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A midwife, a teacher, a writer a  
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times. Nina Rattner Gelbart wrote a  
marvellous tribute to the King's Midwife  
and made sure the reader knows the

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context and the times Madame du Coudray lived in.

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## **The King's Midwife: A History and Mystery of Madame du ...**

The King's Midwife : A History and Mystery of Madame du Coudray by Nina Rattner Gelbart This unorthodox biography explores the life of an extraordinary Enlightenment woman who, by sheer force of character, parlayed a skill in midwifery into a national institution.

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Despite these obstacles, Gelbart tells her story as an unfolding life history focused on the midwife rather than a less personal history focused on midwifery. Gelbart spent ten years researching *The King's Midwife*, a virtue in this day and age when academics feel pressured to chum out a book every two or three years.

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Even as the King's official emissary, however, du Coudray faced many challenges as she sought to ensure the healthy delivery of France's future citizens. Literally on the road for more than 3 decades, this seemingly indefatigable midwife repeatedly battled finance ministers, village matrons, local administrators, and an often jealous medical community.

## **History: The King's Midwife: A History and Mystery of ...**

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This was a major expense--169 livres and 16 sous--and involved a hair-raising test administered by a panel composed of the king's first surgeon or his lieutenant, a number of Paris surgeons, various deans of the medical faculty and royal surgical school, the four sworn midwives of Paris attached to the Chatelet, and receivers, provosts, class masters, and council members.

## **The King's Midwife**

The King's Midwife is a "scholarly" biography--a statement that might justifiably strike fear in the heart of the stoutest reader--but Gelbart keeps the academese to blessed minimum. For the most part, this is a lively and well-written account of an exceptional life.

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## **The King's Midwife - Wonders & Marvels**

The King's Midwife A History and Mystery of Madame du Coudray. by Nina Rattner Gelbart (Author); November 1999; First Edition; Paperback \$33.95, £28.00; Title Details. Rights: Available worldwide Pages: 358 ISBN: 9780520221574

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## **The King's Midwife**

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It's National Midwifery Week, and today we present the history of a "woman in a man's world," the midwife Madame du



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Coudray. Angelique Marguerite Le Boursier du Coudray (1712-1790) was the "King's Midwife" in France.

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