

Constitutionalism: The Tyranny Of The Majority

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In this excerpt from *Democracy in America* Alexis Tocqueville expresses his sentiments about the United States democratic government. Tocqueville believes the government's nature exists in the absolute supremacy of the majority, meaning that those citizens of the United States who are of legal age control legislation passed by the government. However, the power of the majority can exceed its limits. [Tocqueville](#) believed that the United States was a land of equality, liberty, and political wisdom. He considered it be a land where the government only served as the voice of the its citizens. He compares the government of the US to that of European systems. To him, European governments were still constricted by aristocratic privilege, the people had no hand in the formation of their government, let alone, there every day lives. He held up the American system as a successful model of what aristocratic European systems would inevitably become, systems of democracy and social equality. Although he held the American democratic system in high regards, he did have his concerns about the systems shortcomings. Tocqueville feared that the virtues he honored, such as creativity, freedom, civic participation, and taste, would be endangered by "the tyranny of the majority." In the United States the majority rules, but whose their to rule the majority. Tocqueville believed that the majority, with its [unlimited](#) power, would unavoidably turn into a tyranny. He felt that the moral beliefs of the majority would interfere with the quality of the elected legislators. The idea was that in a great number of men there

was more intelligence, than in one individual, thus lacking quality in legislation. Another disadvantage of the majority was that the interests of the majority always were [preferred](#) to that of the minority. Therefore, giving the minority no chance to voice concerns.

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