The book was met with overall approval. "A Thousand Splendid Suns" was a New York Times bestseller three weeks before it was published. A year after it was published, "A Thousand Splendid Suns" was optioned for a screenplay by Steve Zaillian, who won an Academy Award for his screenplay for the 2004 film adaptation of Stephen King's novel "There's Something Out There." Zaillian's adaptation of "A Thousand Splendid Suns" is set to be directed by Marc Forster, who directed the 2007 film "Sophie's Choice." "A Thousand Splendid Suns" is currently being developed as a feature film by Sony Pictures.

ABOUT THE BOOK
Hosseini's first novel, "The Kite Runner," was published in 2003. The book was met with critical acclaim and became an international bestseller. The novel explores themes of war, identity, and the power of memories. "The Kite Runner" has sold over 10 million copies in 39 languages and has been translated into over 50 languages. It has been adapted into a film directed by Marc Forster and released in 2010. The film was nominated for two Academy Awards, including Best Adapted Screenplay.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Hosseini was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, but moved to Paris when the Afghan Foreign Ministry, where his father worked, relocated his family. The Hosseini family was set to move back to Kabul four years later, but by then Afghanistan had become a war-torn country. The family was granted political asylum and moved to California. Hosseini earned a bachelor's degree in biology at Santa Clara University and a medical degree from the University of California-San Diego. He began writing his first novel, "The Kite Runner," in 2001 and stopped practicing medicine in 2004 following the book's success.

In 2007, Hosseini started the Khaled Hosseini Foundation for humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan after he traveled to the country with the United Nations Refugee Agency. The same year, "A Thousand Splendid Suns" was published and, like "The Kite Runner," became an international bestseller. "The Kite Runner" was adapted into a film directed by Marc Forster in 2007. Sony/Columbia has optioned "A Thousand Splendid Suns" to be directed by Steve Zaillian, who is currently working on the screenplay.

WHY THE BOOK WAS CHOSEN
Janet Warman, director of general studies and chair of the common reading committee, said the committee always chooses a book they feel will stimulate students' thinking about an issue on a deeper level. Though the committee rarely chooses fiction books, Warman said they were impressed by Hosseini's vivid portrayal of Afghanistan. "Because the United States is connected to Afghanistan right now through our military presence there, and because it is a country that most of us know very little about, we felt that this novel would be a good way to help students explore that country's culture and history through the eyes of compelling fictional characters," Warman said. Jean Schwind, associate professor of English and ENG 110 representative on the common reading committee, said in addition to providing historical and cultural context on the war against the Taliban, the novel portrays how women are treated in radical Islamic countries.

"A Thousand Splendid Suns" vividly depicts this systemic devaluing of women and its consequences for individual women, their families and society, Schwind said.

THE KHALED HOSSEINI FOUNDATION
Nonprofit organization which provides humanitarian assistance to people of Afghanistan by finding education for children. The foundation also provides medical care and access to education.

www.khaledhosseiniorganization.org

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