



## Democracy in America: The Arthur Goldhammer Translation, Volume One (Library of America)

By Alexis de Tocqueville

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **About the Author**

Alexis de Tocqueville was born in 1805 to a noble French family that had survived the French Revolution. His father gained some political power under the reign of the Bourbons, and after the July Revolution of 1830, the family was exiled along with the king. Tocqueville, then twenty-five years old, stayed in France, swearing allegiance to the new government. Shortly thereafter he and a friend, Gustave de Beaumont, sought and received a government assignment to study the prison system of the United States. They arrived in America in 1831. After extensive travels across the young nation, Tocqueville wrote *Democracy in America* (published in two volumes in 1835 and 1840). The publication of the first volume made Tocqueville a well-known figure, but he led a quiet life, accepting modest governmental posts, traveling around Europe, and marrying an Englishwoman. In 1848, Tocqueville once again rose to political prominence after a prescient speech that foretold of revolution. After serving through the massive upheavals and overthrows of government, Tocqueville retired from political life in 1849. Always weak in health, his lung disease grew progressively worse from that period on. Moving south several times on doctor's recommendations, Tocqueville succumbed to death in 1859, in Cannes.

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