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Governing Morals

The Fight Against Abortion in France, 1890-1950

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A history of controlling women's bodies.

From the late 19th to the mid-20th century, abortion was the subject of a fierce battle involving politicians, clerics, doctors, activists, and many others, and mobilized significant private and public resources. Based on a wide range of sources, Fabrice Cahen reveals how the repressive apparatus operated and examines the strategies used by women seeking to escape it. Clandestine abortion was a highly organized social activity, capable of constantly thwarting the authorities.