sharjah, UAE:

Upon returning home from Beijing--"Being in Beijing: Buses, Bikes, and Beer"--Mike O'Neal accepts a teaching position in Sharjah, the most culturally traditional and conservative of the seven United Arab Emirates. He'd never heard of the place. And from that early morning mumbled phone interview that landed him the job, to his last day of

teaching and living in the gulag housing, Mike faced the adversities of abject racism, witnessed ethnic abuse and blatant sexist attitudes, and dealt with students who possessed not only elitist mentalities, but were classic examples of extreme ADD and ADHD behaviors! As if these challenges weren't enough, Sharjah was a 'dry' Emirate! How would Mike survive the year without beer? But his perpetual sense of humor is ever evident, even when facing his Lebanese gangster bosses, getting stuck up to his knees in sand while wadi bashing, deflecting the sexual innuendos of some of his more provocative female students and staff, and almost keeping his anger in check with anti-American Rudolph Mohammed and ultimately aggravating Itchy Ismael. A break comes when he opts to visit Jordan during the winter break, a safer country than most in the Mideast during the onset of the Arab Spring. But he was no Indiana Jones while stumbling through Petra. Walk the school hallways with Mike and witness, through his eyes, the treatment of students that would have teachers fired, even arrested, in the US, but as well cheer on those abuses because so many of the male students acted like zoo monkeys! Dine with Mike on foods unpronounceable, but ultimately pleasurable to the pallet, or scorching to the tongue! Engage the locals and expats alike with Mike, and learn their stories of prejudice, war, sex, family, and how they see the world from their Arab and oil-soaked-sand-dune point of view. And laugh with Mike as he faces the frustrations of teaching an overloaded class schedule, makes illegal beer runs, commits social faux pas almost daily, sips Jameson Whiskey with his made-to-order South African friend, Des, and succumbs to the wiles of Ezili, the little African-American hottie from Atlanta! This is O'Neal's second book. His writing has matured, even if he hasn't. Now please, join Mike (again) and his days spent in 115 degree heat viewing roadside camels, green desert parrots and veiled beauties, while stuck living in the Sharjah Sandbox.