

University of Chicago Press, contains discrepancies with the contents of the U.K. version. Nevertheless, no matter what version in which their work appears, McCall and her contributors have done a welcome service furthering and sharpening historians' gaze on Interregnum Britain. Consequently, even with the few flaws here and there in its pages, we should not ignore the book.

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***We the Fallen People: The Founders and the Future of American Democracy.* By Robert Tracy McKenzie. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2021. x + 294 pp. \$28.00 cloth.**

A sickness besets American democracy, Robert Tracy McKenzie argues in *We the Fallen People: The Founders and the Future of American Democracy*. The source of the current crisis, he contends, is a “Great Reversal” in the view of human nature that has informed how Americans approach their experiment in republican self-government—a reversal that transpired within a half century of the framing of the US Constitution and continues to infect the body politic to this day.

The Constitution crafted in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787 established a republic deliberately designed for a *fallen* people. McKenzie grants that at least some founders did not view human nature as unqualifiedly depraved; rather, as James Madison conceded in Federalist # 55, “there are other qualities in human nature, which justify a certain portion of esteem and confidence” sufficient for citizens to govern themselves. The founders understood that the problem is not that people are wholly evil; it is that they are not reliably good (17). In any case, they recognized that the infirmities of the human character, driven by passion and selfish impulses, “makes majority rule problematic” (18). Although affirming that the will of the majority will generally prevail (at least the “majority” as it was then construed—excluding, among others, women and enslaved people), the founders fashioned a constitutional republic with manifold structural checks on power to restrain a people predisposed to pursue personal interests above the common good.

The founders' view of human nature, McKenzie writes, is compatible with a biblical anthropology and Christian notions of original sin, although he sidesteps the question whether their dim view of human nature was directly informed by Christian theology. (He asserts that the founders “rarely spoke of sin at all” [74], a claim dependent on the meaning of “rarely” because the founders frequently discussed sin and the need for repentance and divine forgiveness in political papers, such as the many national and state proclamations setting apart days in the official calendar for public prayer, fasting, humiliation, and thanksgiving.) McKenzie makes only passing reference to Reformed Protestant theology, which emphasizes humankind's radical depravity. Most Americans of European descent in the founding era identified with this theological tradition, suggesting a connection between the founding generation's theology and their views of human nature. In any case, the book is less an examination of the founders' *theology* than an exploration of their *anthropology* and its influence on politics.

Within two generations of the Constitution's adoption, a new "democratic gospel" preached by Andrew Jackson and his followers repudiated the founders' (and Christianity's) view of human nature, replacing it with a populist notion that the people are "naturally virtuous" and reliably enlightened, wise, just, patriotic, uncorrupted, and incorruptible—and "their will must be absolute" (250, 105). This Jacksonian legacy remains in the ascendancy, McKenzie concludes, and this is what afflicts American democracy today.

Following an introduction laying out the thesis, the book begins with an examination of the founders' views of human nature followed by a description of "The Great Reversal" in the age of Jackson and an assessment of Jacksonian democracy in action as revealed by the Cherokee removal and national bank controversies. Attention is then turned to insights into American democracy gleaned from Alexis de Tocqueville's first-hand observations of American political culture during Jackson's administration. The book concludes with lessons and applications of this history for American democracy today.

McKenzie is a Christian who has written this book to encourage fellow believers "to think more Christianly" about their democracy and politics (21). Although most of the book is ostensibly about developments in the late 18th and 19th centuries, Donald J. Trump is a persistent presence throughout the book, sometimes lurking unmentioned in the background and at other times brought to the foreground for comparisons and analysis. The populist, anti-elitist, conspiratorial, self-righteous, and authoritarian impulses of Andrew Jackson and his disregard of humankind's fallen, sinful nature were the seeds of a political tradition that would produce President Trump and his style of politics. Jacksonianism celebrated the "innately virtuous" and "intrinsically good" populace, while jettisoning many of the constitutional restraints on government power the founders believed were essential for a well-ordered regime of republican self-government (263). The deleterious consequences of this reversal were already evident in the age of Jackson, as apparent, for example, in policies regarding Native Americans, and they were on full display in the age of Trump.

The interpretations of history presented in support of these comparisons will strike some readers as, at times, forced. The author occasionally paints with an overly broad brush and avoids many subtleties and complexities in the story that might challenge or complicate the thesis. McKenzie, for example, largely ignores the religious motivations that inspired some of the political support for Jackson and his brand of politics. Among Jackson's most ardent supporters were figures who embraced a theology and political anthropology much like that which informed the founding generation's view of human nature.

While avoiding "a comprehensive solution, if it exists," to the political crisis of our times, *We the Fallen People* concludes with a plea to evangelical Christians to have "less faith in ourselves" and to take "our fallenness seriously" (266, 267). McKenzie urges readers to re-embrace the founders' anthropology—an anthropology that accords with a traditional Christian view of humankind as fallen and sinful. Christians must view with healthy skepticism the "democratic gospel" that the people are "individually good and collectively wise," develop habits of restraint, and recommit to the constitutional checks on power the founders fashioned with an awareness of humankind's fallen nature (12).

*We the Fallen People* offers insights into the political anthropology that has shaped American political theory and constitutional design and the practical implications of a people's view of human nature for politics. It provides a sober reminder of the dangers

that await those who would frame constitutions, craft policies, or, more generally, seek the common good without a realistic appraisal of human nature.

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***Birthing Revival: Women and Mission in Nineteenth-Century France.***  
 By Michèle Miller Sigg. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2022.  
 ix + 258 pp. \$54.99 cloth.

Studies of nineteenth-century French religious history have in the main focused on the emergence of laicity and secularism over and against an entrenched conservative Catholic opposition. Sigg's work in some ways challenges this traditional narrative. She sees more diversity of religious position than commonly supposed. Her survey, directed primarily toward an informed public audience, concentrates on the nineteenth-century Réveil (revival or awakening) in France and the role of Protestant women in "birthing" the movement. Close examination of the Revival and those who promoted it can do much in Sigg's view to inform us about the complex nature of French confessional position since the Revolution of 1789.

Scholars recognize that Evangelical Christianity, while Euro-American in its origins, has become increasingly global. Yet, the exploration of its earliest forms has for the most part been confined to Britain and colonial America. Developments in France have received far less attention. From its roots in the Protestant Reformation, evangelicalism exploded in the eighteenth century. Still, the Revival did not flourish in France until the nineteenth century. Sigg also cautions that while men were the public face of the French movement, women worked closely in traditional supportive as well as fresh independent ways. Their activities, unfortunately, went largely unrecognized in the official records and remain woefully underrepresented in recent historical accounts.

Sigg divides the study into four principal sections. The initial three chapters establish the historical context. What were the roles that women enjoyed in early Huguenot history beginning in the sixteenth century? What was their participation in the early missionary movements in France and in association with the French Prophets and later Moravians and Methodists? Finally, how ought we to understand women's contributions as early distributors and teachers of the bible? The next section of the book, chapters four through six, centers on Paris and women's accomplishments there. Sigg examines the work of two women—Émilie Mallet and Albertine de Broglie—in establishing so-called infant schools, organizing the distribution of bibles, and launching the Paris Evangelical International Mission Society's women's committee to raise funds for missionary activities. Chapter seven explores the growing self-awareness of female missionaries, while chapters eight and nine survey the work of "missionary wives" at the Lesotho Mission in South Africa. The closing chapter refocuses attention on France and the development of deaconess communities in Paris and Strasbourg, even as the enthusiasm of the Réveil declined.

Except for the initial introductory material, each chapter views the topic or theme through the lens of one or more prominent Protestant women. Sigg is not especially