

Exercise 1-5: A Culture of Entrepreneurship

Democracy In America, Alexis De Tocqueville

Book Two — Chapters V-VII

Chapter V: Of The Use Which The Americans Make Of Public Associations In Civil Life

"Those associations only which are formed in civil life, without reference to political objects, are here adverted to. The political associations which exist in the United States are only a single feature in the midst of the immense assemblage of associations in that country. Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions, constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds — religious, moral, serious, futile, extensive, or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found establishments for education, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; and in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools.... I have often admired the extreme skill with which the inhabitants of the United States succeed in proposing a common object to the exertions of a great many men, and in getting them voluntarily to pursue it. The Americans form associations for the smallest undertakings."

Assignment: Below, write 2-3 sentences on your interpretation of this Alexis De Tocqueville quote.