

This engaging work is the first book-length investigation into the influence of Jansenism on Alexis de Tocqueville's political thought. The most comprehensive treatment of the subject to date, the author moves beyond the great work *Democracy in America* to show how Tocqueville's sociology of religion and political theory are still of use to contemporary political scientists. More than just an intellectual biography, *Tocqueville, Jansenism, and the Necessity of the Political in a Democratic Age: Building a Republic for the Moderns* demonstrates that once this Jansenist connection is understood, Tocqueville's political thought can be applied in new and surprising ways.

Moving from the historical sociology of Jansenism in seventeenth and eighteenth-century France to contemporary debates over the human right to education, the role of religion in democracy, and the nature of political freedom, Selby brings Tocqueville out of the past in order to make him relevant to the present. Holding valuable lessons for historians as well as political scientists and sociologists, this fresh new interpretation of Alexis de Tocqueville's political thought is a reminder that there is still much to learn from the great theorist of democracy.

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