

## Études d'histoire religieuse



Patricia Simpson, *Marguerite Bourgeoys and Montreal 1640-1665*, Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997, 247 p.

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Volume 64, 1998

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1006659ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1006659ar>

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### Publisher(s)

Société canadienne d'histoire de l'Église catholique

### ISSN

1193-199X (print)

1920-6267 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

### Cite this review

Smyth, E. (1998). Review of [Patricia Simpson, *Marguerite Bourgeoys and Montreal 1640-1665*, Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997, 247 p.] *Études d'histoire religieuse*, 64, 116–117.  
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1006659ar>

\*\* Natalie Zemon Davis, *Juive, Catholique, Protestante – Trois femmes en marge du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, La Librairie du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Seuil, Paris, 390 p.

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Patricia Simpson, *Marguerite Bourgeoys and Montreal 1640-1665*, Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queens University Press, 1997, 247 p.

This latest offering in the McGill-Queen's Studies in the History of Religion is an important addition not only to the field of the historical studies in religion but also to the fields of Canadian social history, history of education and the history of women. Patricia Simpson's book skillfully analyzes how Marguerite Bourgeoys (1620-1700), a citizen of Troyes, France came to be a pivotal figure not only in the history of Canada but in the history of women within the Roman Catholic Church. The author is co-director of the Marguerite Bourgeoys Centre and a member of the congregation which Bourgeoys established. She brings to her subject detailed personal and professional knowledge, as well as a fine critical scholarly eye. She builds on the previous scholarship undertaken by her community, most especially the work of Sister Mariam of the Temple (Eileen) Scott, whose pioneering efforts reported both before the Canadian Catholic Historical Association and other academic conferences, attest to the important contributions which women religious have had in creating, reporting and scrutinizing Canadian history.

Simpson's purposes in writing the book are both analytical and didactic. She assesses Bourgeoys as a leader who set out to «build a better church and a better society» (p. 11) by focusing on the needs of women and children. Further, Simpson argues that Bourgeoys' life «can tell us something about meeting the challenges of the present ... and about the need for understanding and compassion which are no less important now than they were more than two hundred years ago» (p. 11). The resulting study attains both these goals.

The work traces the life and work of Marguerite Bourgeoys from her birth in 1620 to 1665. Although she would live in Montreal for another 35 years, Simpson argues that the period of her life which Bourgeoys would have categorized as her «golden age» would be that period between her arrival in Montreal in 1653 and the departure from Montreal in 1665 of Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve. Simpson emphatically states that «The Montreal that evolved after 1665 was not the settlement of which its founders had dreamed» (p. 10). The work documents the factors which lead her to this

conclusion and further probes the factors which enabled Bourgeoys to be the sole member of the pre-1665 leadership to continue in that role until the end of her life.

Simpson sets her study within the context of past scholarship on Bourgeoys. She critically reviews ten earlier studies or collections which had Bourgeoys, her writings and her life as a primary or secondary focus. Simpson provides both an historical and historiographical context for each. Just as she describes past works as products of their ages, she assesses her own study as a product of the current age, where the categories of gender, race, class and ethnicity inform scholarly analysis.

The six chapters of the study detail aspects of Bourgeoys' life and the worlds in which she lived. The first two chapters set the intellectual, spiritual and historical context for Bourgeoys' life and works. Chapter Three shifts the focus to New France, details the history of Montreal, analyzes the contributions of Jeanne Mance as co-leader and cofounder of the Montreal experiment, examines the key roles which women played in the enterprise and sets the stage for the arrival of Bourgeoys. Chapters Four, Five and Six set out how the experiences of her first twelve years in New France, combined with the experience and spiritual grounding of her previous thirty-three years in France, strengthened Bourgeoys insight and sense of vision which enabled her to remain active and committed to the enterprise after Maison-neuve's departure in 1665.

Simpson states in her introduction, «The life of Marguerite Bourgeoys did not finish with the departure of de Maisonneuve in 1665» (p. 10). She comments that the attainment of canonical status for her community, its expansion to include women of many cultures and the extension of its enterprises beyond Montreal, «is another story.» From this reviewer's perspective, it is a story that needs to be written in as clear and analytical style as this first part has been told. We all look forward to the next book which documents and analyzes the life and work of Bourgeoys from 1665 to her death in 1700.

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René Bacon et Gisèle Desloges, *Sœurs missionnaires de Notre-Dame des anges – De l'intuition à l'institution (1905-1922)*. Lennoxville, Sœurs missionnaires de Notre-Dame des Anges, 1996, 171 p.

Moins connues que les Missionnaires de l'Immaculée-Conception, dont elles sont pour ainsi dire un rameau détaché, les Sœurs Missionnaires