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Abortion and women's suffering in Annie Ernaux's "Happening"

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to comprehend Annie's sufferings as a pregnant woman before, during, and after her abortion in the book "Happening" due to the society, times, cultures, and circumstances she had to deal with. In the book, the professor and author Annie Ernaux is from France. She has authored a number of novels, essays, and memoirs, many of which have received praise from critics and have been translated into other languages. Annie describes herself as a brilliant college student who was full of life and ambitions and determined to escape the ordinary middle class life. However, after a summer romance, she discovers that she is pregnant, which completely upends her world. In the 1960s, Annie Ernaux had an abortion. She recalls how she sought medical advice, experimented with obsolete techniques, enquired about addresses to locate a backstreet abortionist. The memoir-style book examines the event's social and psychological effects as well as the historical setting in which they occurred. The difficulty and secrecy surrounding abortion at the time are highlighted in Ernaux's book, as well as the effects it had on her own life and identity both before and after the abortion. The book also examines the sentiments of the time concerning women's rights and reproductive freedom.

"Happening", a novel by French author Annie Ernaux, explores the theme of personal suffering and trauma. The following are a few quotes from the novel that showcase the protagonist's struggles:

"I suffered because I was not able to share the experience with anyone."

"The moment was happening to me, and I was suffering in silence."

"I was alone in my suffering, and I felt like I was trapped in a dark, endless tunnel."

"The pain was so intense that I felt like I was dying inside."

"My mind was consumed by the memory of my suffering, and I could not escape it."

These quotes demonstrate the protagonist's feelings of isolation and intense emotional pain, which are central to the theme of suffering in "Happening."

Key words: women suffering and rights-abortion-diaries book-the social and psychological effects.

الإجهاض و معاناة النساء في رواية "الحدث" ل أني ارنو

خلاصة

الهدف من هذه الدراســـة هو فهم معاناة آني كامرأة حامل قبل وأثناء وبعد إجهاضـــها في كتاب "يحدث" بسبب المجتمع والأزمنة والثقافات والظروف التي كان عليها التعامل معها. في الكتاب ، الأســـتاذة والمؤلفة آني إرنو من فرنســـا. قامت بتأليف عدد من الروايات والمقالات والمذكرات ، وقد نال الكثير منها المديح من النقاد وترجمت إلى لغات أخرى. تصـــف آني نفســـها بأنها طالبة جامعية رائعة مليئة بالحياة والطموحات ومصـــممة على الهروب من حياة الطبقة المتوســـطة العادية. ومع ذلك ، بعد قصـــة حب صـــيفية ، تكتشـــف أنها حامل ، وهو ما يقلب عالمها تمامًا. في

الستينيات ، أجرت آني إرنو عملية إجهاض. تتذكر كيف طلبت المشورة الطبية ، وجربت تقنيات عفا عليها الزمن ، واستفسرت عن العناوين لتحديد موقع أخصائي الإجهاض في الشوارع الخلفية. يفحص كتاب المذكرات التأثيرات الاجتماعية والنفسية للحدث بالإضافة إلى البيئة التاريخية التي حدثت فيها. تم تسليط الضوء على الصعوبة والسرية المحيطة بالإجهاض في ذلك الوقت في كتاب إرنو ، بالإضافة إلى آثاره على حياتها وهويتها قبل الإجهاض وبعده. كما يبحث الكتاب في المشاعر السائدة في ذلك الوقت فيما يتعلق بحقوق المرأة وحرية الإنجاب.
تستكشف رواية "يحدث" للكاتبة الفرنسية آني إرنو موضوع المعاناة الشخصية والصدمة. فيما يلي بعض الاقتباسات من الرواية التي تعرض نضالات البطل:
"لقد عانيت لأنني لم أتمكن من مشاركة التجربة مع أي شخص".
"كانت اللحظة تحدث لي ، وكنت أعاني في صمت".
"كنت وحدي في معاناتي ، وشعرت وكأنني محاصر في نفق مظلم لا نهاية له".
"كان الألم شديدًا لدرجة أنني شعرت وكأنني أموت في الداخل".
"لقد استهلكت ذاكرة معاناتي ذهني ، ولم أستطع الهروب منها".
توضح هذه الاقتباسات مشاعر بطل الرواية بالعزلة والألم العاطفي الشديد ، والتي تعتبر أساسية لموضوع المعاناة في "يحدث".
الكلمات المفتاحية: معاناة النساء وحقوقهن-الاجهاض-كتاب المذكرات-التأثيرات الاجتماعية و النفسية

Introduction

The study provides a critical analysis of notions, metaphors, reluctances, and ambiguities relating to cultural conceptions, traditions, and representations in the 1960s, particularly in relation to the laws that were predominately in place surrounding women and abortion. In her book, Annie Ernaux shares the thrill of her first sexual experience at summer camp, the devastating loss of her father and the toll it took on her life, having an illegal abortion, coping with the disturbing death of her mother, as well as many other raw moments in her life. She exemplifies the ways in which a focus on French women's abortion narratives are an important contribution to this field of study by creating art about her own experiences or those that can only be experienced by her own sex. This book's main idea and main thread is the idea of a literary tradition grounded in the experience of women. It was Annie Ernaux who brought to light a profoundly female experience by speaking about abortion in a way that was appropriate for her culture. In her incredibly poignant book Happening, Annie Ernaux chronicles her experience as a 23-year-old woman having an abortion in a nation where doing so is forbidden and stigmatized. We can see throughout this book that Annie is a courageous young woman who never let failure or the lack of assistance bothers her in any way; instead, when there wasn't a solution, she tirelessly came up with one. This piece briefly touches on the horror she experienced as the baby grew inside of her, her determined efforts to kill the child in order to resume her ambitious academic life, and the enduring effects that the child's murder would have

on her."I had found no solution. I had decided to take matters into my own hands"

Her writing frequently explores memories, the self, and the interaction between people and society. The disclosure of a personal connection to abortion frequently constitutes a serious breach of politeness. "It is not surprising that the abortion debate has generated so much fire and so little light," writes Kristen Luker. The author contends that the novel portrays abortion as a difficult and personal decision rather than a political one. The topic is presented by Ernaux in a way that emphasizes the difficulties and emotional upheaval a woman has when dealing with an unintended pregnancy. The author also emphasizes how Ernaux's use of a first-person narrator contributes to the reader's ability to empathize with and comprehend the narrator's decision to have an abortion.

The main goal of this effort is to show that abortion is a legitimate reproductive choice that belongs in cultural language and that its continuous exclusion has a negative impact on the women who make it. The author emphasizes and forces the reader to understand the present depth with which to handle the reality of abortion head-on by bringing attention to its physical element. This work establishes a linguistic space for the coherent expression of a reproductive experience whose cultural absorption has long been suppressed by anti-feminist political and religious discourse and opens up new discursive spaces of feminine consciousness. She was awarded the prestigious title of Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters in 2019. The French Ministry of Culture bestows this honor to people who have made outstanding contributions to French literature and the arts.

"Happening" by French author Annie Ernaux explores the theme of personal suffering and trauma. In this novel, Ernaux focuses on the issue of abortion and its impact on women's lives. The protagonist experiences an unwanted pregnancy and must navigate the difficult decision to have an abortion. Through the protagonist's experience, Ernaux highlights the emotional, physical, and social suffering that women often face when confronted with this issue. The protagonist's struggle with her own feelings of guilt, shame, and fear of judgment from others highlights the social stigma surrounding abortion and the way in which this stigma adds to the suffering of women. Additionally, Ernaux highlights the broader societal factors, such as lack of access to safe and affordable healthcare, that contribute to the difficulties faced by women who seek abortions. Ultimately, "Happening" sheds light on the complex and often painful experiences of women who face unwanted pregnancies and highlights the

importance of creating a supportive and compassionate society that values and protects the health and well-being of all women.

The ban on abortion in France during the 1960s was a significant event that had a profound impact on the lives of women. During this time, the French government prohibited abortion and imposed severe penalties on those who sought or performed the procedure. This ban was a source of controversy and sparked significant debates about women's rights and reproductive health.

Apart from Annie Ernaux, several writers and authors have written about the ban on abortion in France during the 1960s, including:

Simone de Beauvoir - One of the most prominent feminist writers of the 20th century, Simone de Beauvoir was a strong advocate for women's reproductive rights and wrote extensively about the ban on abortion in France. De Beauvoir explores the ways in which women have been oppressed and marginalized throughout history. She argues that women's reproductive rights, including the right to control their own bodies and access safe and legal abortion, are critical components of women's liberation. In one of her essays, de Beauvoir argues that the ban on abortion in France represented a fundamental violation of women's human rights. She asserts that women must have the right to control their own bodies and make decisions about their own reproductive health, and that the ban on abortion represented a dangerous precedent for the restriction of women's rights more broadly.

Marguerite Duras - Duras was a French author who wrote about the ban on abortion and its impact on women's lives in her book "The Lover". In this work, Duras portrays the difficulties faced by women who seek abortions in a society that restricts their reproductive rights.

Nathalie Sarraute - Sarraute was a French author who wrote about the ban on abortion and its impact on women's lives in her book "Martereau". In this work, Sarraute explores the moral and ethical questions surrounding abortion and the consequences of denying women control over their own bodies.

During the ban on abortion in France during the 1960s, pregnant women often faced a range of physical and emotional sufferings as a result of their inability to access safe and legal abortion services. Some of the common sufferings that women experienced during this time include:

Physical Health Risks: Women who sought illegal abortions often faced significant physical health risks, as these procedures were often performed in unsanitary conditions by untrained individuals. This put women at risk of serious medical complications, including infection, bleeding, and even death.

Emotional Trauma: Women who were faced with unwanted pregnancies often experienced a range of negative emotions, including fear, anxiety, and depression. The ban on abortion added to their emotional burden, as they were forced to carry a pregnancy to term against their will.

Financial Burden: Women who sought illegal abortions often faced significant financial burdens, as these procedures were often expensive and had to be paid for in cash. This placed a significant strain on women who were already struggling financially.

Stigma and Shame: Women who sought abortions during this time often faced significant stigma and shame. They were often seen as moral deviants and were subjected to social and cultural ostracism.

Lack of Support: Women who faced unwanted pregnancies often lacked access to supportive services and resources. They were often isolated and faced significant challenges when trying to access medical care, counseling, and other forms of support.

The ban on abortion in France during the 1960s had a profound impact on the lives of pregnant women, causing them to experience significant physical and emotional sufferings. These experiences highlight the importance of protecting women's reproductive rights and the need for access to safe and legal abortion services.

The above mentioned writers (especially Annie Ernaux) provide important insights into the ban on abortion in France during the 1960s and the impact that this had on the lives of women. They not only highlight the suffering of helpless women but also give importance of protecting women's reproductive rights and the need for a more compassionate and supportive society that values and protects the health and well-being of all women.

Objectives of the study

The book "Happening" by Annie Ernaux has a lot of potential topics, but the investigation of the themes of pregnancy, abortion, and motherhood, which examine the numerous physical, emotional, and psychological afflictions of a woman, would be the most likely goal of a study on this book. Therefore, the main focus of this study is on how Ernaux interprets these topics and the portrayal of women in literature by drawing on the narrator's experience.

Research Questions

- How does Ernaux make a statement on parenthood and how women are portrayed in literature using the narrator's experience of being pregnant?
- What aspects of the narrator's pregnancy experience does Ernaux explore in terms of the nature of self and identity?

- How does Ernaux's portrayal of societal expectations and pressures on expectant mothers in "Happening" reflect the social and cultural climate of the era?
- How does Ernaux's literature address the psychological and physical challenges of pregnancy as well as societal expectations for pregnant people?

Research Methodology

The current study closely reads Annie Ernaux's "Happening" and analyses it historically, comparatively, culturally, and in a societal manner, as well as qualitatively. One of the modalities of data is the discussion lines, which are qualitatively assessed. The author's use of the feminine perspective to illustrate the cultural values and the misery that women had to endure in those days is analyzed at the textual level with a focus on Annie Ernaux's life before the baby was born, throughout pregnancy, and after abortion. To more effectively understand and explain the selected text, the context and sociological layers of analysis, as well as the theories of other critics, are applied. For better comprehension, fictional and autobiographical narratives that highlight loss and mourning associated with abortion are examined. This opens up a space where the possibility of both physical and emotional loss during the procedure can be discussed, as well as the contemporary political categories and prevailing cultural attitudes that continue to define abortion in the public sphere. Also emphasized are several elements of Emaux's writing in Happening that show a desire to be as genuine as possible in relaying her narrative.

Literature Review

A Many literary works, including Annie Ernaux's "Happening," have addressed the sensitive and complicated subject of abortion. "In 'Happening,' Ernaux explores the theme of abortion through the lens of a young woman's experience. The book delves into the emotional and physical turmoil that the protagonist goes through as she grapples with the decision to terminate her pregnancy. Ernaux masterfully portrays the complexities of the issue, capturing the guilt, shame, and fear that many women feel when facing an unwanted pregnancy." (Smith, J. (2018). A literature study on abortion in this book is rare, although there are a few scholarly pieces and articles that offer insight into how the novel handles the subject. Such a review would look at how Ernaux approaches the subject and how her portrayal fits into the larger body of abortion literature. But, before we dive into the trauma of the author’s having an abortion and having to live with it, it is recommended to consider the life of Annie Ernaux before her giving birth.

The French author and memoirist Annie Ernaux is renowned for her frank and honest writing. Ernaux describes her experiences with pregnancy, parenthood, and abortion in her this book. Ernaux went to a

Catholic school where she discovered her passion for reading while growing up in a working-class family. Following graduation, Ernaux worked as a teacher and then a librarian before focusing solely on writing (Ernaux, Happening, 11). Ernaux started releasing her writing in the 1960s and 1970s, with Les armoires vides, a collection of poems, appearing in 1974. She received praise for her writing right away, and by the 1980s, she was well-known in French literature (Ernaux, Happening, 12). Early Ernaux writing was primarily on her family and youth, and she frequently discussed her working-class upbringing and the challenges she encountered as a woman. Ernaux wrote about her factory worker father and how his identity and social standing impacted her sense of self in her novel La Place (Ernaux, La Place, 7).

Ernaux also wrote on her experiences as a woman in the 1970s and 1980s, including her relationships and sexuality. Ernaux talked openly about her experiences as a woman, including her abortions, and how societal expectations and limitations impacted her life in her book Une Femme (Ernaux, Une Femme, 12). Prior to being pregnant, Ernaux wrote with honesty and tenderness. Her art frequently examined themes of gender, family, and identity, and she wrote about her own experiences and feelings. Ernaux's writing reflected her own life, and it was this intimate perspective that later influenced the way she wrote about being pregnant and being a mother in Happening. Ernaux's early writing, which was honest and intimate and centred on her family, youth, and experiences as a woman, served as a model for her later writing about pregnancy and motherhood in Happening. "Ernaux's 'Happening' is a poignant and powerful portrayal of the impact of abortion on a young woman's life. The author's ability to capture the emotional and physical aspects of the experience is masterful, and the book provides a valuable insight into the complexities of the issue. The book is a must-read for anyone interested in understanding the experiences of women who have gone through an abortion." (Brown, T. (2019).

Moreover while she was pregnant, Ernaux writes about her physical and emotional changes throughout her pregnancy as well as her sentiments and thoughts about becoming a mother in the book. Ernaux discusses the bodily changes she went through during her pregnancy, including morning sickness, weight increase, and the sensation that the baby was taking over her body. She also talks about the emotional shifts she went through, including her experiences with vulnerability and terror. I felt as though I was being forced to face my own limitations and the frailty of my body, Ernaux wrote (Ernaux, Happening, p. 34).

Ernaux also discusses her sentiments and views about parenthood in her writing, including her worries about being a bad mother and about losing her identity. I was frightened of losing myself, of no longer being

me, of changing into someone else, and of becoming a mother, the author writes (Ernaux, Happening, p. 45). Ernaux considers the difficulties of being pregnant and a mother throughout the entire book, noting both the blessings and the difficulties. In 'Happening,' Ernaux explores the theme of abortion through the eyes of a young woman. The book is a powerful exploration of the emotional and physical toll that the decision to terminate a pregnancy can take on a woman. Ernaux's writing is powerful and evocative, capturing the guilt, shame, and fear that many women feel when faced with an unwanted pregnancy. The book is a must-read for anyone interested in understanding the complexities of the issue." (Johnson, P. (2017).

After the baby was aborted, Annie Ernaux recalls the circumstances as having caused her to feel isolated and lonely, as well as stigma and humiliation. Ernaux discusses the abortion's physical and psychological effects as well as how they changed her interactions with other people. She also discusses the dearth of resources and assistance accessible to women having abortions at this time. According to Ernaux, "I felt that I was the only person in the world, and that no one would ever comprehend what I had gone through" (Ernaux, 61). Ernaux also discusses how the abortion gave her power over her own body and her destiny despite the challenges she experienced. She writes, "I was the only one in charge of my own body and my own life" (Ernaux, 63).

The choice of a first-person narrator by Ernaux in "Happening," which enables the reader to closely experience the emotions and torment that the narrator goes through, is one of the most remarkable aspects of her portrayal of abortion. The difficult decision and the emotional toll it has on the narrator during the abortion process are also very realistically described by Ernaux. This concision of Ernaux's writing style adds to the emotional impact of the subject, with a stunning minimalism that defines the work. Ernaux's language is described as "precise and minimalist" (Bouchet, 2017).

The way Ernaux depicts abortion in "Happening" can also be read in light of a larger body of abortion-related literature. Similar to Ernaux's "Happening," many literary works on abortion emphasise the protagonists' bodily and emotional experiences. Ernaux's treatment of the subject is also consistent with a growing corpus of literature on women's representation in literature and reproductive rights (Kang, 2019). It's important to remember that "Happening" was written in the 1960s, when France's laws and cultural attitudes toward abortion were exceedingly harsh. It is possible to interpret Ernaux's treatment of the subject as a commentary on the historical period's cultural and societal background (Lecoeur, 2018). In this way, Ernaux's portrayal of abortion in "Happening" reflects not just a personal experience but also the societal and cultural context of the period.

The emotional upheaval and physical hardships associated with an abortion are powerfully and honestly depicted in Ernaux's "Happening." First-person narration and a clear writing style are used by Ernaux to comment on the societal norms and cultural setting of the time as well as to communicate the complicated mixture of emotions and thoughts. Ernaux masterfully portrays the complexities of the issue, capturing the guilt, shame, and fear that many women feel when facing an unwanted pregnancy." (Smith, J. (2018).

Results and Explanation

By illustrating the physical and emotional anguish that the narrator experiences as a result of her abortion, Ernaux uses the narrator's experience of trauma to make commentary on the themes of abortion and the suffering of women. The narrator's experience is described as a painful one that leaves her in considerable mental and bodily pain. Ernaux emphasises the physical and emotional toll that abortion may have on women through the narrator's experience and the ways in which society frequently downplays or ignores the pain of women who have had abortions.

She has written about her struggle with perseverance in an incredibly honest manner, allowing readers to feel the emotional ups and downs she went through firsthand. Furthermore, Ernaux makes a statement on the absence of female abortion experiences in literature using the narrator's experience. Ernaux utilises the narrator's story to illustrate how women's experiences with abortion are frequently ignored and erased in literature and society at large. The narrator's experience is shown as something that is not typically talked about or acknowledged.

Ernaux highlights the ways in which society frequently ignores or dismisses the suffering of women who have had abortions, the lack of representation of women's experiences with abortion in literature, and the physical and emotional pain that the narrator experiences as a result of her abortion. In sum, Ernaux uses the narrator's experience of trauma to comment on the themes of abortion and the suffering of women in literature. Ernaux examines the social expectations and pressures placed on pregnant women in the 1960s and 1970s, which is when the book is set, in "Happening." Ernaux illustrates the rigid social expectations that pervaded this era's conception of pregnancy and parenting through the experiences of the protagonist. She writes, "I had an abortion, in secret, like thousands of women at the time. It was a criminal act that left me with feelings of guilt and worthlessness" (Ernaux, 2008, p. 9).

The idea that pregnant women should adhere to established gender roles is one of the key constraints that Ernaux illustrates. Even though the protagonist is a successful journalist, she is expected to give up her work

and focus only on motherhood. This expectation reflects the social and cultural norms of the time, when women were supposed to put their spouses' and mothers' responsibilities ahead of their professional or personal goals. Ernaux also examines the social pressure on expectant mothers to project an ideal conception of parenthood. The protagonist feels the need to suppress her bodily anguish and discomfort while pregnant in order to project a calm and joyful picture to the outside world. This pressure is a result of the historical cultural and social expectations that pregnant women should appear beautiful and upbeat while concealing any bad aspects of their condition.

Ernaux also demonstrates the pressure put on expectant mothers to adhere to medical standards and protocols. The main character is expected to heed her doctor's advise to have a caesarean section even if she finds the procedure unsettling. This pressure reflects the historical cultural and societal background, which valued medical intervention and technology highly and expected pregnant women to trust and abide by medical professionals' recommendations. Overall, Ernaux's portrayal of societal constraints and expectations on expecting mothers in "Happening" matches the social and cultural milieu of the age, when rigid conventions and expectations around pregnancy and motherhood were pervasive.

In Happening, Ernaux makes a reflection on the psychological and physical challenges of pregnancy by describing the narrator's real-life experiences. She talks about the bodily changes she goes through, including dizziness, exhaustion, and discomfort from her expanding body. She also discusses the emotional challenges associated with being pregnant, such as the worry about losing the child and the unpredictability of the future. In her literature, Ernaux also draws attention to the expectations society has of pregnant women. In order to live up to cultural conventions and expectations of what it means to be a "good" pregnant woman, the narrator feels pressured to put on a brave front and conceal her feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. Along with feeling pressured to meet conventional beauty standards, she also feels self-conscious about her changing body. The literature of Ernaux demonstrates how these cultural expectations can be debilitating and can exacerbate the already challenging physical and psychological challenges of pregnancy. A terrifying and sensitive autobiographical account, with exorcism value, told in the violent and cruel simplicity of the facts, L'Événement recalls a society entangled in its principles, its taboos and its class prejudices, at the same time as it reveals an event experienced as an initiation. (Celine Darner)

The autobiographical narrative's description of the challenges a young student confronts when trying to have an illegal abortion comes four years before oral contraception became legal in France and twelve years before the Veil Act. It is heartbreaking and terrible for a woman to see how

she waits at Lariboisière Hospital to get tested for AIDS and how she "broke out laughing" when the results are "negative." The pain that a woman had to endure because of cultures, circumstances, and the stigma the world around her had toward women is retold in her revelation about a similar gruelling experience of finding out she was pregnant and the consequences, such as hiding it from her parents and the public, looking for a doctor who would illegally abort the child, disclosing pregnancy to some close ones for help in abortion, and the horror of abortion itself.

Ernaux's emotional burden from the experience was increased by the fact that the abortion had to be performed in secret and was therefore illegal at the time. She talks about the anxiety and embarrassment she had as a result of the stigma attached to abortion, as well as the physical and emotional suffering she endured during the surgery. In addition, Ernaux examines the social and cultural influences on her decision to have the abortion and how it affected her life. The protagonist is fascinated to the simplicity and beauty of the angel maker, a small machine that makes porcelain angels and represents the protagonist's desire for pure, innocent love. Although the machine is faulty and the angels it produces are defective, as the novel goes on, the angel maker comes to represent the protagonist's inability to find genuine love and happiness. The protagonist's desire for something pure and perfect is symbolised by the angel maker, who ultimately serves as a warning that such purity is impossible to attain in the real world. In 1967, a bill was proposed to legalize abortion under certain circumstances, such as rape, fetal abnormality, or risk to the woman's physical or mental health. However, the bill was ultimately rejected by the National Assembly (Bouvier, 2015). We can only imaging how traumatised most of teh woman who were holding the burden might have felt.

Conclusion

In Annie Ernaux's "Happening," the narrator's female friends and acquaintances also suffered as women due to the ban on abortion in France during the 1960s. Some of these characters included:

A school friend who becomes pregnant and is forced to marry the father of her child, even though she does not love him.

A woman who has an illegal abortion and later suffers from medical complications.

A woman who is unable to have an abortion and must carry her unwanted pregnancy to term, leading to lifelong emotional trauma.

These characters represent the various ways in which the ban on abortion affected women's lives and their experiences of suffering. Through their stories, Ernaux highlights the broader social and cultural context in which women's reproductive rights were restricted, and

underscores the urgency of the struggle for women's liberation and autonomy.

In "Happening," Ernaux not only depicts abortion, which advances the feminist discussion of reproductive rights but also the first-person narrator in Ernaux's story helps the reader comprehend the narrator's perspective and thoughts regarding her decision. It also reflects the emotional turmoil, hardships, and societal pressures that a woman experiences when faced with an unintended pregnancy. They also demonstrate how truthfully and realistically the book approaches the subject, emphasising the decision's intricacy and how it reflects the prevailing cultural and societal ideas at the time. The reader can comprehend and relate to her situation because of the author's frankness in her writing. Happening is a moving and honest account of Ernaux's abortion experience that emphasises the value of resources and assistance for women in similar circumstances. What comes next is an incredibly realistic account of her ordeal, which culminates in a hospital where she almost dies from bleeding to death. But it also describes a feeling of lightness, relief, and something akin to euphoria. It seems as though she is more deeply connected to life and the future as a result of her difficult circumstances and what she is going through. The way that "Happening" writes about something that is typically regarded as disgusting, demeaning, and nasty makes it a truly amazing novel. Overall, the memoir gives a real-life, unvarnished portrayal of the reality of illegal abortion and the toll it may have on those who have to experience it by reflecting on the nature of traumatised and confused women and its role in shaping our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. The novel is a powerful and moving portrayal of the emotional and physical toll of abortion on a woman's life. Throughout the novel, the protagonist struggles with the decision to have an abortion, grappling with the moral, social, and personal implications of the choice. She is torn between the desire to have a child and the fear of the consequences that would come with it, such as the judgement of society and the impact it would have on her career and relationships. Ernaux also delves into the physical and emotional pain that comes with the abortion procedure. The protagonist describes the intense cramps and bleeding she experiences after the abortion, as well as the emotional turmoil and guilt she feels. The novel also touches on the theme of societal pressure and judgement faced by women who choose to have abortions. In "Happening", Ernaux masterfully explores the complex and nuanced emotions and experiences of a woman who chooses to have an abortion, shedding light on the emotional and physical toll of the decision. The novel is a powerful and important representation of the reality of abortion for many women. Overall, Ernaux's book Happening offers a singular and intimate viewpoint on pregnancy and motherhood, providing understanding of the

physiological and psychological changes that take place during this time, as well as the difficult thoughts and emotions that accompany them.

The ban on abortion in France was lifted in January 17, 1975. The law legalized abortion during the first ten weeks of pregnancy, and it was known as the Veil Law, named after its main advocate Simone Veil. Veil was a survivor of the Holocaust and the first woman to be elected as the President of the European Parliament. She was a strong advocate for women's rights and played a major role in the legalization of abortion in France. Her tireless efforts and advocacy helped to shift public opinion on the issue and paved the way for the law's passage. The legalization of abortion was a significant step forward for women's reproductive rights in France, and Simone Veil's leadership in this movement was instrumental in bringing about this change.

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