
An Analysis of De Tocqueville's Argument on Human Selfishness and Its Link to Democratic Society in Democracy in America

We live in a society where mediocrity is rewarded. People tend to their own needs and disregard others in pursuit of for social advancement. According to De Tocqueville's "Democracy in America", human selfishness can be directly linked to a democratic society. In order to prevent such greed, aristocracies should be promoted in order to encourage charitable behaviors and build a sense of community.

Democracy stimulates individualism and prevents unity. It causes man to focus on himself and carry all the burden alone. Unlike aristocratic societies, democracy is for "the interest of man" and confines himself. In contrast, aristocratic institutions "have the effect of closely binding every man to several of his fellow citizens." Similar to a sports team, members must depend on each other in order to function. It encourages people to branch out of their comfort zones and rely on complete strangers, therefore cultivating a compassion for humanity. Hence, Tocqueville's belief that democracy creates isolation. Therefore, in his novel, he expresses how a democratic society should be avoided and in its place aristocracy should stand. Democracy is seen as being more individualistic.

Tocqueville begins his argument by listing the good qualities of the aristocracy. He expresses how a man, who is part of the aristocracy, will "frequently sacrifice his person gratifications to those who went before." This reveals how aristocrats are thoughtful people. They care about the wellbeing of others and are willing to give up themselves for others. Aristocrats tend to focus on others rather than themselves and are selfless.

Aristocracy empowers people and helps build a better community. Just as De Tocqueville's novel states, democracy "throws [man] back forever upon himself alone" and therefore should be avoided to prevent selfishness. People must come together as one in order to strengthen society. Once united, humanity can be restored.

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