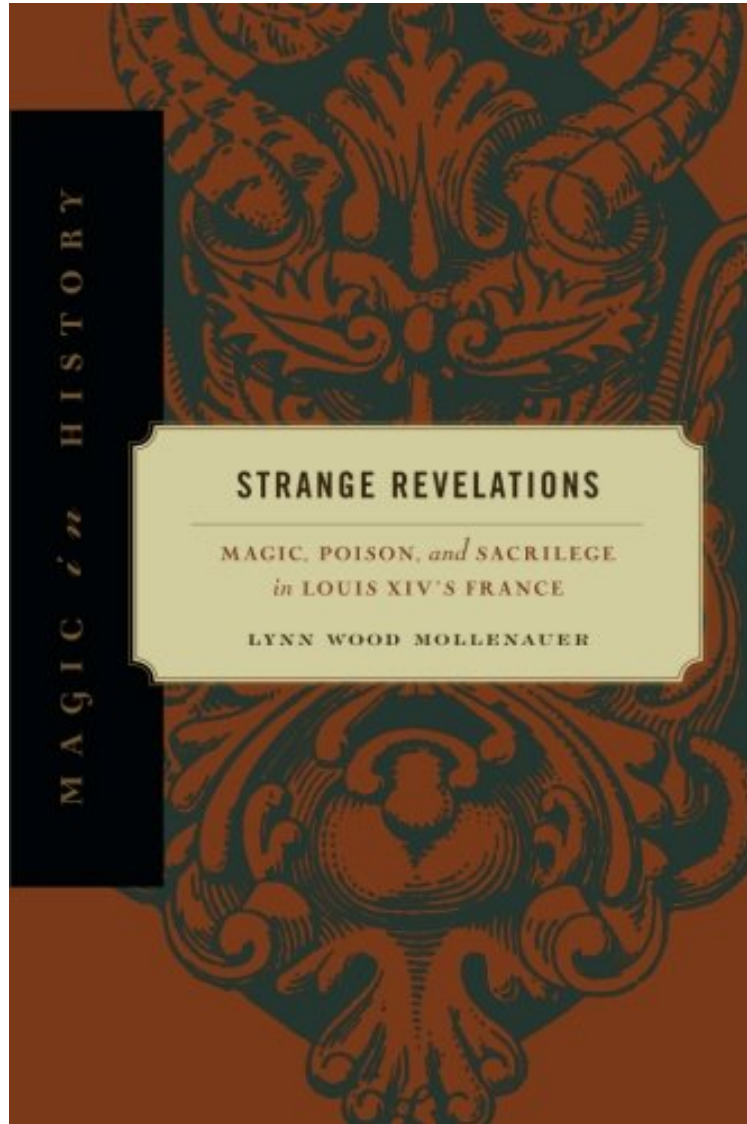


[E-BOOK] Strange Revelations: Magic, Poison, and Sacrilege in Louis XIV's France (Magic in History)

## Strange Revelations: Magic, Poison, and Sacrilege in Louis XIV's France (Magic in History)

Lynn Wood Mollenauer

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**Lynn Wood Mollenauer : Strange Revelations: Magic, Poison, and Sacrilege in Louis XIV's France (Magic in History)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Strange Revelations: Magic, Poison, and Sacrilege in Louis XIV's France (Magic in History):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Brilliant analysis of the Affair of the PoisonsBy FrenchTurkBrilliant analysis of the Affair of the Poisons. One chapter reads like an Agatha Christie murder mystery transposed to the

seventeenth-century.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I regret waiting so longBy Giordano ParedrosI regret waiting so long before reading this book. It is a excellent account of the incident in French political history known as the Affair of the Poisons. Mollenauer has well researched her subject by penetrating the archives of the Bibliotheque l'Arsenal and Bastille. It makes for good reading as well as for me a jumping off point for further research into more arcane corners of the demimonde of French society. It was a world of fortune tellers, sorcerers, renegade clergy, and assorted criminals. My specific interest is less political history but bibliographical. I am especially interested in magic handbooks, how they came about, and how they were put to use particularly by this subclass whose clientele reached into high levels of power within the court of Louis XIV. Mollenauer's sources include the interrogation records of the Paris chief of police Gabriel-Nicolas de la Reynie, who has been compared perhaps unjustly to the Joseph McCarthy of his day.In closing, I would like to mention the French movie made in 1955 of "L'affaire des poisons", but I only found excerpts posted on youtube.

The Affair of the Poisons was the greatest court scandal of the seventeenth century. From 1679 to 1682 the French crown investigated more than 400 peopleincluding Louis XIV's official mistress and members of the highest-ranking circles at courtfor sensational crimes. In *Strange Revelations*, Lynn Mollenauer brings this bizarre story to life, exposing a criminal magical underworld thriving in the heart of the Sun Kings capital. The macabre details of the Affair of the Poisons read like a gothic novel. In the fall of 1678, Nicolas de la Reynie, head of the Paris police, uncovered a plot to poison Louis XIV. La Reynie's subsequent investigation unveiled a loosely knit community of sorceresses, magicians, and renegade priests who offered for sale an array of services and products ranging from abortions to love magic to poisons known as inheritance powders. It was the inheritance powders (usually made from powdered toads steeped in arsenic) that lent the Affair of the Poisons its name. The purchasers of the powders gave the affair its notoriety, for the scandal extended into the most exalted ranks of the French court. Mollenauer adroitly uses the Affair of the Poisons to uncover the hidden forms of power that men and women of all social classes invoked to achieve their goals. While the exercise of state power during the ancien regime was quintessentially visibleritually displayed through public ceremoniesthe affair exposes the simultaneous presence of other imagined and real sources of power available to the Sun Kings subjects: magic, poison, and the manipulation of sexual passions. Highly entertaining yet deeply researched, *Strange Revelations* will appeal to anyone interested in the history of court society, gender, magic, or crime in early modern Europe.

*Strange Revelations* effectively explores the multiple ways in which power was exercised at the court of Louis XIV, focusing on the hidden forms effected through poison and magic. Mollenauer does an excellent job of probing these issues through close analysis of the records left to us concerning the Affair of the Poisons.'James R. Farr, Purdue UniversityThe latest in the distinguished *Magic in History* series of the Pennsylvania State University Press, Lynn Wood Mollenauer's *Strange Revelations: Magic, Poison, and Sacrilege in Louis XIV's France* (2007) is a well-researched and convincing introduction to and nearly definitive book on the subject. This paradoxical fact results from the lack of further sources for research: thus Mollenauer has done just about all that can be done on poisoning and black magic in late seventeenth-century Paris.Orest Ranum, H-France Book sThis book is a worthy contribution to the *Magic in History* Series: in fact, it is spellbinding.Camille Weiss, *Renaissance Quarterly*It is well researched and an enjoyable read. Undergraduate students should digest it without resistance, and teachers can find much in it to provoke discussion, including but not limited to the obvious evidentiary problem. It should be on everyone's reading list.John J. Hunt, *Journal of Church and State*For anyone with an interest in the history of magic, *Strange Revelations* contains fascinating revelations indeed.Jeffrey Freedman, *Church History*This intelligent and well-written study deserves a wide readership among historians in general and is accessible enough for undergraduate students as well the literate public.Malcolm Greenshields, *Catholic Historical* About the AuthorLynn Wood Mollenauer is Assistant Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.