

contains as many titles as the text does pages. With the understanding created by this extensive reading, Gourdeau takes us through the minutiae of daily life: the foods that the nuns ate and shared with their "seminarians", the hygienic practices and dress code that they imposed, the lessons that they taught, and the religious practices that they required of them. She gives these things meaning, without presuming too much on her sources; her conclusions are always well grounded.

Marie's writings reveal an interesting balance between intolerance and tolerance. She kept paganism at arm's length, to the degree that she did not even recognize her charges officially until they received Christian names in baptism. "Aux yeux de cette fervente catholique, les petites 'sauvagesses' vivaient dans les limbes avant leur conversion" (p. 78). Yet in their treatment of the Amerindians she and her companions showed considerable sensitivity. They learned their languages (Marie took great pains to learn Algonquin, Montagnais, and Huron and to draw up dictionaries and catechisms in these languages), they accepted some of their tastes, customs, and habits, as for instance their form of dancing, in which even Madame de Peltrie shared at recreation (p. 74). Perhaps more surprisingly, considering the mentality of cloistered nuns, they allowed them a freedom, which would have been unheard of in France, to come and go from the monastery. "Nous les laissons libres en ce point", wrote Marie, "car on les gagne plutôt par ce moyen, que de les retenir par contrainte ou par prières" (p. 60). Yet she recognized that this same need for space made her charges unfit for the full demands of religious life; she was never able to make nuns of them, as she had initially hoped (p. 91).

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the work, for this reader, is what it tells us about the missionary mentality of the period. Gourdeau makes her case: the French Catholic culture of the Ursulines, while it remained dominant within the monastery walls, nevertheless underwent subtle transformation in its encounter with native ways.

Other readers will find other points of interest. All in all, anyone concerned with the Catholic Reformation, or Amerindian history, or the history of New France, or that of women, would do well to read this laudable little study of a small encounter between a few not-very-important people, which took place within a tiny space and during a brief moment of historical time. I should add, also, that students looking for an example of how good scholarship makes the most of limited evidence will find this a very useful and instructive book.

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Allan Everett Marble — *Surgeons, Smallpox and the Poor: A History of Medicine and Social Conditions in Nova Scotia, 1749–1799*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993. Pp. xiv, 356.

This book at times seems more like a mine of historical information about physicians and surgeons than a social history of the medical profession and the poor

for whom they cared, as the title suggests. However impressive the details illuminated by Dr. Marble's research, without a clear thesis and in the absence of any attempt at a conclusion, the book, which ends abruptly, is less effective than it otherwise might have been, and the reader is left somewhat adrift.

To his great credit, Marble identified 340 surgeons, 21 physicians, and five apothecaries between 1749 and 1799, and would have found more if he had considered Louisbourg, where the French erected a major hospital and where several surgeons had served during the first British occupation between 1745 and 1749. The oversight of pre-1758 Louisbourg is as curious as it is unexplained. It would have been useful had the author attempted some sort of group analysis of such medical practitioners, from which we could have learned something of their social origins, age profile, marital status, religious adherence, or length of service and range of experience. Nor are we given collective details of their estates for those who died in the colony, obtainable from the probate court records, with which he is so familiar. As the personal papers and account books of not one of these practitioners have survived, except for a couple of diaries, Marble became dependent on evidence from public records.

Only one such important source — the records of Nova Scotia's Chancery Court — was overlooked. From its study he could have learned that several of the surgeons, physicians, or apothecaries who settled in Nova Scotia, not merely accompanied regiments or ships and happened to serve there briefly, became active in business. John Day of Windsor, as an example, became in 1775 an important sub-contractor for the supply from Nova Scotia of the British army in Boston. Evidence for Day's commercial dealings, with capital raised in London, is found in the civil suits his widow had to defend against his creditors. Further study, begun by Marble, of civil suits in the Inferior Court of Common Pleas and the Supreme Court would multiply such examples and help to complete the history of the eighteenth-century medical practice in Nova Scotia still recoverable from extant sources.

One of the great values of this book is to remind us that the social structure of Nova Scotia, throughout its colonial history before Confederation, remains largely unstudied. In the eighteenth century, the colony was severely underpopulated, given even its then-known resources. At the highest estimate there were some 20,000 to 25,000 souls inhabiting peninsular Nova Scotia and Cape Breton by 1755. At least 40 per cent of the original English settlers of Halifax from 1749 to 1750 had departed immediately for New England, while the Germans at Lunenburg endured. With the Acadian expulsion — as many as 1,200 never left peninsular Nova Scotia or Cape Breton — destroying in a stroke the most advanced agricultural settlement north of Pennsylvania, and the removal of the Louisbourg garrison and much of the French population of Cape Breton in 1758, the colony's population shrank by half to less than 12,000 in 1767. Most of these were the families of the 8,000 New England planters who took up the vacated Acadian lands. The fewer than 1,500 Mi'kmaq maintained territorial control over much of the province as late as 1760. Their failed attempts to retain possession of their land in the face of a large influx of settlers from 1783 onwards shattered their way of life and eroded their culture.

The colony's population expanded in wartime after 1775 to no more than approximately 17,000, including the military, before the influx of about 29,000 Loyalist refugees in 1783. By 1800, when the gender balance in the colony was more balanced than earlier, there were between 60,000 and 66,000 souls, most of them very poor.

Marble adds much detail to this. He demonstrates that arrivals in wartime in the 1750s, 1770s, and 1790s of large numbers of troops and seamen created epidemics in Halifax and its environs. With them came hundreds of soldiers' wives and children, along with camp followers, many of whom were abandoned at Halifax when the regiments departed. As the medical men treated mainly soldiers and seamen for smallpox, Marble's account provides a great deal more information about the poor in Halifax than hitherto has been attempted. In addition, from his laboriously researched study of those whose death we have a record of in this era, we know that of the 2,800 whose age is known half were minors; 42 per cent had not reached their eleventh birthday. His death list of almost 11,500 individuals — a rare historical data base — if reconstituted, could be subject to far more analysis than Marble attempts.

Dr. Marble's scholarly enterprise straddles several fields. Not only is he a widely published professor in the Technical University of Nova Scotia and director of research in Dalhousie's Department of Surgery, but also a noted Nova Scotia genealogist, well known for his capacity to comb almost every manuscript likely to reveal something useful to the several historical topics he simultaneously pursues. Always very generous in sharing his research with others, he places Nova Scotia historians doubly in his debt for reminding them of how little of the province's early history they have yet written.

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Serge Gagnon — *Mariage et famille au temps de Papineau*, Sainte-Foy, Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1993, 300 p.

*Mariage et famille* is a study of the aspects of the institution of marriage in Lower Canada between 1790 and 1830 that can be deduced from religious archives. The bulk of the documentation is drawn from letters sent to the bishops by curés seeking clarification on how to deal with specific problems among their parishioners, or seeking permission to allow couples to marry who fell within the prohibited degrees of kinship or who required episcopal permission for other reasons. Thus the major focus is the French-speaking and Catholic population, although there are glimpses of the problems immigration caused in determining, for example, the validity of a marriage candidate's claim of widowhood. Protestant theology is not the subject of the book, but protestantism plays a large role, as the mere threat to be married by a protestant minister could at times precipitate the desired dispensation from the bishop.