

ANNIE ERNAUX WINS LITERATURE NOBEL

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Above all, Ms. Ernaux's crystalline prose has excavated her own passage from working-class girl to the literary elite, casting a critical eye on social structures and her own complicated emotions.

"In her writing, Ms. Ernaux consistently and from different angles, examines a life marked by strong disparities regarding gender, language and class", the Swedish Academy noted.

"Her work is uncompromising and written in plain language, scraped clean," it said.

"And when she with great courage and clinical acuity reveals the agony of the experience of class, describing shame, humiliation, jealousy or inability to see who you are, she has achieved something admirable and enduring". The chairman of the Nobel Committee, Anders Olsson, said Ms. Ernaux had "been under consideration for her books for many years". "We have had very intensive discussions about her," he told Swedish news agency TT. She debuted with the novel *Cleaned Out* in 1974, a cool-eyed but harrowing account of an abortion she went through in her youth and that she had kept secret from her family.

But it was her fourth book, *A Man's Place* from 1983 — a dispassionate portrait of her father and the social milieu that formed him — that started her literary breakthrough. She then went on to write a portrait of her mother in 1987, *A Woman's Story*, which with "severe brevity" was a "wonderful tribute to a strong woman", the Academy noted. Outside France, recognition has only come in recent years, notably after the English translation of her key 2008 work, *The Years*, which was nominated for the prestigious Man Booker International Prize in 2019.

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