

The Fifty-Eighth Season of the
**TORONTO RENAISSANCE AND
REFORMATION COLLOQUIUM**
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(University of Toronto Mississauga)

Relief, Deliverance, or Exorcism? Casting Out a Demon in Seventeenth-Century New France

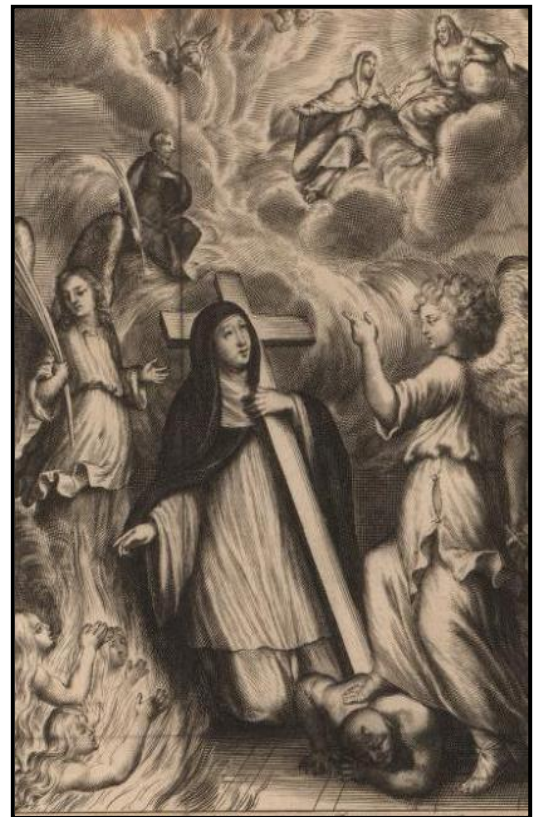
**NOW RESCHEDULED FOR:
Thursday, 30 March 2023,
at 4:00 p.m. (EST) via Zoom**

To join, please use the following Zoom link:

<https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/82840360702>

There is no passcode; once you click on the link, you will enter directly into the waiting room.

One night in October 1662, Marie Regnouard, the seigneuresse at an estate near Québec, freed her servant from a demon's torments. At this point, priests and nuns had been trying to end the demonic infestation for many months; finally the efforts of a laywoman succeeded where others had failed. These efforts were described in sources from the time as a kind of "relief" and "deliverance." Looking beyond such words to the actions themselves, we can see a conspicuous resemblance to something else: an exorcism. Marie's actions reveal the complexities and precarities of New France as a colonial society. The ideals of the colony's founders were receding from view, the French settlements were vulnerable to attack by enemies in Europe and North America, and disagreements simmered between civic and religious leaders about how to respond. Uncertain about the future of New France, the colonists grew anxious about demonic interference and they sought help from both the living and the dead.



MAIRI COWAN is an Associate Professor, teaching stream, in the Department of Historical Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga. This presentation draws from her new book *The Possession of Barbe Hallay: Diabolical Arts and Daily Life in Early Canada* (McGill-Queen's UP, 2022).

Image: Frontispiece engraving from Paul Raguenaud, *La vie de la mère Catherine de Saint Augustin*. (1671) John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images.