



网络原文快读系列
WANGLUO YUANWEN KUAI DU XILIE
丛书策划：梁卫

Embarrassed Americans

● 马云霞等 编译

尴尬的美国人



世界图书出版公司

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世界图书出版公司

广州·上海·西安·北京

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

尴尬的美国人 / 马云霞等编译. —广州: 广东世界图书出版公司, 2002.12

(网络原文快读系列)

ISBN 7-5062-5883-8

I . 尴... II . 马... III . 英语—对照读物—汉、英
IV . H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2002) 第 100291 号

尴尬的美国人

出版发行: 广东世界图书出版公司

(广州市新港西路大江冲 25 号 邮编: 510300)

电 话: 020-84451969 84453623

<http://www.gdst.com.cn>

E-mail: pub@gdst.com.cn

印 刷: 中国人民解放军第四二三二工厂

(湛江市霞山区某塘路 61 号 邮编: 524002)

版 次: 2003 年 3 月第 1 版

2003 年 3 月第 1 次印刷

开 本: 787mm × 1 092mm 1/32

印 张: 4.5

印 数: 0 001 ~ 5 000 册

书 号: ISBN 7-5062-5883-8/H·0374

出版社注册号: 粤 014

定 价: 7.50 元

如发现因印装质量问题影响阅读, 请与承印厂联系退换。

前言

三四百年前，美国的大部分土地还是草莽未辟的处女地。两百多年前，这里还没有取得自由发展的权利。今天，美国已成为当今世界上经济实力最为强大的国家——这无疑让每一个美国人引以自豪。但是，也有许多鲜为人知的事实让美国人尴尬万分。

诚然，一本小册子不可能涵盖美国社会的方方面面、描绘美国社会尴尬人士众生像；但是，编者试图通过反映美国社会颇具代表性的几个方面，让读者对美国社会的尴尬之处有一些感性认识，并由此可见一斑。

通过本书，你可以对美国总统选举之内幕了解个通透透透；新鲜刺激、令人咋舌的美国小姐选举和与之联袂登场的“写实剧”能让你着实耳目一新；一边，你可以从《父母，别累着你的眼睛》中感受到美国家长们监视儿女的无奈与尴尬，另一边，你会对《一位父亲的恶梦》中满含辛酸的父亲充满同情——真是难为了美国的父母！《谁之过？》中父母的遭遇更让人倍感意外：原本一番好意送孩子去接受训练，却最终将孩子送上一条不归路；《少女怀孕新视角》让你深思；妙趣横生的《笨脑袋瓜》会让你啼笑皆非；《今日青少年：吸毒两难》中的青少年们会与你侃侃而谈吸毒问题。另外，你还能了解到大公司——米·高梅公司侵犯隐私权一案的始末……，骇人听闻的“9.11”事件爆发了，编者也搜集到了一些相关的材料，增强了本书的时代气息；当然，这些材料并不代表编者的任何观点。

另外，要特别申明的是，再现美国社会的尴尬两难并不是

本书的初衷，本书旨在让读者从另一个层面了解美国社会。

这本小册子的材料是从多种渠道采编而来，结构紧凑，语言简练、通俗易懂，可读性强。小册子中的各篇文章都是相对独立的，其间没有太大联系，所以读者无须从头到尾按次序去读，尽可以随便翻阅。

特别感谢武汉理工大学外国语学院程晏萍教授对全部书稿的审校，使得这本小册子得以问世。

编译者

于武汉理工大学外语学院

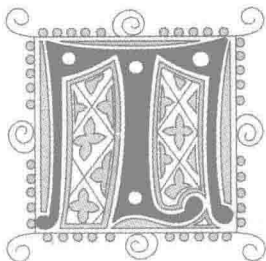
目 录

1. Should You Spy on Your Teen?	1
父母, 别累着你的眼睛	7
2. A Father's Nightmare	11
一位父亲的恶梦	18
3. Another View on Teen Pregnancy	23
少女怀孕新视角	27
4. Is It an Ideal Career?	30
这是理想的职业吗?	34
5. Miss America	37
美国小姐	42
6. Miss America and Reality TV	46
美国小姐与写实电视	51
7. Legal Reality: TV Cop Show Wins in Privacy Case	54
合法的事实: 警方电视直播赢得隐私侵权案	58
8. The Perfect Match	61
无比般配	65
9. The Soft Sell	68
笨脑袋瓜	72
10. The Embarrassed Americans	75
尴尬的美国人	82
11. The Shocking Days	87
令人震惊的日子	95
12. Whose Fault Is It?	101

谁之过?	109
13. Who's Papa?	115
真假父亲.....	121
14. Teenagers Today: Drug Dilemma	125
今日青少年: 吸毒两难.....	129
15. Special Halloween	132
今年鬼节好怕鬼!	136



1. Should You Spy on Your Teen?



Many parents knew their children could make mistakes that would last a lifetime—maybe even shorten a lifetime.

As former chairman of the Illinois chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, (Ruth Ann) is well aware of the dangerous combination of teens, alcohol and cars. All the boys are now in their 20s, and “we’re proud of them,” she says.

be aware of

The Lipics are not alone. In recent years many parents have thought they had to engage in espionage to keep tabs on their kids. The reason for parental anxiety is clear. A 1999 report by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan showed that about 62 percent of high school seniors reported having gotten drunk. The report also reported that about 42 percent had used drugs in the last year.

Another survey shows that roughly 50 percent of high school girls and boys have engaged in the sexual intercourse. Add to this the trouble found via Internet sex merchants and chatroom stalkers.

be aware

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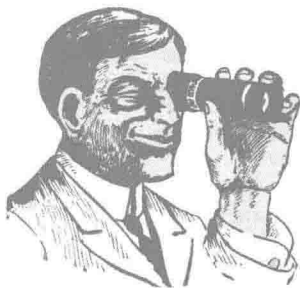
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What isn't as clear is the propriety of parents' spying on their children. Is it right to read children's diaries, search their rooms, tail them to hangouts? Conscientious parents can be found on both sides of the issue.

One camp believe that protection of a teen outweighs the right to privacy. Yvonne Webster, a mother of four boys aged 11 to 24, worried when she heard rumors that gangs were infiltrating the local high school. "I got very nervous," she said. Fearing her two older sons were not telling her all she needed to know, she talked with their friends to find out what was going on at the school. "They were getting into shouting matches with students," she said of her sons. "But that was it."



She also searched the boy's rooms and went through their pockets, but she never found any evidence of a problem.

To her, spying was justified, though she has not seen a need to do it with her younger sons. "Kids are precious, and we all need to be respectful of them," Webster said. "But when they enter high school and we see the problems they could be influenced by, we have



to find ways to protect them. If spying is the route we have to take, I would do it.”

She has plenty of company. The owner of The Spy Shop inc., on Chicago’s Near North Side estimates that 20 percent of his business in video-monitoring equipment is for families, including parents spying on their latchkey children. Home-drug-testing is another market that’s growing steadily. Bill Minot, marketing director for drug-test manufacturer Psychemedics Corp, said his company began offering the kits for home use several years ago at the behest of parents. The kits required a snippet of hair to be sent to the company for analysis; results are available in about a week.

But espionage can be dangerous to parent child relationship, cautions Fran Stott, dean of academic programs at a graduate school in child development. “Spying is adversarial”, she explained , and might undermine any foundation of mutual trust a parent needs to build with a teenager.

“As parents, we are very anxious not to let children make mistakes, and our anxiety only causes more problems than it solves,” Scott said. “That is not to say there aren’t times when teenagers show signs we need to take very seriously—evidence of drug use, an eating disorder or a drinking problem. It is our job as parents



to sort it out. I personally would try to do it in a more straight-forward way.”

Severe distress will manifest itself in ways that don't require spying, she said, such as drastic changes in moods and grades or associations with new friends. Loving but firm confrontation is a better approach than spying, said Scott. And if parents see evidence of severe trouble, she added, “Seeking professional help. Your goal is not to vent your own anger; your goal is to help your child.”

Teens tend to agree with Scott. “There are things teenagers need to experience on their own,” said Brittany Cable, 17. “It helps you mature faster.” She added of her parents, “If they need to find something out, they should just ask me and I'll let them know.”

Even Minot suggests avoiding the espionage approach when using the home drug tests. “We recommend that you talk with your child and show him the device so it becomes a deterrent,” he said. “Get one and leave it on the shelf.”

As the mother of five, aged 14 to 20, Carolyn Sehmer has engaged more in soft spying, such as straining to listen to listen to phone calls, until she is sure all is well. But her best method, she says, is volunteering at her children's school, where she picks





up good information on the entire teen culture.

Barbara Cavanagh, whose seven children range from five to 24, agrees that many kids do not talk openly, but she is uncomfortable with the idea of spying. Instead, her approach is to limit the opportunities for wrong-doing. "Loving doesn't mean I don't respect their privacy. But thing like sleepovers in high school—no way. I just said no."

A child's safety should outweigh any qualms about espionage, according to social worker Dave Clinton, who works at an alternative school for disturbed children. But this applies only if parents have legitimate reasons to be concerned.

"You wonder what is in that dresser, in that diary," Clinton said. "It is not a good idea to invade that space. That's off limits unless there is some clear provocation. Then I'm not snooping; I'm worried. Kids can understand reasons, but not snooping."

That sentiment echoes the views of Laura Schlessinger, a radio adviser. "Parents are to respect their children's nest and 'stuff'," she says. "However, when a parent has reason to believe that there might be a problem—sex, drugs, criminality, for example—it is their obligation to use whatever means necessary





to help and protect their child. Children who are 'off track' don't generally talk openly to their parents—out of guilt, shame, emotional problems, foolishness, etc.”

As the Lipics see it, children aren't born deserving trust; they earn it. They spied on their sons “so they could develop some credibility with us,” Robert Lipic explains. “Then we felt very comfortable.” Once the boys proved worthy of trust, they received it.

But many of those sensitive to the subject of family espionage, even those who resorted to spying, urged this bottom-line caution: be careful, these are your children.





父母，别累着你的眼睛

(偷看日记、跟踪、窃听……父母们在家里扮演起了间谍的角色。是不是007的电影看多了？非也！这全是因为爱子心切。然而，这算不算侵犯人权呢？)



许多父母知道他们的孩子可能会做错事，有些错会影响他们的一生，甚至威胁到他们的生命。

作为伊利诺斯州反酒后驾车运动母亲协会的前任主席，露丝·安很清楚青少年酒后驾车的危险性。如今，她的3个儿子都20多岁了。她说：“令我和我丈夫感到骄傲的是，他们没有这么做。”

虽然利比克夫妇是通过监视得知这些情况的，但这种做法并不少见。在最近几年，许多父母觉得他们有必要偷偷监视子女以密切注意他们的动向。父母的担心是有充足的理由的：密歇根大学社会调查研究所1999年的一份报告表明约62%的高中生酗酒，报告同时指出，去年吸毒的高中生约占42%。

另一项调查表明，大约50%的高中男女生之间有过性行为；另外，通过网上“皮条客”和聊天室的“采花大盗”也发现了这类问题。

父母秘密监视子女是否得体还尚有争议。偷看孩子的日记、秘密搜查他们的房间、悄悄跟踪他们——这些是否正当呢？对这个问题，同样都是有责任心的家长，也持两种截然不同的态度。

有些人认为保护子女远比尊重隐私权重要。伊冯娜·韦伯



斯特有4个儿子，年龄从11岁到24岁。当她听到犯罪团伙进入当地高中的传闻后，十分担心。“我变得非常紧张。”她说。由于担心她的两个大儿子没有告诉她所有的一切，她向儿子的朋友们打听学校的状况。“他俩与同学们大声嚷嚷地争吵，闹个不停，”谈到两个大儿子，她说，“但没什么不寻常的举动。”

她还秘密搜查孩子们的房间、翻他们的口袋，然而，却从未发现任何破绽。

虽然她认为没有必要去监视她的两个小儿子，但她觉得监视他们名正言顺。“父母若珍爱孩子就应该尊重他们，”韦伯斯特说道，“但当他们进入高中后，做父母的如果觉察到他们可能受到了不好的影响，就应该尽全力去保护他们。如果监视他们是惟一可行的方法，我会这么做。”

像韦伯斯特这样的人很多。据芝加哥中北部的监视用品服务有限公司的老板估计，他的录像监控设备业务中有20%的业务是面向家庭的，其中包括父母监视那些脖子上挂钥匙的儿童。家用毒品测试器是另一具有稳定发展市场的产品。比尔·迈诺特，毒品测试器生产公司——Psychomedics公司的市场经理，说他们公司在几年前应家长们的要求，开始提供家用的毒品测试器设备。该设备只需对送到他们公司的一小根头发进行分析，结果约一周后便可得到。

然而，弗兰·斯托特——某大学研究儿童发展学术课题组的负责人提醒人们：监视会危及父母与子女的关系。“虽然监视子女是可行的，”她解释道，“但父母与子女间的相互信任会因此而受影响，而这种信任是必不可少的。

“身为父母，我们十分担心孩子，怕他们做错事；但因此去



监视他们，只会适得其反，”斯托特说道，“这并不是说我们在证据确凿的情况下，对孩子们吸毒、暴饮暴食或酗酒置之不理。解决这些问题是父母的职责，而我个人倾向于尽量用一种比较直接的方式来解决。”

她还说，孩子们一旦精神上出现严重问题，不需要大人监视就会自动以多种方式显示出来，比如在情绪、学习成绩以及与新朋友的交往上出现变化。斯托特认为，父母在爱护子女的同时勇于正视他们的一切比偷偷监视的方法要好得多。另外，她还补充道，“家长们如果发现了许多严重问题的证据，应寻求一些专业人员的帮助。因为，他们的目的不是发泄愤怒，而是帮助孩子。”

青少年们同意斯托特的观点。“有许多事情青少年们应自己去经历，”17岁的布丽特尼·凯布尔说道，“这么做能帮助你成熟得更快一些。”谈到她父母，她说：“如果他们需要搞清楚一些事情，他们应该直接问我，我会告诉他们的。”

就连迈诺特也提出使用家用毒品测试器时，应避免偷偷摸摸。“我们建议家长们应与孩子们谈谈，并把整个装置给他们看，让它成为一种威慑物，”他说，“而家长们只需将一台测试器放在书架上就够了。”

卡罗琳·塞荷默是5个孩子的母亲，她最小的孩子有14岁，最大的20岁。她监视孩子大多采取比较温和的方式，比如，窃听他们的电话直至她确信一切正常。然而，她说最好的方法是亲自到孩子们的学校去，了解与他们有关的所有情报。

芭芭拉·卡文纳弗有7个孩子，年龄在5岁到24岁之间。她对此有同感：许多孩子不愿对父母坦白他们的所作所为。由于监



视孩子的做法让她感觉不自在,所以她的做法是尽量减少孩子们做错事的机会。“用一生来爱护他们,但不要完全相信他们,”她说,“这并不是说我不尊重他们的隐私权。但诸如高中校园里夜不归宿的事情——决不允许发生!我说不允许就不允许。”

大卫·克林顿是一名社工,在少年劳改学校工作。他认为,尽管有些家长对监视孩子产生的负面效应有所顾虑,但考虑到孩子的安全问题,这些顾虑则无足轻重了;而这一点只有在父母有正当的理由时才适用。

“你想知道他们的梳妆台里装了些什么,日记里写了些什么,”克林顿说,“但擅自入侵这些地方的做法不可取。除非理由充足,你才可以这么做。那样,你就可以说自己不是在窥探孩子,而是因担心所致。而孩子们也会谅解你,不会认为你在窥探他们。”

克林顿的观点与电台顾问劳拉·施莱辛杰的观点不谋而合。她说:“父母是应尊重子女,不擅入他们的房间,不乱翻他们的‘物品’;但若某位家长有理由相信他的孩子可能遇上了麻烦——诸如性、毒品、犯罪——家长的职责是尽其所能来帮助和保护孩子。那些‘越轨’的孩子通常不会向父母坦白做过的愧疚事、面临的情感问题以及做过的傻事等等。”

在利比克夫妇看来,孩子们不是生来就值得信任,而是要看他们的实际表现。通过监视,“致使孩子们逐步加强对我们的信任,”罗伯特·利比克解释说,“这让我们感到很欣慰。”只有孩子们被证实值得信任,他们才接受这个事实。

但是,许多反对父母监视子女的人,以及那些已经这么做的人都特别提出这样的警告:小心些,他们是你们的孩子!

