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Running towards Healing: Resilience in *A Heart in a Body in the World* (2018) by Deb Caletti

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to “myself”, who did her best during the journey of writing this thesis.

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First, this work could not have been completed without the blessing of God, and I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor, Ms. MOUMENE Soumia, from the bottom of my heart for her patience and guidance, who helped me to finish my work. I am grateful for this opportunity to work with her.

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Abstract

The central aim of this thesis is to thoroughly examine the recovery process, using Deb Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World* as a case study. Hence, the study attempts to discuss how Annabelle, the novel's protagonist, deals with her mental health issues and how she navigates and demonstrates resilience in a traditionally male-dominated environment. To initiate this investigation, analytical methodology is used to examine what Deb Caletti is trying to express through her novel. The study employs two theoretical frameworks: the trauma theory and the feminism theory. On the one hand, the trauma theory is used to examine the effect of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on the protagonist, Annabelle, and to determine the process of healing utilised by her. On the other hand, the novel employs feminist theory to explore concepts of female empowerment and resilience through the lens of the female protagonist. Indeed, Annabelle's courage and determination convey a message of female strength. Finally, this thesis highlights the role of contemporary young adult literature in providing readers with inspiring stories that resonate with their experiences and challenges.

Keywords:

Post-traumatic stress disorder, Recovery process, Female empowerment, Resilience, *A Heart in a Body in the World*, Deb Caletti, Trauma, Young adult literature, Feminism.

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Introduction:

Young adult literature frequently explores themes of resilience, emotional struggle, and recovery. Central to these themes is the heart, an enduring companion throughout one's life journey, providing the strength to endure even the cruelest days. Lives are filled with highs and lows, just as books contain lighthearted and sad chapters. Some people can move past hard times easily, while others struggle and feel the pain indefinitely. This can cause emotional or even physical harm. To cope, some try to escape the pain, which can be a sign of strength and a step towards healing. Recovery from pain is possible, especially with support. Having caring individuals around makes a significant difference. Their love and support can help one survive the difficult chapters, demonstrating the transformative power of human connection and emotional support.

Deb Caletti is an American writer of young adult literature. She is known for writing about feelings and connections between people. Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World* explores themes of trauma, mental health, the impact of gun violence, and how to build oneself after a crisis. The protagonist, Annabelle Agnelli, faces a traumatizing accident, so she runs from Seattle to Washington D.C. Although she has post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), she does the impossible because of the grief and guilt she holds inside her heart, even though it is not her fault. She demonstrates how her relationships with others aid her in coping and surviving. Hence, the current research attempts to explore themes of trauma, recovery, and empowerment in Deb Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World*, as well as, how contemporary young adult novels represent such themes.

The central goal of this thesis is to thoroughly examine the process of recovery, considering Deb Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World* as a case study. The protagonist of this novel, Annabelle Agnelli, experiences mental health issues related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and

anxiety. These issues arise from witnessing a violent incident at a party. Deb Caletti in her novel, takes the mean of journalizing as form of therapy, where Annabelle can document her thoughts, feelings and experiences. In addition, this study will focus on the female empowerment. The protagonist promotes female resilience through her journey of healing, and self-discovery after experiencing that traumatic event. The recovery process reflects her empowerment, inner strength and her capacity to rise above adversity.

This study aims to address the following questions: How does Annabelle deal with her mental health issues? How is the act of running across the country used as a metaphor for Annabelle's mental health and emotional journey? How does Annabelle's character develop over the course of the novel, particularly in terms of her mental and emotional well-being? How do female protagonists navigate and demonstrate resilience in traditionally male-dominated environment within literary works? how does Calette represent post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) through the experience of Annabelle in her novel?

Deb Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World* follows a young woman's cross-country walk as a means of healing from trauma. The novel powerfully addresses themes of recovery and resilience while highlighting the effects of violence. Caletti's evocative storytelling captures both personal struggle and the journey toward self-discovery.

The thesis will be divided into three chapters. Chapter one will give an overview of violence against women. The first section will define violence, explore its various forms, and examine its impact on women. The second section will shed the light on young adult literature and its importance, giving examples of some case studies that exhibit various themes. The last section

will introduce trauma theory and feminist theory, as well as the key ideas used to examine the selected case study in this work.

The second chapter will examine the depiction of trauma in the novel. The first section will give a brief introduction about Deb Caletti and her novel *A Heart in a Body in the World*. The second section will examine the protagonist's life before the traumatizing event. The last section will explore the impact of trauma on the protagonist.

The third chapter will explore the themes of the recovery process and female empowerment in *A Heart in a Body in the World*. The first section will deal with the protagonist's recovery journey and regaining her well-being, while the second one will analyze how the protagonist is an example of empowerment and inspiration

Chapter I: Exploring Violence against American Women: Definitions, Literary Perspectives, and Theoretical Framework

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of violence against women. The first section examines the definition of violence, including its types and effects on women. The second section deals with young adult literature and its significance. Additionally, it discusses case studies that illustrate various themes. The final section introduces both trauma theory and feminist theory, along with the key concepts used to examine the selected case study in this work.

I.1. Violence against Women in the USA: A Brief Overview

The term "violence against women" encompasses physical, sexual, or psychological harm inflicted upon women, as well as the threat of such harm, the unlawful restriction of individual liberty, or any form of coercion. This also includes any act of gender-based violence that has the potential to cause harm to women ("World Health Organization"). Violence against women has been a continuing problem in the United States throughout history. From the early 15th century until the 19th century, the law explicitly allowed wife beating for punishment purposes. In *Rules of Married Life*, Cherubino da Siena argues that "Take up a stick and beat her soundly, for it is better to punish the body and correct the soul than to damage the soul and spare the body"(14). The 1960s and 1970s marked an important turning point with the rise of the battered women's movement and the establishment of shelters for survivors of domestic violence ("Cambridge"). In *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan states: "There was no "woman's vote" women voted as their husbands did. No pollster or political candidate talked about "women's issues" women were not taken that seriously, women didn't take themselves that seriously"(7).

Till this day, many victims of violence have experienced multiple types of abuse over their lifetimes. Some women experience higher risks for specific forms of violence and oppression because of their gender, and this leads to a long-term psychological impact, such as trauma, anxiety, and other mental issues for the victims. Claire M. Renzetti and Raquel Kennedy Bergen, in their book *Violence Against Women*, report that 54% of women have experienced violence at the hands of a relative, friend, or intimate partner. Renzetti and Bergen argue that American women are more likely to be victimized by someone they know than a stranger (1). Violence against women in America manifests in various ways, including physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological violence. Intimate partner violence manifests as an ideal illustration of violent acts that are faced by women globally, and it points to the behavior of the intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual, or psychological harm, involving bodily violence, forced sexual acts and psychologically harmful behaviors (Gupta). However, the USA is trying to reduce violence against women by supporting anti-sexual harassment campaigns such as the “Me Too” movement, which is committed to creating directions for healing and justice for those women who suffered from violence (Brittain).

Violence against women in the USA takes numerous toxic manifestations, including domestic violence, gun violence and stalking. Domestic violence, which is also referred to as intimate partner violence (IPV), is considered to be a public health issue and a social problem that deeply influences millions of women (Moorer). It indicates using force as a means to enforce power and control over the partner. However, it can happen between romantic partners who may or may not be living together in the same domestic setting. The jealous and controlling type of man relies on this, in order to take away the self-confidence, independence, feeling of safety and health from his female partner. This way of using force against women can be sexual, physical, emotional or online abuse.

Another serious problem in the USA is gun violence, which affects women in particular (Drane). According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2019, the total number of women in the United States who were killed by guns, was 39,707. Due to their gender, women often become victims of individuals they know or are related to. Violence against women persists in every country and in all sectors of society. When such violence involves the use of weapons specifically designed to cause injury and death and which can fire bullets at high speed from a distance, sometimes at a rate of several bullets per second, then the risk to women's lives increases dramatically (Amnesty International 2).

Stalking is the third type of violence that women experience in the USA. Merriam-Webster defines stalking as the act or crime of willfully and repeatedly following or harassing another person in circumstances that would cause a reasonable person to fear injury or death especially because of express or implied threats; broadly: a crime of engaging in a course of conduct directed at a person that serves no legitimate purpose and seriously alarms, annoys, or intimidates that person. It includes posting about the victim on social media, repeating messages and calls, tracking, and threatening their victims to harm them or anyone close to them. Stalking can take many forms. In *The Gift of Fear: Survival Signals That Protect Us from Violence*, Gavin de Becker states that: "Stalking is a sinister crime in which the perpetrator methodically invades the life of the victim, leaving them feeling constantly unsafe" (104). Finally, this serious issue, which affects the majority of women in the USA, has profound effects on them and requires a significant amount of time for healing.

Violence against women can cause long-lasting physical and mental health problems. Domestic violence causes mental health issues for the victims. Scholarly investigations, such as "How Does Domestic Violence Affect Women's Mental Health?" by Kelsey Hegarty, Lyndsey Hooker, Cathy Humphreys, and Angela Taft, have found that women who experience violence

are significantly more likely to suffer from its effects on their mental health than non-abused women. These mental health issues include depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. Moreover, these mental health conditions can become more serious, leading the victims to end their lives. Also, the victims of intimate partner violence are more likely to think about suicide, and this is what violence against women can do at the psychological level. Moving on to physical health, which is another urgent issue for women who face domestic violence, it is reported that half of women in relationships marked by mistreatment in the USA are physically wounded by their partners, and most of them experience multiple types of injuries, including frequent broken bones as well as more lasting harm such as brain damage (Armstrong).

The United States is making a lot of efforts to reduce violence against women in different ways. The government has to provide more resources for supporting programs and organizations that oppose violence against women and share awareness among people about it. In this case, there is the organization "End Violence Against Women," which was established in 2005 and consists of activists, survivors, and supporters that work with the aim of putting an end to the violence against women and girls in all forms. In addition to fostering a culture where violence against women is not tolerated and where victims are supported, movements such as 'Me Too' must be supported for their role in raising awareness about sexual abuse and harassment in the workplace. The "Me Too" movement was introduced by Tarana Burke in 2006. She worked with those who experienced and survived it and discovered that the phrase "Me too" could help ensure others that they were not alone in having experienced abuse. Then Burke is broadly acknowledged as the originator of the "Me Too" movement. The hash tag #me too became very popular online when Alyssa Milano tweeted for women to write #me too if they have experienced sexual abuse, and for the first time, women who faced violence were able to speak out (Brown 2). Some people have criticized the "Me Too" movement, stating that it promotes making fast

judgments about people and excluding individuals for their past actions or statements (Brittain). However, Tarana Burke's intention with the "Me Too" movement is not primarily about targeting powerful men, taking them down, or seeking punishment for bad behavior. Instead, the movement is centered on recognizing and addressing the pain experienced by survivors of sexual harassment, and aiming to reduce that pain (Brittain).

Violence against women manifests as one of society's most harmful human rights catastrophes. This serious issue occurs in communities across the United States and takes many forms, including domestic abuse, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and more. The impacts go beyond physical harm, leaving lasting psychological scars.

I.2. Young Adult Literature: An Overview

Young Adult Literature resonates with the unique struggles and challenges confronted by teenagers. It is directed at readers from the age 12 to 18. These novels have a range of values, which are not only meant to entertain the readers but also to authenticate the complex experiences of discovering one's self identity and voice (Harrison and Ehlers). Reading these narratives provides young readers with the capacity to feel empathy, resilience, and wisdom with the main character in order to guide them in their journey into adulthood (Cart). There are various examples of young adult novels that cover and examine serious issues, like *Under Rose –Tainted Skies* (2016), by Louise Gornal and *How Dare the Sun Rise* (2017), by Sandra Uwiringiyimana. While Gornal discusses the theme of mental health in her novel, Uwiringiyimana stresses themes of empowerment and resilience.

Young adult literature is a genre of literature written for readers between the ages of 12 and 18. Moreover, young adult literature emerged in the twentieth century and became popular in the late 1960s and 1970s, since it started to make noise in the literary world by providing new

narratives and vibrating with the experiences of young adults, paving the way for modern young adult writers to step into the spotlight. It attracted more readers, booksellers, editors, and library agents than ever before. Young adult literature covers many themes about adulthood's challenges and complexities, as well as the daily life problems faced by adolescents, such as death, politics, race, sexuality, and violence (Morgan). Young adult novels are known to have some elements, such as the protagonist having to be young and the perspectives of teenagers being present, because they are already directed at young adults and they will read them willingly. In *Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism*, Michael Cart states that Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* and Horatio Alger, Jr.'s *Ragged Dick*, were the first to write about young adults and gain national attention, and the two of them appeared in 1868 (6).

This genre of literature has certain defining characteristics; generally, the protagonists of the story are between the ages of 12 and 18, which allows readers to see the characters' struggles and experiences, and to learn from their identity formation. The second characteristic is a common theme, such as self-discovery, empowerment, and healing, which serves to make the stories relatable and engaging. The third one is the writing style. Young adult books contain simple dialogue and language, focusing on the thoughts and feelings of teenagers or young adults. The last characteristic is that young adults face moral or ethical dilemmas, so they need to think critically from their own perspectives. It can occur when they face someone who betrayed them or when they need to deal with the villain of the story (Salao).

Despite its success, young adult literature has faced significant criticism. Many critics and authors, like Chris Crowe, argue that young adult literature should not be treated as a replacement for the classic works but rather as an accompaniment to them. In "The Problem with YA Literature" Chris Crowe stresses that: "The problem with YA literature is that it is often seen as a replacement for classic works rather than a complement to them". However, the others think that

it is not qualified as a real literature, since its popularity and commercial success reduce its literary value. In *The Sorcerer's Apprentice: An Anthology of Magical Tales*, Jack Zipes asserts: "To become a phenomenon, a work has to conform to the standards set by the mass media and promoted by the culture industry in general"(92). However, numerous comments assert that people perceive Young adult fiction as a form of storytelling. Several controversies have also arisen, with libraries, schools, and stores banning books due to their inappropriate content for young readers (Zipes).

Young adult literature holds significant importance because it has grown into a developed and powerful genre since the mid-1990s. It addresses the different interests of its young adult audience. Those in the transition period are continually evolving and looking for their self-image. Young adult literature now contains varied writers and characters across races, ethnicity and abilities. Many underprivileged teens find themselves represented in young adult novels for the first time. These different authors serve as role models, mirroring their teen readers' identities and experiences. Basically, young adult literature builds empathy by exposing readers to characters unlike themselves. The United States experiences a literacy emergency, with only a third of 8th graders reading and writing effectively, and even there are low rates for low-income and minority students. While the causes are examined, the need for solutions is urgent. Making teens involved with current, relatable young adult literature provides a possibility to solve this crisis. The qualified young adult books have the potential to captivate readers, motivate them, and promote a love for reading. Many solutions to the literacy crisis may be found in these persuasive young adult stories (Deuell).

Under Rose Tainted Skies (2016) by Louise Gornall is a contemporary young adult and a convincing novel about Norah Dean, a 17-year-old girl, who struggles with mental health conditions. The novel touchingly depicts a teenager grappling with fears and challenges. In this

novel, the theme of mental illness is deeply analyzed through the character Norah, who struggles with obsessive-compulsive disorder, agoraphobia, and anxiety. The book depicts the presence of anxiety in Norah's life. It surrounds her like a shadow and never leaves her. In the novel, Louise Gornal states that the anxiety does not leave her alone, even during the good times. Despite her attempts to manage it, her anxiety remains present and demands a significant amount of energy to control it. There is no a specific way to control the anxiety directly, however, the individual can learn how to manage it by finding ways to cope with it (Zinn). Norah's struggles with anxiety are explored clearly, presenting how it affects her daily life, which makes it difficult for her to be in public spaces, and leads her to feel isolated. In relationships too, because she finds it hard to interact with her new neighbor Luke since she does not know how to engage with other people. She fails at maintaining her relationship with Luke, due to her anxiety. After the breakup, she harms herself and even enters the hospital. *Under Rose-Tainted Skies* provides an insightful portrayal of anxiety disorders and examines these life-changing challenges that are often not openly debated. This novel allows the readers to come away with a better comprehension of different mental illnesses and how they have an impact on the simple aspects of a sufferer's daily life (Cosola).

How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child (2017) by Sandra Uwiringiyimana is a contemporary young adult book. The protagonist, Sandra, narrates her life escaping from the violence in Congo and she lived as a refugee in diverse places before finally settling in the United States. In this novel, the theme of empowerment is intensely examined through the lenses of survival, resilience, and influence. Uwiringiyimana shares her personal journey as a refugee, highlighting the challenges she faced and how she found a way to positively influence others through her experiences. Uwiringiyimana writes, "It was part of an unfortunate culture [...] in which young men would kidnap a girl, rape her, and then marry her. The rape is committed so

that the girl is too ashamed to go back home, or so that her family won't ask for her back. Hundreds, if not thousands, of girls have been married this way. It is one of the reasons why I think my parents were so passionate about educating their girls, so that we could learn that no one can take away our worth" (34). In the novel, she describes the customs of her culture as regrettable, where hundreds of girls experience the violence of sexual assault and blame themselves for it. The narrative explores deeply the strength and courage needed to overcome the hardship, highlighting the importance of resilience and determination in the face of unthinkable challenges (Spellmeier). Through Sandra's story, the book illustrates the power of one's voice and experiences in motivating change and empowerment, demonstrating the ability to move through hard conditions and arise stronger (Sander). Overall, *How Dare the Sun Rise* serves as a proof of the strength, courage, and impact persons can have in empowering themselves and others in difficult situations (Cooper).

Finally, the response of young adult readers to this genre is positive. In fact, they appreciate the power of its themes, which prepare them for real-life situations and provide personal growth.

I.3. Theoretical Framework: Trauma theory and Feminism

Trauma theory implies to the study of the psychological and emotional reactions of people who have encountered overpowering events that leave a lasting impact on their memory and health, causing post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety. However, it is always followed by recovery, which is a journey of learning to control symptoms while looking for hope for an improved condition.

Trauma theory investigates the ways in which traumatic incidents are addressed through literary texts. Trauma theory tries to comprehend the different ways in which traumatic events are illustrated, managed, revealed, and restrained throughout a range of literary and historical texts

("Trauma-Theory"). Trauma theorists are not only intrigued by how different authors might attempt to discuss and address their own personal traumas through their writings, but also how fictional characters attempt to do so. The term trauma indicates facing very stressful, terrifying or upsetting incidents that become hard to cope with. It could be one event, or an ongoing situation, that occurs over a long duration of time "Trauma". The majority of people have experienced an event in their lives that could be viewed as traumatic. However, the impact on each individual will differ. Trauma can take place at any age, and it can impact us at any time, including an extended period after the situation has happened.

Trauma originates from the Greek word, which means wound. First utilized in English in the seventeenth century in medicine, it is cited as bodily damage generated by an outside agent (Luckhurst 3). In early versions of the Oxford English Dictionary, the items for trauma, traumatic, traumatism and the prefix trauma were purely from sources relating to physical wounds (Luckhurst 3). However, the one exception came from a 1895 copy of *Popular Science Monthly*, which named this psychical trauma a morbid nervous condition (Luckhurst 3). In the late nineteenth century, the term trauma started to shift from the physical to the mental realm. In *The Trauma Question*, Roger Luckhurst writes, "the predominant popular connotations of trauma now circle around metaphors of psychic scars and mental wounds. The metaphor of a psychological 'impact' still retains the sense of a wound caused by an exterior agent"(2). It emerged in 1960 as a result of violence against women and children, post-traumatic stress disorder during the Vietnam War in 1955, and experiences of betrayal (Van der Kolk). In *The body Keeps the Scores*, Bassel Van Der Kolk states: As human being we belong to an extremely resilient species. Since time immemorial we have rebounded from our relentless wars, countless disasters (both natural and man-made), and the violence or betrayal in our lives. But traumatic experiences do leave traces, whether on a large scale (on our histories and cultures) or close to

home, on our families, with dark secrets being imperceptibly passed down through generations. They also leave traces on our minds and emotions, on our capacity for joy and intimacy, and even on our biology and immune systems (12). Even though humans are resilient, traumatic experiences leave lasting traces on individuals, families, and cultures. The manifestation of trauma can differ, presenting as acute, enduring, or complicated, and it can affect individuals distinctively based on their coping abilities (Rayder). Trauma's evolution and the way people react are formed by elements like intensity, longevity, genetic tendencies and environmental conditions. Within literary and cultural fields, trauma theory examines how horrifying events distort views and senses of identity, both individual and cultural (Balaev). It analyzes the representations of trauma in writings, evaluating the cognitive, rhetorical, and cultural meanings to understand trauma's effects on memory, character formation, and language manifestation.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a psychological state that arises after someone faces or witnesses a very terrifying, shocking, or life-threatening situation ("What Is PTSD?"). According to the American Psychiatric Association, those who face an experience incorporating actual or endangered death, serious wounds, or a bodily threat are recognized as having PTSD (Luckhurst 1). In other words, post-traumatic stress disorder is developed by individuals who face wars, tragedies, accidents, or other stressful situations. It seems to cause particular visible physical, psychological and emotional disorders. Although it shows physical symptoms, it obstructs memory and identity in strange ways. A cluster of symptoms involves constantly re-experiencing the traumatic situation. On the other hand, another group of symptoms is characterized by a persistent avoidance of any stimuli associated with the trauma, including thoughts or feelings related to it, a loss of emotions, and an inability to recall the significant event. A third group of symptoms show an increase in arousal or reactivity, like losing of temper control, being overly alert, and an overstated response. (Luckhurst 1). These symptoms can

appear after the trauma, continue chronically over time, or emerge tardy months or years later (Tull 39).

Anxiety is the most widespread category of mental health issues, affecting an overwhelmingly high proportion of the adult population. It can be distinguished in several ways: the fear of failing an exam, not being able to pay your bills, or being rejected by someone (American Psychological Association, "Anxiety"). The realization of anxiety as a unique mental health condition has ancient roots, with Greek and Roman philosophers distinguishing it from other negative cases. Despite these early remarks, it took centuries for a deeper comprehension to manifest, with terms like "panophobia" used primarily (Stanborough). It can affect the entire person, behavioral, physiological and psychological. At the behavioral level, it can interfere in your ability to act, to express yourself, and to deal with everyday situations. On the physiological level, it can include bodily responses such as sweating, rapid heartbeat and queasiness. On a psychological level, anxiety can lead to feelings such as fear of death, delusions, or even a sense of disconnection from oneself (Cherney).

Recovery can mean diverse things. Some people considers the recovery means that they do not have symptoms anymore of their mental health issues .the others, it will mean Handling their symptoms, restoring control of their life and obtaining new ways to live the life they want (Lyon). Recovery is often portrayed as a process that is not always simple. You might have days, weeks, or months, where you feel well and times when your symptoms revive. As Bessel van der Kolk states, "The recovery is a big challenge, but it lets you to reestablish the ownership of your mind, body and self"(208). In addition, recovery involves finding a way to become focused and calm in your reactions to thoughts, images or anything that reminds you of the past. There are some steps to take in order to recover, but it depends on the circumstances of the individual. Such as looking for ways to enjoy your present life, engaging with the people around you, confronting

what has happened to you, being aware of your inner self, and being surrounded by a good support network (Van der Kolk 208). However, being surrounded by a supportive network can help to overcome the traumas, because relationships creates a safe place, where you become convinced to let go (Van der Kolk 215).

In *A Heart in a Body in the World* by Deb Caletti, the protagonist Annabelle Agnelli, struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder after witnessing a horrible accident, which leaves a trace in her soul and follows her as a nightmare. However, the novel depicts also the recovery process. Annabelle as a female protagonist can represent many other women and what happened to them, hence, the feminist literary theory is also relevant to this study.

Feminist theory helps to examine and better comprehend unequal and oppressive gender relations. It encourages the goal of equality and justice while supplying more opportunities for women. It advocates for social change, and promotes resilience and empowerment among underprivileged populations

Feminist theory is a critical foundation that aspires to comprehend and disassemble gender inequality, male-centric power structures, and constraining standards around sexuality. It presents challenges about patriarchal beliefs and the marginalization of women (Arinder). Feminist theory originated in the 18th century and expanded during the 1970s and 1980s as part of the equality movements. The purpose of using a feminist perspective is to facilitate the exploration of how people engage within systems and potentially provide solutions to challenge and eliminate oppressive systems and structures. It is characterized by examining gender norms and roles, working towards gender equality, and dealing with feminist issues (Arinder).

Resilience, on the psychological side, indicates inner hardiness, allowing individuals to recover from life's difficulties and challenges, often blossoming stronger than before (Psychology

Today). It requires finding a way through difficulties, recuperating emotionally, and pushing towards goals despite obstacles. Resilience allows individuals to revive, modify, and continue advancing after disruptive suffering. In her work *The Resilience Dividend*, Judith Robin argues that resilience is the ability of individuals, communities, or organizations to rebound from shocks and stresses and rise from those adverse experiences" (3). It is not something that you either own or do not own. It is an ability that you develop through experience or by facing failure. For example, when someone is dealing with mental health problems like anxiety and depression, they use their emotional resilience to search for help and to be healthier. However, being positive and optimistic, viewing failure as an experience to develop, sleeping enough, exercise and living by principles contribute to achieving resilience (Miles). In *The Story of My Life*, Helen Keller states that "optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."

In the late 20th century, female empowerment gained significant interest as a key idea in development and economics. Female empowerment seeks to increase women's self-esteem, decision-making power, entrance to opportunities and resources, control over their lives, and ability to drive societal change (Machavarapu). It advances gender equality by allowing women's equal participation in work. Empowered women essentially play a part in the health, outputs, and expansion of families, communities, and nations for enduring development. Julie Bindel, along with other critics and writers, criticizes the notion of empowerment, suggesting it contradicts feminist autonomy by implying the transfer of power to others. She emphasizes feminist liberation from patriarchal structures over dependence on external empowerment, advocating for women's self-empowerment.

The violence against women in American society led to an understanding of how it can affect in a damaging ways women, physically, psychologically and mentally. In addition to the

representation of the young adult literature and its significance. Since it helps the young readers to feel empathy with the others, create understanding and being able to deal with their own adversities and challenges. Moreover, the trauma theory and the feminist theory are represented, in order to analyze the themes which are related to the case study. However, the following chapter will highlight how the trauma is represented in Deb Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in The World*.

Chapter II: The Evolution of Annabelle Agnelli in *A Heart in a Body in the World: Before and After the Traumatic Event*

This chapter focuses on exploring how trauma is depicted in *A Heart in a Body in The World* by Deb Caletti. The first section introduces the author, Deb Caletti, and gives a short overview of her novel, *A Heart in a Body in the World*. This initial section attempts at shedding light on the reasons that motivated Caletti to write such interesting work. The second section discusses the protagonist's daily activities before the distressed event. Finally, the third section examines how the protagonist's life is affected by the traumatizing event.

II.1. Deb Caletti's Insight: A Brief Overview of *A Heart in a Body in the World*

A Heart in a Body in the World is an inspiring young adult novel written by Deb Caletti in 2018. Deb Caletti tackles themes of post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and healing in this novel. The novel conveys a significant message to assist young adults in confronting their challenges and adversities.

Deb Caletti is a highly praised and decorated American author who wrote almost 20 books for adult and young adult audience, such as *The Queen of Everything* (2002), *Honey, Baby, Sweetheart* (2004), *Wild Rose* (2011). She is from San Rafael, California. Her childhood was not stable; she moved frequently between different cities and schools. From a youthful age, she loved reading and writing, and she developed deep passion for storytelling. Moreover she gained a Bachelor's degree in journalism from the university of Washington in Seattle .Caletti over her career garnered a numerous prestigious honors , she won a Michael L. PrintZ Honor medal in , the Josette Frank Award for fiction in 2019, and the Washington state book award among other state literary honors, 2005 . She wrote about profound themes like relationship between the mother and daughter, trauma and healing and body image issues. In addition to writing, Caletti is a participating member of the literary community. She functions on advisory boards, teaches on

the craft of writing and the creative process. Presently, Caletti lives with her family in Seattle, and continues attracting the readers through her compelling and provoking stories.

Deb Caletti gives, via her powerful novel "*A Heart in a Body in the World*," a voice to the complex themes of trauma, healing, resilience, and activism against gun violence. At the novel's heart, Caletti wonders whether one person's story can have a meaningful impact, whether it speaks to anyone, does anything, or is just words on a page. Caletti during an interview states that she found her response in the letters from the audience who saw their own experiences reflected in the narrative; they felt truly understood, and that's the most important part. The book highlights the prevalent belief that women bear responsibility for the feelings and actions of men. There's a deeply rooted sense of guilt and self-questioning over whether we "caused" certain actions an unfortunate everyday thing. Caletti emphasizes the importance of challenging this notion, taking action instead of remaining silent, pursuing hope, and never ceasing to speak out against violence because women have a powerful voice. Caletti in her article "At the Heart of It" states that "As a writer, as a human being, I, like Annabelle, believe still believe in the power of one voice"(Caletti). Her words remind us that stories have the power to reveal truths and create positive change in the world around us (Caletti).

Deb Caletti in her article mentions her motivation behind writing about the marathoner, Annabelle Agnelli. She decided to write the novel *A Heart in a Body in the World* after hearing about a recent graduate who committed a horrible act of violence against three students in a nearby high school with which she was familiar. After the crime, Caletti felt it harder, and this tragedy affected her deeply. She then learned why that man committed such a crime: he had just been left by his girlfriend. Feeling rejected and jealous, he said she was his dream girl (Caletti). Deb Caletti remembered that in the past she had also been a dream girl she states "I'd also been in a situation where very intense and frightening things had been done in the name of 'love.' I

had been a 'dream girl.' Now, every time I hear and hear and hear these stories, probably forever more as long as I live, I think, that could have been me" (3).

Deb Caletti was furious at what he did and wanted everyone else to feel it too. In her article, Caletti asserts, "I was angry. I was angry at why he did it and how he did it. Here it was again. That same story. I was fed up. Done. I wanted everyone to be angry and fed up and done with this story. In many ways, though, I would never be done with it. Stories like that in your life stay and stay and stay" (Caletti). She needed Annabelle, who witnessed something ugly, carried its guilt, and sought to overcome it in her own way. Caletti knew everything Annabelle felt—the guilt she carried when the guy's love turned frightening, and the fear of whether he would harm her, himself, or others. Deb Caletti Furthermore, in the same article, argues that women are often told they have to carry the responsibility for what men do, which is an everyday thing. Caletti emphasizes, Women, young women, women of all ages, are told we are responsible for how we make men feel and what we make men do. It is difficult to understand what we've caused and what we haven't caused, what belongs to us and what belongs to someone else, what we are guilty of and not. It is confusing to know if we're powerful—so powerful that we make men do bad stuff—or if we're powerless, because we are told that over and over, too (Caletti).

In her article, Caletti explains the story to comprehend the confusion of power, control, and misogyny in order to overcome it. In this regard, Caletti stresses, "I wanted to thoughtfully, lovingly, and carefully take the strands apart to show how a situation like this truly feels. I wanted to explore my own anger and sense of helplessness about violence and gun violence in particular" (Caletti). She stated that her greater wish is to help even one person, and fiction provides the ability to see from someone else's perspective. This helps us understand ourselves, start to view things differently, and make better choices. Caletti emphasizes, "It can be a door to

conversation about things that confuse us and scare us and even traumatize us. I need that from books” (Caletti). She also states that the important part is to give her readers a sense of agency.

A Heart in a Body in the World is a timely novel because Deb Caletti wrote it before the "me too" movement became noticeable. She asserts that "it was timely two years ago, it was timely before that, it is timely now, and it has been timely for far, far, too long" (Caletti). Finally, Deb Caletti emphasizes the power of the voice and how it has the potential to completely transform situations due to its immense power. She explains, "as a human being, I, like Annabelle, believe—still believe—in the power of one voice: a voice that can speak of pain and fury and the deep need for a better world, a voice that can join other voices. I want to tell my readers this. I want to tell them I believe in THEIR voices. I want to tell them that people plus people plus anger is how things can change" (Caletti). As in the novel, Annabelle was powerless, but she ran in spite of everything. Her running tells her that she does not know what to do, but that she must do something.

A Heart in a Body in the World is talking about the protagonist Annabelle Agnelli, who lives in Seattle with her mother Gina and her brother Malcolm in Washington. Annabelle is a high school senior who adores running, which is her favorite hobby. However, something happened to her when she was picking up food at a restaurant. A drunken man tried to grab her arm. Because of this incident, the idea of running across the country comes to her mind. The novel shows that she faced a traumatic event, causes her Post traumatic stress disorder. Annabelle intends to stay in hotels, and breakfasts at night while running across the country during the day. However, Annabelle’s grandpa Ed, shows up with his RV on the second night. Grandpa Ed, proposes to drive side by side with Annabelle, and sleep in his RV at night. Annabelle’s brother Malcolm determines he will be Annabelle’s logistics coordinator and maps out her way. Malcolm

collaborates with Annabelle's friends Zach and Olivia. Zach generates a GoFundMe account and picks up money for Annabelle, while Olivia becomes Annabelle's publicist and structures a T-shirt and a social media page, and programs interviews for Annabelle with reporters and schedules speeches at clubs and colleges. While Annabelle is running she become a social activist and meets with a new people, who shows support and love. Annabelle's long journey goes through ups and downs. Finally, Annabelle makes it to her arrival point, Washington, DC. During the trial and sentencing hearing, Annabelle addresses Daniel Wainwright by name for the first time, and he receives two consecutive life sentences ("A Heart in a Body in the World Summary").

II.2. Before the Trauma: Annabelle's Story

In *A Heart in a Body in the World*, Deb Caletti states that "Every person is a book with chapters, some are glorious and some are dark and ugly" (338). Before her ugly chapter, Annabelle Agnelli was just a simple, kind student, and no one was expecting something like that to happen.

Annabelle Agnelli is a high school senior and a girl who likes to study science and everything that is related to it. She loves science—all of it—biology and physiology, planet Earth, the universe, and creatures both animal and human. She loves the magical design of it all—the unfathomable architecture of the cosmos right down to the intricate master piece of the eye (Caletti 15). Annabelle enrolls in multiple Advanced Placement (AP) courses across various subjects, demonstrating her high level of academic engagement and achievement: "If it's science, it's AP for everything" (Caletti 15). Annabelle works at Essential Baking Company. In addition to that, she volunteers hours at Sunnyside Eldercare. Annabelle is also a long-distance runner and has two marathon medals hanging on her door. She loves to run, as if she were born for it. She participated in many races, too. In *Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of*

Adolescence, Laurence Steinberg states that "structured, meaningful activities, such as hobbies, sports, or the arts, play a crucial role in adolescent development by promoting discipline, self-esteem, and social skills"(130). In addition to that, Annabelle loves talking and clarifying the mysteries: "She loves mysteries, too, but she loves explanations for mysteries even more. To her, explanations don't ruin mysteries; they only make them more magnificent"(Caletti 15).

Annabelle is that type of girl who is popular, likes to travel, and reads a lot of books to entertain herself: "Cross-country (of course), friends (she's popular), books read just for fun (too many to name)"(Caletti 3). Annabelle lives in Seattle with her family, which consists of her mother Gina, her genius brother Malcolm, and their father Anthony, who left them six years ago after saying that he had enough. Additionally, Ed Agnelli, her grandfather, has retired and is currently touring the nation in his RV.

Annabelle remembers how kind she was before the tragic incident. Everyone adored her. Caletti states: "See! She's nice, and to old people, too. Sweet, watery-eyed ladies with tissue-paper skin. Cranky old men with hungry basset-hound ears and suspenders. They love her. She's a sweetheart, they say. She is"(Caletti 15). They all agreed that Annabelle was kind and naive, with moments of confidence, but still had the innocence that the children have; "That kind of naive kindness is akin to standing on a busy freeway and gazing at the beauty of the sun"(Caletti 16). Annabelle, like any other typical American teenage girl, enjoyed going to parties with her friends, having fun together. In the *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman states that: "The social brain is in its natural habitat when we're talking with someone face-to-face in real time. The more socially connected we are, the better we feel, and the more resilient we become."(50).

One night in December, just before Christmas, she attended a dance party with her friends. She and her friends, as a group, went to a dance party at night. Everyone else seemed to have fun. She felt beautiful that night, and she sounded happy. "This is Annabelle as she used to

be: anxious, careful, responsible, but with moments of confidence, twinkles of flirtation. Love of life, a bright smile, a snort of laughter, a sense of belonging with her friends” (Caletti 175). However, there were parts of herself that showed how much she was anxious—she struggled with apologizing for other people's actions, and she was also a silver-tongued liar. In other words, niceness was expected from her, not honesty. She was a kind people-pleaser who made sure everyone around her was fine, even if she was not. She helped people a lot but got nothing in return. In *The Disease to Please: Curing the People-Pleasing Syndrome*, Harriet B. Braiker states that "people-pleasers are those who say 'yes' when they want to say 'no' for fear of disappointing others or earning disapproval. This behavior often leads to a loss of self-identity and chronic stress” (66). Annabelle is just like this in her daily life: "She is supposed to give not take" (Caletti 169).

Since childhood, Anabelle has been taught not to be rude to others. When the taker showed his control over her and wanted her for himself, she did not react, but instead, Annabelle showed kindness; she chose to be nice rather than honest in situations like this, and this was how Annabelle solved her problems. Her parents used to say, "Treat others the way you'd want to be treated. Be kind to those who are less fortunate. If you don't, BAD STUFF WILL HAPPEN” (Caletti 212). Annabelle wanted to feel liked like any other girl her age, but this was not an invitation. “So what if he likes her? It doesn't matter. She gives in to the fact of it, being quietly adored. Who wouldn't like being adored, even if it makes her uncomfortable sometimes?” (Caletti 238). Her best friend, Kat, was able to understand Anabelle's situation. Kat understood that Anabelle was reacting negatively to the passive-aggressive behaviors shown by the Taker and others. In this context, Kat expresses, “You're just afraid of not being liked, Annabelle. You should try it out sometime. Say some bad shit. Say what you think. Say what you mean. Say no. say ‘I don't want that. See what happens” (Caletti 216).

Anabelle's family is a typical American family. Her relationship with her mother, Gina, and her brother, Malcom, is ordinary. Her mother and brother love and support her. Gina, being a caring mother, advises Annabelle during her teenage years. In *The Hurried Child*, David Elkind states, "Family life is our first school for emotional learning. Our family is where we learn how to interpret our emotions and how to manage them"(213). Gina wisely counsels Annabelle to listen to her inner voice, saying, "Something is bothering you, you listen. Good stuff doesn't nag at you. You feel nervous in a parking lot, you get out of there" (Caletti 220). Annabelle's friends also adore her and enjoy her company. Her closest friend, Kat, is like a sister to her. They share a deep bond, and Kat has been a part of Annabelle's family for a long time. Annabelle's other friends, Zach and Olivia, are always by her side, supporting her and celebrating special occasions like her 17th birthday, where Kat's thoughtful gift of a Moleskine notebook deeply touched Annabelle.

Anabelle dated a boyfriend named Will, which is normal for an American teenage girl. Will was supportive of Anabelle and they shared many experiences together. "They go to Shilshole Beach with friends, and they drink a beer or two at the bonfires, and they bring burritos to Magnuson Park. He sometimes runs with her in the summer when she trains for cross-country in the fall"(Caletti 49). Unfortunately, he decided to end the relationship. Instead of seeking attention after the breakup. In *The Psychology of Romantic Love*, Robert Sternberg mentions that when the relationship end, the partners may experience a "self-esteem crisis", by seeking for the attention". Anabelle had a normal reaction of trying to move on with her high school life. This is shown when she wears a new shirt the next day, stating "In terms of power, though, beauty is like glass, isn't it? Shining, but transparent and easily marred. A shard of glass can draw blood, but a fist can shatter it, too" (Caletti 52).

The 'taker' showed in Anabelle's life during her sensitive teenage period and tried to manipulate and control her. The brains of the adolescents seek for the excitement and the novelty,

which makes the odd behaviours interesting(Steinberg), which made the taker's odd behaviors initially interesting to Anabelle. In *The Identity: Youth and Crisis*, Erik H. Erikson states that the first task of adolescence is the formation of the personality, and wanting to be seen by others, which the "taker" does like this. He acted like he could deeply understand her, giving her a meaningful card. The taker then tried controlling her by making her drive him and lying about plans, leading to her feeling uncomfortable yet tolerating it, "She wanted him around and now she wants him to go away, and even though she's annoyed that he's in her car, she also worries that this wanting-not-wanting makes her kind of horrible" (Caletti 210). However, Anabelle realized she was being manipulated and rejected him, she did not fall into his trap. This unfortunately led to the tragic and the horrible event that changed her life and cost her dears Kat and Will.

Annabelle was preparing herself for the party night at Geoff Graham's, she is excited a lot to have fun with her boyfriend Will and best friend Kat, she felt safe and free because the "taker" will not attend to the party. Annabelle saw Kat, and they were wearing matching clothes, they are best friends after all. However, Annabelle cared about her look, because for her beloved Will, she was constantly checking her lip-gloss. Suddenly and without warning, Annabelle witnessed a horrific sight she could have never expected or thought about. The taker was carrying a rifle, and Will and Kat were lying on the ground, blood flowing from their lifeless bodies. At this moment, Annabelle's world has been destroyed as she lost the two most important people in her life to terrible violence at the hands of "taker".

In *A Heart in a Body in the World*, Deb Caletti states that: "Today: It is clear that some people are without either a heart or a soul" (253). Annabelle after that is left without a soul, the taker took everything from her, her Kat, her Will and her heart. This name, 'the taker,' definitely fits him, he is heartless.

II.3. The Aftermath of Trauma in Annabelle's Life

No one really knows what is hidden inside the heart. What sorrow, what guilt and what darkness lurk within. Annabelle changed directly after experiencing that horrible event. In *A Heart in a Body in the World*, Deb Caletti reflects on the enigmatic nature of the heart and its resilience: “The heart sings and speaks and tells its own story. There are exact miles of arteries; there is the exact force of its beat. But the heart is also quiet. It is also a mystery. No one really knows how it goes on after being broken” (343). Throughout the novel Annabelle Agnelli, refers to the resilience of the heart as a mystery, and how it keeps beating after being broken.

According to the American Psychological Association, trauma is considered to be an emotional response, after witnessing a traumatic event that damage the individual psychologically and physically. Annabelle received a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder after experiencing that traumatic event. Annabelle Agnelli demonstrates the symptoms quite clearly. Starting with hyperarousal, which is considered to be the main symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), it happens when someone's body unexpectedly kicks into high alert because they are thinking about their trauma. Even if that real danger is not present, their body does act as if it is, leading them to feel stressed after a traumatic event (Cirino). In *Trauma and Recovery*, Judith Herman states that "hyperarousal is a common symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), where individuals experience intense anxiety, irritability, and hyper vigilance as a result of past traumatic experiences"(79). Annabelle Agnelli has a problem when she is picking up her food with a drunken man. This situation triggers a high alert level in her, causing her to run away from the scene. “Well, sometimes you just snap. Snapping is easy when you’re already brittle from the worst possible thing happening. It is easy when you're broken and guilty and scared. You snap just like that. Like the snap has been waiting around for the right

moment” (Caletti 2). Annabelle, at that moment, becomes determined about what she is up to and what her destination is. She calls her mom and says, “I’m not coming home. I’m going to run and keep running. I’m going to run until I reach Washington” (Caletti 11). Gina is conscious of Annabelle’s PTSD, and when she describes her plan to run across the country, Gina says, “Don’t you remember what Dr. Mann said? This is hyperarousal, recklessness. Have you been having flashbacks? You haven’t been sleeping well” (Caletti 11). She describes her condition.

Annabelle Agnelli also experiences 'avoidance' as a severe symptom. Emotional avoidance is a natural response to trauma. However, it is considered to be part of the avoidance cluster of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms; it works as a means for people with PTSD to escape from the painful and the sad memories” (Tull). In *Remembering Trauma*, Richard J. McNally states that "avoidance behaviors in PTSD serve as barriers to healing and recovery, preventing the individual from confronting and processing the traumatic memories necessary for psychological integration and growth"(289). In other words, avoidance is a way used by traumatized people to avoid recalling or thinking about the bad and sad memories of that event. Annabelle avoids thinking about all of this because it is hurtful for her; she will remember everything again, and she will meet the taker again. “You will not be weak, she tells herself. You will not think about Seth Gregory and the future. You will not imagine jails and handcuffs” (Caletti 28).

Intrusive thoughts are another serious symptom with which Annabelle is dealing. Intrusive thoughts refer to harmful ideas, images, sounds, smells, and feelings associated with a specific traumatic incident that persistently surface in a person's mind, either consciously or subconsciously. These thoughts create severe anxiety when they enter the mind. They play a lively role in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and they also have a significant influence on the people affected by it. Van Der Kolk states that “intrusive thoughts in PTSD can be

overwhelming and uncontrollable, causing intense emotional distress and physiological arousal". These intensive thoughts and flashbacks are common when people confront a traumatic event. The memories that led to those events keep burning in your mind; they let you re-experience that traumatic event again and again. While Annabelle is running using her GPS, which she called Loretta in order to show her the way, a lot of thoughts come into her mind without her conscious awareness. She remembers the taker, the way he entered the class, and how he smiled at her. However, in order to stop this, she starts to yell, "Stop," which is a strategy that Dr. Mann has suggested for Annabelle to control those intrusive thoughts and flashbacks. Annabelle wants to stop those thoughts from overwhelming her because they exhaust her, but even when she tries to divert her attention to something else to help her forget, they keep returning. She states, "You wish you could annihilate some memories, too, but you can't do that either. You try. But they pop in" (Caletti 14).

In addition to the previous Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms that Annabelle struggles with, anxiety is another symptom to consider. Anxiety refers to a feeling of nervousness, fear, or worry about something that is happening or can happen in the future ("anxiety"). Van Der Kolk states that "anxiety is a pervasive symptom of PTSD, often manifesting as hypervigilance, exaggerated startle responses, and intense feelings of fear or panic" (Van Der Kolk). Anxiety is one symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder; it carries feelings of fear, unsafety and doubt about everything. It can interfere in your daily life and relationships, leading to negative results. People with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) perceive danger as a constant presence in their surroundings. However, when Annabelle reaches a tunnel, she has no flashlight or headlamp, and it looks dark and cold. Despite her fear, Annabelle bravely enters the tunnel. "Anxiety plays in your background like a bad grocery store music you pace and count stuff and wake at night, your heart beating too fast. You pretend to be brave and

do stuff to prove you're not a scared person like she is" (Caletti 5–6). Annabelle starts hearing things; she doubts herself because she is not referring to something specific but to a lot of sounds. Annabelle is aware of her state, and this shows her strength. However, she starts to feel someone's fingers among her shoulder, and this is not just a metaphor, because Annabelle truly feels the fingers over her; her post-traumatic stress disorder has increased her body sensation, and this makes her hyper-aware of touch. She senses someone attempting to capture her, indicating that Annabelle is constantly in danger. She is always on the verge of being captured by someone invisible but scary; the danger is everywhere, not only in one place but in every corner of her life and every interaction. The intense fear torments her, and this shows that Caletti succeeded in putting the terror into words: "Here is danger above, below, around, behind. Darkness wiggles its horrible fingers and tries to grab" (Caletti 72).

Annabelle is also grappling with another symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder, known as emotional numbness. It is a condition in which you are unable to feel or express emotions. Feeling numb is momentary. In addition the emotional numbness is considered a strategy used by those who have faced trauma in order to protect themselves from further emotional or bodily pain (Lindberg). Herman states that: "The numbing response of the mind to overwhelming horror preserves the self at the cost of a reduced capacity to feel. This protective shield, however, can become an impenetrable barrier to further emotional life and growth". In other words, emotional numbness is a state where traumatized people are unable to express their emotions and avoid interactions with others in order to protect themselves from danger.

Annabelle no longer engages or interacts with others, nor does she express her emotions for them. In addition to that, Annabelle stops listening to music and reading books as she used to, because those are just reminders of that traumatic event. Annabelle wants to be alone and not engage with anyone, not even her mom, the most important person she loves. "But sometimes

you wish even the people you love would go away. Not for long, not forever, just long enough to have a little quiet” (Caletti 78–79). She even stops scrolling through social media accounts. She wishes to stay in another space, just to relax. Her brother Malcolm calls her and tells her that she is going to meet Ashley Naches from Wenatchee High for publicity. After arguing about it, she finally agrees to go. Malcolm becomes so serious; he loves her so much, and she knows that. “She’s glad the calls are done. She has no desire, even, to look at social media, to peek at what her friends are doing” (Caletti 82). She also misses books and music because they remind her of Kat. “Books make you feel things hard” (Caletti 205)

Survivor's guilt is a psychological phenomenon associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It is the reaction to an event that some people face when they survive a traumatizing situation that others do not. However, the survivor's guilt is difficult to treat because it depends on the patients' symptoms and their specific needs (Bistas). Herman states that: “Survivors of trauma often experience profound feelings of guilt and responsibility, believing they could have or should have done something differently to alter the outcome. This phenomenon, known as survivor's guilt, is a frequent and debilitating aspect of post-traumatic stress”. In other words, Survivor’s guilt is a common response to trauma, where people who survived a traumatic event are more likely to feel guilty about living while others did not. In Annabelle Agnelli's case, she aspires to resemble a robot, symbolizing the flow of energy in and out of her body. She runs as a punishment for her crime, and she thinks, “This pretty much is the hell you deserve” (Caletti 122).

Annabelle describes herself as a monster. Her mind is full of upset thoughts, like she prefers to be dead in place of Will and Kat. Their last words are stuck in her head. Kat told her that she had never fallen in love, while Will told her to see her soon, before the traumatic event that happened unexpectedly. “She is also driven by something that is beyond all sense. She is

compelled by a force that has no reason. Call it guilt, Shame, a need for redemption” (Caletti 63). Being unable to truly confess what is on her mind becomes an issue for her, and now she is taking responsibility for that. Annabelle would change the past or even prevent their deaths entirely, but she knows that it is too late for that. She thinks what if she kept a distance between herself and the taker? If only she was assertive, none of this would happen. Her Dr. Mann has said. “Your only job—and it’s a big one—is to try to speak and live your own honest truth. That truth might shift. You might need more time to even understand what that truth is. That’s it. That’s the job. Trying to manage or control everyone else? Not the job. Impossible, besides” (Caletti 236-7).

Deb Caletti's motivation behind writing this novel was real, as she wanted to confront her ideas through the protagonist Annabelle Agnelli. Annabelle, after the traumatic event, was just a teenager enjoying her life with her family and friends. However, the traumatic event took everything from her and diagnosed her with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Chapter III: Resilience and Empowerment: Female Recovery in Deb Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World*

The final chapter examines the themes of recovery and female empowerment in Deb Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World*. The first section explores Annabelle's recovery journey, shedding light on the psychological as well as emotional challenges she faces. The second section examines Annabelle's journey towards female empowerment and how she grows to conquer all the challenges and to inspire others.

III.1. Journey to Healing: The Recovery Process in *A Heart in a Body in the World*

Annabelle Agnelli shows resilience in her process of healing from that tragic event. It was not easy, and it took her 2,700 miles to recover. Her healing journey starts with her first step into running. While she is running, she relies on journaling as a way to express what is inside her heart, which helps her discover herself more. Her loved ones give her the power to reach her destination. While she is running, she meets new people who are proud of what she is doing and support her in various ways.

According to Herman, recovery from trauma is the process of healing and regaining control over one's life after experiencing trauma. It means that you are free to feel what you want without being angry, ashamed or scared. It also involves learning to stay calm even when you remember thoughts, pictures, or events that remind you of that traumatic event. In addition to being fully open and engaging with the world (Van der Kolk 2009). Recovery is often viewed as a challenging process that depends on the individual's unique circumstances. The first and most important step in the healing process is to confront past events and find ways to manage the related emotions.

The emotional brain is where the motivators for post-traumatic reactions are located, such as rapid breathing, speaking with a reedy voice, and showing defensiveness. Unlike the rational

brain, which conveys itself through thoughts, the emotional brain makes you understand the origins of these feelings and protects you from the intensive reactions; however, it cannot vanquish those feelings (Van Der Kolk 210). So the essential part of resolving the stress of the trauma is finding a balance between the emotional and rational brains. This state is called the "window of tolerance", which was coined by Dr. Dan Siegel. When in a state of shutdown or hyperarousal, control over the body and mind is lost. In a state of shutdown (hypoarousal), the body becomes heavy, and concentration becomes difficult. In summary, the only way to achieve this balance is to access your emotional brain and engage in "the limbic system therapy," which aims to restore your emotional brain to its normal function of maintaining your body (Van Del Kolk 210). This therapy indicates accessing your self-awareness. Alternatively, it involves recognizing your inner self.

The neuroscientist Joseph LeDoux and his colleagues have shown that the only way to consciously access the emotional brain is through self-awareness, i.e., by activating the medial prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain that notices what is going on inside us and thus allows us to feel what we're feeling (Van Del Kolk 211). Being aware of yourself, focusing on your sensations, and noticing what annoys you opens up more options to react instead of the usual responses and even manage it. Mindfulness puts us in touch with the transitory nature of our feelings and perceptions. When we pay focused attention to our bodily sensations, we can recognize the ebb and flow of our emotions and, with that, increase our control over them. Moving to the importance of relationships in the process of recovery. The traumatized people must feel safe before they can calm down. Van Del Kolk states that "in order to recover, mind, body, and brain need to be convinced that it is safe to let go (215).

Starting with running, which is a form of exercise that involves moving the body at high intensity, running is a popular form among other physical activities because it offers several

health benefits. There are two types of running: aerobic and anaerobic exercises. During aerobic exercise, heart rate and oxygen intake stay in a regular state over a period of time, while anaerobic exercise is about fast bursts of energy performed at a high level of effort in a short time (Millard). Running has many benefits, including improving heart health and cognitive functions by increasing blood flow to the muscles and brain. It also helps to reduce mental health issues like anxiety, PTSD and depression. ("Running and Jogging: Health Benefits"). . In *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, John J. Ratey states that": Exercise, particularly running, is one of the best things you can do for your brain. It boosts cognitive function, alleviates depression, and improves mental health overall".

Annabelle Agnelli is determined to recover and escape from the pain that resides within her heart and mind, so she starts running with the intention of leaving everything behind. She decides to run until she reaches Washington, D.C. Indeed, she makes a good choice; she believes that "it's something. Something is better than nothing" (Caletti 22). Annabelle faces problems at first, especially on her first day. While she is running, people keep looking at her, which makes her uncomfortable; "They look at her like she's got a bomb strapped to her chest" (Caletti 28). Yes, she makes them worry, as if she is a danger, but she continues anyway. In addition to the hardship of the route, especially the big hills, she runs through it anyway. Due to that, everything in her body hurts. She experiences pain in her legs, her chest, her heels, and her stomach. In addition, Annabelle feels a sense of loneliness. She remembers what Gina said to her: that is too much for a young lady, and she cannot handle it all alone.

Since the start of Annabelle's run, there has been a noticeable shift in her body and her eating habits. Annabelle starts to feel starving, and she also understands that in order to finish the race, she must provide her body with energy and feed herself appropriately. "But she is starting to understand that if she wants to be strong, she needs to feed the strength. Energy and power in,

energy and power out" (Caletti 95). While running through forests, farmland, and highways, Annabelle notices a reduction in her stress, which she describes as a relief. Running allows Annabelle to express herself and her anger in a healthy way rather than repressing it like she used to. As a result, this leads to her inner healing process at the psychological and emotional levels. While she is running beside Rockford High, a truck passes by quickly, causing her to become angry and yell loudly at it. She feels the fury throughout her body and expresses it. "The road is working its magic. The miles are. Distance is. People are. She's healing. She's mobilizing"(Caletti 263).

Journaling is considered a way to help people cope with their trauma. Practicing writing improves the physical and psychological health of people with mental and physical issues. It takes only paper and a pen, and it can be done anywhere at any time (Tull). In *Opening Up by Writing It Down: How Expressive Writing Improves Health and Eases Emotional Pain*, James W. Pennebaker and Joshua M. Smyth argue that "expressive writing can be a valuable tool for dealing with the aftermath of trauma, promoting emotional and psychological healing". Recent research has shown that journaling can assist people who suffer from PTSD in different ways. At the psychological level, writing plays an important role in coping with the symptoms of PTSD, such as anxiety. At the physical level, it seems to reduce body tension and revive focus. In *Writing to Heal: A Guided Journal for Recovering from Trauma and Emotional Upheaval*, James W. Pennebaker states that "when people write about their deepest thoughts and feelings, it helps them make sense of the trauma and reduces the emotional burden". In addition to that, the process of writing does not only help the traumatized people cope with post-traumatic stress disorder but also post-traumatic growth. It involves the ability to understand the lessons and create a positive life change (Tull). Pennebaker argues that "expressive writing can lead to long-term improvements in mood, health, and well-being".

The act of journaling is represented in *A Heart in a Body in the World* by the protagonist, Annabelle Agnelli. In order to cope with the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, Annabelle relies on writing down her thoughts and feelings, which are difficult to talk about. Van der Kolk states that “journaling provides a safe space to explore feelings and thoughts that are too difficult to voice”. Annabelle is always worried about what to write on the moleskine that Kat gave her, but she starts journaling as a way to heal from the internal wounds. “Now, look. The pen is moving, and the blank page has ink on it for the first time” (Caletti 13). Annabelle uses the symbol of the heart to address the emotional damage and heartbreak that she is suffering from, which cannot be repaired easily. “Running 2,700 miles cannot repair hearts that have been destroyed” (Caletti 187). At the end of the novel, the reader can notice a shift in the author's writing style from pessimistic to optimistic. This indicates resilience and the ability to revive despite the hard times. “Sometimes, humans must also attempt to come back to life” (Caletti 328).

According to self-discovering theory. The journaling has an important role for increase the awareness and self-growth. It provides a space for the person to listen to his inner voice and transform it into words (Spike). This process allows to explore feelings, express the anger and release any other negative thoughts. Moreover, the act of putting words into paper helps to regulate the emotions and achieve better understanding for the self. For example, Annabelle describes the state of her heart during witnessing the unexpected crime of the taker, as if her heart stopped beating. “In real life, the Physiological Response to fear in unexpected situations is a feeling that your heart has stopped altogether” (Caletti 45).

The act of journaling also has a beneficial effect on mental health. It helps reduce anxiety and stress by managing unwanted thoughts and writing them down. In addition, it promotes emotional healing by promoting positive thinking and self-talk. Since Annabelle began

journaling, her anxiety and stress levels have miraculously decreased. Annabelle's daily life also shows a remarkable change in her personality and the way she deals with problems. Before, she used to panic in every stressful situation that happened to her. However, now she starts to understand and live without anxiety or fear: "How weird, she thinks, that there are people who maybe don't feel this thing, this endless buzz of nerves and fear and responsibility and control. It is so relaxing without it. It is restful (Caletti 168).

Studies show that the most powerful protection against becoming traumatized is having a good support network (Van der Kolk). "When we are terrified, nothing calms us down like the reassuring voice or the firm embrace of someone we trust. Frightened adults respond to the same comforts as terrified children: gentle holding and rocking and the assurance that somebody bigger and stronger is taking care of things, so you can safely go to sleep" (Van der Kolk 215). The key to recovery is to deeply feel that it is safe to let go. Van der Kolk states that "in order to recover, mind, body, and brain need to be convinced that it is safe to let go. That happens only when you feel safe at a visceral level and allow yourself to connect that sense of safety with memories of past helplessness" (215). After facing trauma, survivors require the presence of close people and their voices. Herman states that "recovery can take place only within the context of relationships; it cannot occur in isolation". It is important to be surrounded by people who make you feel safe. According to Van der Kolk, "it is critical to communicate with loved ones close and far and to reunite as soon as possible with family and friends in a place that feels safe." Our attachment bonds are our greatest protection against threats" (215).

The social relationships are well represented in this novel. The protagonist, Annabelle Agnelli, starts her journey by running across the country due to what she has been through and to raise awareness about gun violence. Her family, friends, and even the unfamiliar community stand by her side. They provide her with support, courage, and motivation. In fact, she could not

make anything without their help. She just accepts their hands and tries to rely on them, even if it is hard for her to trust them again. Annabelle observes that “a human heart is the size of two hands clasped together. Imagine your own hands joined, or your hand in someone else’s, because that is what hands are for, and what hearts are for: holding each other. This can be very, very hard to remember when hearts have been so broken” (Caletti 12). Grandpa Ed, who loves Annabelle and shares her pain, accompanies her on her journey. His help saves Annabelle from loneliness, providing her with emotional support so she can face the challenges. Her grandpa Ed is the kindest person ever. His appearance that day in the hotel is heroic, saying, “We’re going to DC! You run, I drive. I got the RV outside. It’s been almost six months since I’ve been on the road, and I’m losing my mind. Che cavolo! Let’s get out of here” (Caletti 41). Annabelle stays speechless, but that gives her the strength to carry on her mission. Grandpa Ed promised Gina that he would take care of her, and he does. He takes Annabelle to the doctor when she gets hurt. He always tries to change her mood by being funny and cheerful. Well, he knows the Italian jokes, so sometimes he uses them to cheer her up. Since they are both in the RV, he respects her personal space. She states in her moleskine: “It’s the people who know you and love you that save you” (Caletti 40). After witnessing the deer's death in front of her eyes, she shuts herself up and does not respond to her mother, who is on the phone. He kept reminding her gently about the importance of her family; she could not make them worry like that without saying a word. He says, “Family! They're the ones who're always gonna to be there for you. You don’t ignore the family. They show their love. You take their love. You feel better. Capisce?” (Caletti 227).

The traumatized people heal in the context of relationships with families, friend and loves ones. This relationship plays a big role because provides a physical and emotional safety including the feeling of being ashamed and judged, instead it creates a space where can face and process what happened. People who shut down and try to manage terror, stress and angry by

themselves, are more likely to arise another issues such as dissociation, despair and explosions (Van der Kolk). In other words, the relationships can save you from traumas and create for you a safe place till you recover, but the most important part is choosing someone you trust. "You have to find someone you can trust enough to accompany you, someone who can safely hold your feelings and help you listen to the painful messages from your emotional brain. You need a guide who is not afraid of your terror and who can contain your darkest rage" (Van der Kolk 217).

Annabelle's mother Gina is so supportive, but at first she was chocked about Annabelle's decision, she states: "And this isn't pressure? This isn't changing one kind of pressure for another kind of pressure? Frying pan into the fire. Frying pan into the blazing forest fire!" (Caletti 21).

Despite her anxiety, Gina u agrees because she sees how important this is for Annabelle's recovering process, and from the beginning of Annabelle's running she calls her every time.

Annabelle's Brother Malcolm, is also extremely supportive. He was the first one who support her decision at first. Malcolm prepared for her a backpack with all the supplies she would need for her journey, like phone charger, toothpaste, water bottle. He even created a Facebook page called "Run for a Cause" to raise public awareness, pushing Annabelle to do interviews by stating "You can. You have to. This is too big to just be about you" (Caletti 82).

Friendships also play an important role in healing from traumas, because having a friend who understands you and stands by your side can be a relief. Friends create a warm environment that fosters self-understanding and provides the necessary guidance and support. Annabelle is lucky to have friends who fight with her rather than judge or blame her. Deb Caletti, in this novel, is trying to give the reader a sense of agency through her friends. Zack and Olivia. They also witnessed what the taker had done at that night's party. Zack, on the one hand, has been her friend since fifth grade. Zack. He set up a GoFundMe account for her to collect donations and funds for her journey. Therefore, he is responsible for managing her financial affairs.

Additionally, he and her brother, Malcolm, plan every day to find the safest place for Annabelle and Grandpa Ed to park their RV. On the other hand, she has known her friend, Olivia, since middle school. Olivia designs the Run for a Cause T-shirt, which Annabelle wears while running. Olivia also coordinates Annabelle's interviews and speeches, although she dislikes being in public. When she plans the interview with Ashley Naches, Olivia encourages Annabelle by stressing, "You need to do this for you. And maybe this is the wrong thing to say, but I need you to do this" (Caletti 40–1). Indeed, her win is their win.

Community support plays a big role in the healing process because when you know that there are people who care, understand, and support you, it gives you empowerment and motivation to finish what you started. People who do not know Annabelle have supported her, giving her a sense of belonging and reassuring her that she is not alone in her journey. The strangers stood by her side, sharing her rage against the taker. She needs this support to combat her physical and mental health issues. When Annabelle reaches the intersection of East Morris Road and WA 27, she stops and begins to feel a sense of regret, believing that her future would remain unchanged even if she completed her running. She stops a bus, and as she rides it, everyone starts looking at her, shouting and calling her name, "Go, Annabelle!" (Caletti 127). A woman gives Annabelle a baggie full of oranges and states, "Don't stop. Keep going!" (Caletti 127). A child also gifts her a balloon. A man says, "You are lifting us. We are lifting you" (128). She wondered how they know her; they state that they heard about her from the spokesman. A man gives her the newspaper where she found the article that Ashley Naches wrote about her from the interview. Annabelle starts to fight back tears, and she runs out of the bus to continue her run. She totally forgets about quitting.

When Annabelle arrives in the village of Warren, she meets Angie Canfield, a serious woman who holds her hands and states, "Don't you let him get to you" (Caletti 252). Annabelle notices that the people are also angry at the taker; they care about her. "What is Annabelle feeling, besides guilt? Something new" (Caletti 252). Now she is aware that things are about to change due to the people's support. Bill McGuire, the manager at Magic Walter University, introduces her to the staff, students, and parents. She shakes hands with them. Annabelle felt gratitude that she was alive. "Happiness seems like a miracle. Happiness seems like something that maybe always should be celebrated" (Caletti 272). Now it is her last street; she arrives after everything. "Every person survives something" (Caletti 338). She could see Andrew Jackson and, beyond him, the White House. She hears everyone cheering with her name, "Go, Annabelle, go." They were all wearing red T-shirts. Malcolm runs toward her; Gina and Grandpa Ed are crying, and everyone is hugging her. "What does she feel besides guilt? Joy. She feels joy." (Caletti 348). In the court, the taker is present, and Annabelle is looking straight at him. She informs him that he has not won. He needs to know he hasn't won. Her heart has." (Caletti 129).

III.2. Embracing Strength: Female Empowerment in *A Heart in a Body in the World*

The novel *A Heart in a Body in the World* effectively conveys the theme of women's empowerment through its protagonist, Annabelle Agnelli. Annabelle stands up for herself in a society where firearms are a commonplace part of daily life and assumes responsibility for her actions. The taker has done his part, and now it's her turn, making her powerful. Many women and young adults find inspiration in Annabelle's empowerment. She becomes their voice, and her message becomes their message as well.

Women empowerment in the feminist theory is a range of actions that aim to enable women to control their lives, providing women with the rights in order to access to healthcare, education and contribute in the society (Shafa) In other words, empowerment is the recognition

of a woman's self-autonomy and the ability to make decisions and choices about her life, including her education, personal relationships and career. In *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan states that: "The only way for a woman, as for a man, to find herself, to know herself as a person, is by creative work of her own". Empowering women and girls is basic thing for the social and the health development of the countries, families and the societies. When the women are safe and living a productive life they will provide the society with diverse benefits and raise a healthy and happy children ("What is Women's Empowerment?"). In *The Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the World*, Melinda Gates states that: "When we invest in women and girls, we are investing in the people who invest in everyone else".

Women empowerment is well represented by Deb Caletti's *A heart in a body in the world* by Annabelle. In the novel when she is standing to pick up her food in the line. And a drunker man holds her hand. She was powerless, didn't say a word. Indeed she hated how weak she is. "Annabelle wants to be strong, and on her own, but she has no idea how" (Caletti 9). Annabelle hated being powerless. Annabelle wants to be strong and face everything "She wants to rise up, set her gorilla-mean chest right up against the chest of anyone threatening her. She wants to be the kind of woman who says No man will ever and No one messes with me" (Caletti 9).

A woman's voice is considered a way of empowerment. This involves raising her voice against any form of oppression and sharing her narrative in order to challenge harmful stereotypes and misrepresentation.. Through their voices, they reclaim their self-autonomy and define their own aspirations and experiences ("Empowering Your Voice"). *From I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*, Malala Yousafzai states that: "When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful". Before the traumatizing event, Annabelle was just a girl with some girlhood issues; now she is carrying a message instead of all the females and trying to stop the violence with her voice. At first, she does not want to be

in public; she states, “My mission is personal” (Caletti 145). However, Olivia recognizes the critical importance of Annabelle's voice at this moment, urging her to reach out to the world and share her concerns about gun violence and stressing how all of the females need her voice. Olivia states, “This is about you. But also... me. All of us. And... my little sisters. Every woman. Every person, but especially—every female person” (Caletti 145). Following this, the Young Feminist Alliance club at Carnegie Mellon University plans to invite Annabelle to deliver a speech. Annabelle, since she suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, avoids meeting people. Olivia states, “Do you have any idea how many young women have experienced . . . well, if not exactly what you have, something like it? Someone using violence to control or silence them? Powerlessness through intimidation? Who doesn't feel they need a voice?” (Caletti 234). Annabelle is doing something, she is fighting on her own way, and this is what the people want to know “You're doing. And you're just being your honest self, moving forward. You're not staying in old places anymore, do you see? That is the message”.

Women can empower each other by providing guidance and support to less experienced women, helping them overcome challenges and adversities. Being a model plays an important role in inspiring other women; it helps them provide the motivation so they can continue reaching their own dreams and goals. Women have to represent each other's by advocating their rights and interests, and by making sure that their voice is powerful and well represented in different aspects of life. In addition to the encouragement, the emotional support that women can provide to each others can enhance them to overcome the obstacles and keep motivated (Shafa). Emma Watson in her speech at the UN launching the HeForShe campaign states "If not me, who? If not now, when?"(Watson).

Annabelle Agnelli is considered a model that inspires all females to speak up for themselves and never stop sharing their experiences just because of how society works. Through

her speeches and interviews, Annabelle Agnelli inspires and motivates many women. One night, while Anabelle was in the RV, a girl approached her and expressed her admiration for her strength, saying, "Your strength inspires me" (Caletti 202). While her speech at Carnegie Mellon Gender is powerful, Annabelle finds it difficult to address 'the taker' by name, so she refers to him as 'the shooter' instead. The audience, which is made up of only female students, listens to her. She recounts how he read the gun's instructions and describes how he shot her best friend, Kat Klein, and Will MacEvans, the boy she loves. Annabelle starts to cry. She takes a breath and moves to gun violence: "I don't have a great plan about the laws or regulations needed to decrease gun violence. I'm only eighteen. I don't have the knowledge required to devise those laws. But I'm old enough to know that even those words decrease gun violence are crazy. Decrease sounds insane" (Caletti 332). She describes how the taker wanted to control her and hated her for being with someone else. When she was with someone else, he resorted to violence as a form of revenge. Annabelle states, "I see that his violence was just a show of power by a bully. Maybe all violence is. But it works. It sure does. Violence shuts you up, all right. A gun always gets the last word"(Caletti 333). She continues, "I live in this system, you know, you do, we do, where the control and the shutting up is such a regular thing that we sometimes don't even see it. Where there are rules and rights for him and rules and rights for her and they are different rules and rights" (Caletti 333). Annabelle adds that she runs and does not know if her country will protect her rights. She says, "As a female, as a person who wants to be safe from violence. It has not shown me that it will protect me from males more powerful than me, from people who hate and intend to do harm" (Caletti 334). She asserts that her desire to run stems from feelings of grief and sadness. She asserts, "I don't know what to do but that I must do something. That I must use my voice, because it's the only thing you have sometimes when someone or something is larger and more powerful than you" (Caletti 334).

Finally, *A Heart in a Body in the World* by Deb Caletti addresses timely issues such as toxic masculinity, the challenges women face in society, and gun violence. In one book, the protagonist, Annabelle Agnelli, demonstrates resilience and empowerment by running across the country to convey a message, relying only on her voice. Indeed, her message inspires many females, especially young adults and encourages them to face the adversities, the challenges, and the hard times and overcome them.

Conclusion

Psychological issues and resilience are the primary focus of many writers in Young adult literature, which highlights the themes of trauma and how the main characters try to cope with it. In her novel *A Heart in a Body in the World*, Deb Caletti depicts a teenager girl called Annabelle who struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder after witnessing a horrible event, and tries to manage it in her own way. Caletti also examines the threat of gun violence in American society, where women are the most likely to be the victims.

In this novel, Caletti depicts resilience as a crucial component of the protagonist's recovery process, which includes her decision to run across the country to heal from her traumatic wounds. In addition to the process of journaling, which helps the protagonist, Annabelle, organise her thoughts and reduce her post-traumatic disorder symptoms, Caletti tries to give the reader a sense of agency by depicting the support that the protagonist received during her recovery journey from her family, friends, and community. Through the voice of her main character, Caletti conveys the importance of speaking out about violence against women in American society, using this narrative as a means of empowerment.

This study is structured into three chapters. The first chapter examines an overview of the violence against women in American society and its impact at the physical, psychological and mental levels. Additionally, it provides a concise overview of young adult literature, emphasizing its significance, particularly for teenagers. Moreover, it highlights a theoretical framework that analyses the related themes of this case study.

The trauma theory is used in the second chapter in order to analyze the representation of trauma in *A Heart in a Body in the World* by Deb Caletti. It begins with a brief introduction to the author, including her motivations for writing this novel, as well as a novel summary. In addition to analyzing the life of the main character before the traumatic event, the novel also shows the

impact of trauma on the protagonist after witnessing the event, according to the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

The last chapter shows the recovery process of the main character. The protagonist uses running as a means to heal; Annabelle runs from Seattle to Washington, DC. In addition, Annabelle uses journaling as a method to express her thoughts and release her emotions. It shows that the supportive community helps Annabelle during her journey, providing her with motivation and encouragement. This study also explores the theme of female empowerment, as the protagonist challenges herself and runs in order to address female issues such as violence and men's power of control.

One of the central findings in the analysis of "*A Heart in a Body in the World*" is that running serves as a symbol for the hardships of mental illness and the recovery process. By examining Annabelle's running journey, this study concludes that Deb Caletti uses running as a metaphor for overcoming the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Despite the ups and downs, Annabelle gradually regains her mental well-being throughout the novel.

Another finding of this analysis is that the female protagonist in *A Heart in a Body in the World* employs various strategies to navigate and also asserts her resilience in the traditionally male-dominated setting, which is depicted in the novel through the use of gun violence. Through a close examination and analysis of this novel, Annabelle Agnelli challenges everything in order to share her voice and raise awareness about the violence against women in her society.

Through the analysis of the protagonist's trauma and the resilience in order to recover *in A Heart in a Body in the World*, this study gives a contribution to the fields of trauma theory and the feminist theory, shedding the light on young adult literature and its significance. This study suggests that Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World*, as a young adult novel, serves as a powerful way to address contemporary issues related to teenagers.

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Résumé

L'objectif principal de cette recherche universitaire est de mener un examen complet du processus de rétablissement, en utilisant *Un cœur dans un corps dans le monde* de Deb Caletti comme étude de cas. Cette étude tente d'examiner la manière dont Annabelle gère ses problèmes de santé mentale et comment elle survit dans un environnement traditionnellement dominé par les hommes. La méthodologie analytique a été utilisée dans cette analyse, pour examiner ce que Deb Caletti tente d'exprimer dans son roman *Un cœur dans un corps dans le monde*. Cette étude utilise deux cadres : la théorie du traumatisme et la théorie féministe. La théorie du traumatisme, d'une part, tente d'étudier l'effet du SSPT sur la protagoniste Annabelle et également de déterminer le processus de guérison qu'elle utilise. La théorie féministe, quant à elle, est utilisée pour discuter des concepts d'autonomisation et de résilience à travers l'héroïne féminine du roman. En fait, le courage et la détermination d'Annabelle transmettent le message de la force féminine. Enfin, cette thèse met également en évidence le rôle de la littérature jeunesse contemporaine en fournissant aux lecteurs des histoires inspirantes qui résonnent avec leurs expériences et leurs défis.

ملخص

المغزى الرئيسي لهذا البحث الأكاديمي هو إجراء فحص شامل لعملية التعافي، باستخدام "قلب في جسد في العالم" للكاتبة داب كاليتي كدراسة حالة. تحاول هذه الدراسة مناقشة كيفية تعامل أنابيل مع مشكلات صحتها العقلية و كيفية صمودها في بيئة يهيمن عليها الذكور تقليدياً. لقد تم استخدام المنهجية التحليلية لفحص ما يحاول داب كاليتي التعبير عنه في روايتها "قلب في جسد في العالم". هذه الدراسة تستخدم إطارين نظريتين: نظرية الصدمة و نظرية النسوية. من ناحية تحاول نظرية الصدمة دراسة تأثير اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة على بطله الرواية أنابيل وايضا لتحديد عملية الشفاء التي تستخدمها. تستخدم النظرية النسوية من ناحية اخرى لمناقشة مفاهيم التمكين والصمود من خلال البطلة النسائية في الرواية. في الواقع إن شجاعة الشخصية الرئيسية أنابيل وتصميمها ينقلان رسالة قوة الأنثى. وأخيراً تسلط هذه الأطروحة الضوء على دور أدب الشباب المعاصر في تزويد القراء بقصص ملهمة تتوافق مع تجاربهم وتحدياتهم.