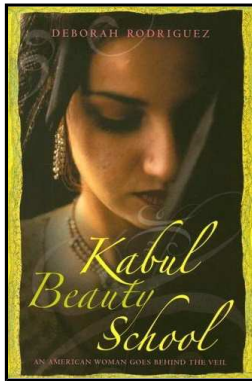


## Books, Cooks, Looks & Ms. Elani

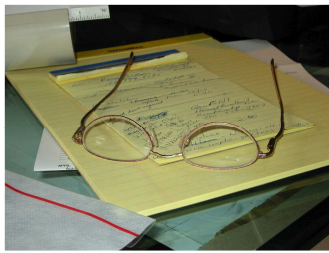


Dear Friends and Readers,

Opening the school was the easy part.

***Kabul Beauty School***

by Deborah Rodriguez  
ISBN 9781400065592



There have been many books written about women who go to another country to help, to find their true identity, to make a difference. In Deborah Rodriguez's ***Kabul Beauty School*** she not only did all of those things but much more; she became an integral part of a community in Kabul and still lives there. This story is not only well written but the humor that Rodriguez uses makes the reader thankful that a smile and laughter can help cross languages and cultures. More than once her inability to understand a situation actually saved her and her friends.

In 2001 Rodriguez left for Afghanistan as part of a humanitarian group to offer aid. All she had to offer was the ability to do hair but soon learned that this profession was one sought out by both Westerners and Afghan women. After doing a few haircuts for free an idea was born. Afghan women have a long and proud tradition of having and running their own beauty shops but the Taliban had put a stop to new schools. She began to illicit help from corporations and friends and in 2003 opened up the Kabul Beauty School.

Opening the school was the easy part. Becoming accepted, not only as an American but as a woman, was another feat entirely. Through friends she made and the man who became her husband, she overcame the barriers that threatened to send her back to the states; having her hair covered outside the home being one of the hardest, let alone not arguing with her husband. She learned, along with her students, the role of being a woman and not losing your own identity. Students who became her friends allowed her to see the beauty and hardships of the culture. Rodriguez was accepted and asked to participate in many of the traditions that few foreigners get to observe.

Her effect on the students in the school was two fold; she not only taught them a skill that allowed them to have money of their own but also gave the women a place where they could laugh, gossip and be with other women. Rodriguez also needed the friendship of women as she fought the battles within herself that sent her to Afghanistan. A book that is an enthralling story.

*Ms. Elani*