



# BUT MY BRAIN HAD OTHER IDEAS

*A memoir of tenacity, discovery, and life*

When Deb Brandon discovered that cavernous angiomas—tangles of malformed blood vessels in her brain—were behind the terrifying symptoms she'd been experiencing, she underwent one brain surgery. And then another. And then another. And that was just the beginning.

The book also includes an introduction by Connie Lee, founder and president of the Angioma Alliance. Unlike other memoirs that focus on injury crisis and acute recovery, *But My Brain Had Other Ideas* follows Brandon's story all the way through to long-term recovery, revealing without sugarcoating or sentimentality Brandon's struggles—and ultimate triumph.

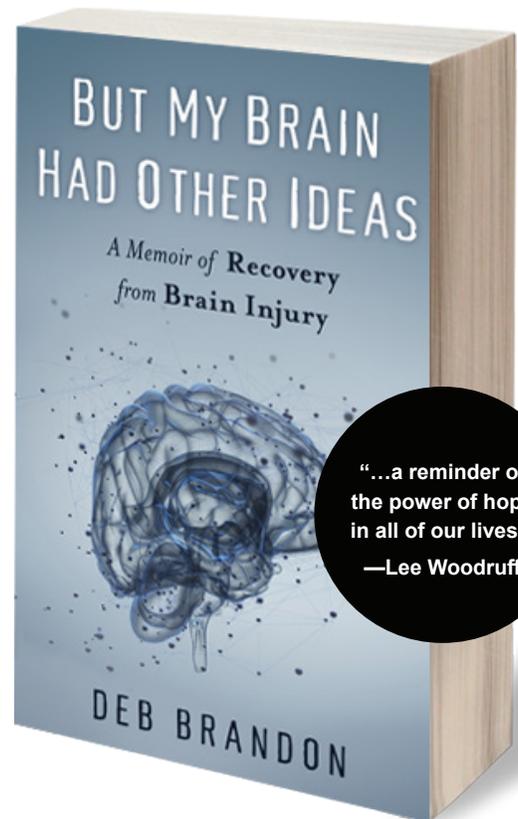
## FOR FANS OF

*Ghost in My Brain: How a Concussion Stole My Life and How the New Science of Brain Plasticity Helped Me Get It Back* by Clark Elliott

*Get Me Through Tomorrow: A Sister's Memoir of Brain Injury and Revival* by Mojie Crigler

*Do No Harm: Stories of Life, Death, and Brain Surgery* by Henry Marsh

*Brain On Fire: My Month of Madness* by Susannah Cahalan



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**Paperback Price: \$16.95**

## ADVANCE PRAISE

“It’s impossible to read *But My Brain Had Other Ideas* and not be in awe of this woman’s determination to triumph over her disease. Brandon’s clear-eyed approach to her story will hook you from the first chapter and remind you what it means to live life full on. Her refusal to be circumscribed by angioma is a reminder of the power of hope in all of our lives.”

—Lee Woodruff, *New York Times* best-selling author and journalist

“Told in poetic and exacting language, Brandon’s intimate account of life with a damaged brain is equal parts hypnotizing, harrowing, and inspiring.”

—Michael Paul Mason, author of *Head Cases: Stories of Brain Injury and Its Aftermath*

“Disability does not discriminate, it can be joined in the blink of an eye or in this case a rupture in the brain. *But My Brain Had Other Ideas* is a mind boggling roller coaster reality ride of personal trauma, disability and society’s mind numbing response.

—Lawrence Powell, past director of the Office of Disability Resources, Carnegie Mellon University

“*But My Brain Had Other Ideas* is wonderfully written—not only from a literary point of view, but also as a deeply personal and clear explanation of what it feels like to experience the things that Brandon describes.”

—Dr. William J. Hawthorne III, Psy.D, clinical psychology (neuropsychologist)

“Deb Brandon documents her journey with cerebral cavernous angioma, a disease of brain blood vessels, with ferocious honesty. Her tale offers a glimpse into an often confusing and frightening world in which reality can be upended from one day to the next, a world that requires reaching down to the depths of resilience to stay afloat. Deb’s struggles and triumphs will resonate with anyone who suffers from invisible illness and those who love them.”

—Connie Lee, Psy.D., President and CEO of Angioma Alliance

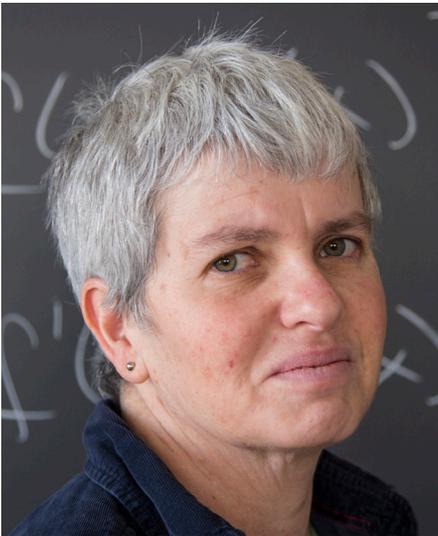
“Deb Brandon is analytical, precise, and detail oriented. But her prose reveals “another side of her brain”: authentic, poetic, and romantic. I was singularly captured by Deb’s storytelling. Beyond my perspective as a surgeon and expert on cavernous angiomas, I could not resist hiking along with her in the wilderness, watching Deb draw from nature the strength to adjust, and readjust. As a professor, I wanted to be with her, as she balanced her challenges with the desire to teach and continue to contribute at the highest level. *But My Brain Had Other Ideas* is a lively portrait of the personal toll of brain disease. “

—Issam A. Awad, MD, MSc, FACS, Director of Neurovascular Surgery, University of Chicago  
Medicine and Biological Services

“*But My Brain Had Other Ideas* is a courageous story, one that rings with the truth of living through trauma that robs us of what we take for granted—a functioning brain and body, a sense of normalcy and trust in life itself. Deb Brandon’s chronicle of her journey through the life-threatening brain bleeds of a cavernous angioma, the surgeries, rehab, and the long slog to adapt as a brain-injury survivor offers a beacon of hope for all coping with a disability of any sort.”

—Susan J. Tweit, speaker and award-winning author of *Walking Nature Home*

## MEET DEBORAH BRANDON



Deborah Brandon, PhD has been a professor in the Mathematical Sciences Department at Carnegie Mellon University since 1991. She has participated nationally and internationally in dragon boating. She is a mother, a writer, and a respected textile artist, as well as a brain injury survivor. Her essays have appeared in several publications, including the Weave A Real Peace newsletter, where she has a regular column; *Dragon Boat World International*, *HandEye Magazine*, *Logan Magazine*, *SIAM Journal of Mathematical Analysis*, and *Journal of Integral Equations and Applications*. Her books include *Birth and Rebirth: Textile Techniques from Around the World*. Brandon is an active blogger and regularly participates in social media platforms, including Facebook, where she discusses brain injury and its impact.

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