This chapter first sketches Max Weber's theory of business associations, highlighting issues of organizational form, cultural orientation, and political process. This perspective shapes social scientists' main assumptions about why and how business associations function, especially for scholars of comparative economic governance. Their comparative approach shows the distinctiveness of American associations, which is demonstrated here with brief contrasts to German and Japanese associational history. This Weberian comparative approach generates a major theoretical and empirical anomaly: it cannot explain why American associations thrive. To explore this issue, the chapter reconstructs the history of American business associations before and after the introduction of antitrust law in the late nineteenth century, again considering that history in terms of their organization, orientation, and politics.