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*Childhoods of the Presidents*

哈里·S·杜鲁门

HARRY S. TRUMAN

【美】小阿瑟·M·史勒辛格 主编

【美】巴巴拉·塞弗 著

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# ★ *Introduction* ★

Alexis de Tocqueville began his great work *Democracy in America* with a discourse on childhood. If we are to understand the prejudices, the habits and the passions that will rule a man's life, Tocqueville said, we must watch the baby in his mother's arms; we must see the first images that the world casts upon the mirror of his mind; we must hear the first words that awaken his sleeping powers of thought. "The entire man," he wrote, "is, so to speak, to be seen in the cradle of the child."

That is why these books on the childhoods of the American presidents are so much to the point. And, as our history shows, a great variety of childhoods can lead to the White House. The record confirms the ancient adage that every American boy, no matter how unpromising his beginnings, can aspire to the presidency. Soon, one hopes, the adage will be extended to include every American girl.

All our presidents thus far have been white males who, within the limits of their gender, reflect the diversity of American life. They were born in nineteen of our states; eight of the last thirteen presidents were born west of the Mississippi. Of all our presidents, Abraham Lincoln had the

least promising childhood, yet he became our greatest president. Oddly enough, presidents who are children of privilege sometimes feel an obligation to reform society in order to give children of poverty a better break. And, with Lincoln the great exception, presidents who are children of poverty sometimes feel that there is no need to reform a society that has enabled them to rise from privation to the summit.

Does schooling make a difference? Harry S. Truman, the only twentieth-century president never to attend college, is generally accounted a near-great president. Actually nine—more than one fifth—of our presidents never went to college at all, including such luminaries as George Washington, Andrew Jackson and Grover Cleveland. But, Truman aside, all the non-college men held the highest office before the twentieth century, and, given the increasing complexity of life, a college education will unquestionably be a necessity in the twenty-first century.

Every reader of this book, girls included, has a right to aspire to the presidency. As you survey the childhoods of those who made it, try to figure out the qualities that brought them to the White House. I would suggest that among those qualities are ambition, determination, discipline, education—and luck.

**—ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR.**

# 序

亚历克西斯·德·托克维尔以讲述人的童年作为他的巨著《美国的民主》的开始。托克维尔说，如果我们想理解支配一个人生活的偏见、习惯和爱好，我们必须观察他还是襁褓中的婴孩这一时期的情况；我们必须审视世界投射到他心灵上的第一个印记；我们必须聆听唤醒他那沉睡中的思想力量的第一句话。他写道：“可以说，从婴孩时期的摇篮中将可以了解整个人。”

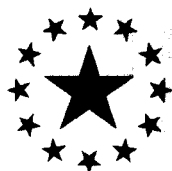
这就是为什么这套关于美国总统童年的书如此重要。另外，正如历史所展示的，尽管童年时代的经历多种多样，却都能引导一个人走上通往白宫的道路。历史的记录验证了一句古话：每个美国男孩，不管早期看起来前途多么无望，都能够立志成为总统。人们还希望，这句古话所涵盖的范围不久将扩展，把每个美国女孩也包括在内。

迄今为止，所有的美国总统都是白人男性，他们在有限的性别范围之内，反映了美国生活的多样性。他们出生于合众国的19个州；最后13位当中有8位出生在密西西比河西部。在所有的总统当中，亚伯拉罕·林肯的童年最显得前途无望，然而他却成为美国历史上最伟大的总统。非常奇怪的是，童年生活优裕的总统有时却有一种责任感，进行社会改革，给家庭贫苦的孩子创造更好的机会。而另一方面，除林肯是一个特例之外，出身贫苦的总统有时却感到，对于使他们从穷困的底层发展到事业颠峰的社会，没有进行改革的必要。

学校教育重要吗？哈里·S·杜鲁门是仅有的一位从未上过大学的20世纪的美国总统，然而却被普遍认为接近最伟大的总统。实际上，我们的总统当中有9位——占全部的五分之一还多——从未上过大学，包括乔治·华盛顿、安德鲁·杰克逊以及格罗弗·克利夫兰这些杰出的人物。但是，除杜鲁门以外，所有这些没上过大学却担任了总统这一最显要职务的人都生活在20世纪以前。由于社会生活变得越来越复杂，大学教育毫无疑问将成为21世纪美国总统的必备条件。

该书的每位读者，包括女孩在内，都有权立志当总统。你们在探讨这些总统的童年时，要努力去领悟是什么品质使他们当上了白宫的主人。我在这里做一提示，在这些品质当中包括志向、决心、纪律、教育——当然还有机会。

——小阿瑟·M·史勒辛格



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# *The Buck Stops Here*

"**W**e'd be playing cowboy or *shinny*," a childhood friend of the most famous citizen of Independence, Missouri, recalled, ". . . and Harry would come . . . but he did not play much in those rough games because he wore double-strength glasses. He just couldn't get in that kind of a game. But he came by and talked to us."



# 第一章

## 我负责<sup>①</sup>



“那时候，我们常常玩扮牛仔和曲棍球的游戏，”密苏里州独立城有史以来最出名的公民的儿时伙伴回忆道，“……哈里也会过来……不过这类粗野的游戏他玩得不多，因为他戴着副加固眼镜，这种游戏玩不开。但是他会过来和我们聊聊。”

Bespectacled, bookish, and polite, the young Harry S. Truman was sometimes a target for teasing. But, a childhood friend recalled, even the tough boys “had a lot of respect for him.”

戴着眼镜、斯文礼貌的哈里·杜鲁门常常成为嘲笑的对象。然而，据一位童年好友回忆，即使是最粗野的男孩“对他也心存几分敬意”。

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注：① The Buck Stops Here, 俚语，意为责怪某人。

In a time when it was uncommon for children to wear them, Harry Truman's eyeglasses marked him as a target for other boys' teasing. "Of course, they called me *four-eyes* and a lot of other things, too. That's hard on a boy. It makes him lonely," Harry remembered years later.

The young Harry Truman also exposed himself to teasing by taking piano lessons, considered a "girl's activity" among the boys of Independence. But Harry loved music, and he wasn't about to let **peer pressure** get in the way of doing something he enjoyed. As his close friend Charlie Ross explained, "It required a lot of courage for a kid to take music lessons in a town like Independence."

Perhaps it was because they could sense this courage that the rowdy boys accepted the polite and bookish kid who never joined their rough sports and games. Perhaps they admired the inner strength that allowed Harry Truman to stay true to himself. "They wanted to call him a sissy," childhood friend Henry P. Chiles remembered, "but they just didn't do it because they had a lot of respect for him."

As an adult, Harry Truman would win the respect of millions of Americans—including many of his opponents—by having the courage to do what he thought was right, regardless of how a decision might affect him personally or whether it was politically popular. The boy whose glasses had prevented him from joining in the rough games of his peers put himself in harm's way as a man



那时侯小孩子戴眼镜是很稀奇的，哈里·杜鲁门的眼镜让他成了其他男孩取笑的把柄。多年以后，哈里回忆道：“他们叫我‘四只眼’什么的，这对一个小男孩来说也真够够的，会让他感到很孤独。”

年少的哈里·杜鲁门还因为上钢琴课而被取笑。独立城的男孩都认为那是“女孩儿家搞的事”。但是哈里酷爱音乐，他还不准备仅仅因为同龄小孩儿对他有压力就放弃自己喜欢的事。正如他的好友查理·罗斯解释的那样：“在独立城这样一个地方，一个男孩去上音乐课是需要很大勇气的。”

也许是因为感觉到了这种勇气，那些爱闹的男孩们还是接受了礼貌斯文的哈里，虽然他从不玩他们那种粗鲁的游戏。也有可能是他们佩服哈里·杜鲁门有那样的毅力坚持自己的信念。儿时的伙伴亨利·奇里斯回忆道：“他们想叫他假姑娘，但是却叫不出口，因为他们骨子里是相当尊敬他的。”

长大以后，哈里·杜鲁门只要认为正确的事就都会勇敢地去，至于一个决定会不会影响自己、在政治上会不会受欢迎他则不予考虑。这为他赢得了无数美国人的尊敬，包括他的对手们的尊敬。杜鲁门曾经因为戴着眼镜而不能参加同龄人的游戏，但他却毅然在第一次世界大战时



by joining the army during World War I — even though his poor eyesight could have excused him from having to fight in that deadly conflict.

Nearly everyone had counted Harry Truman out during the 1948 presidential campaign. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* even declared Thomas Dewey the winner before the election results were in — but Truman got the last laugh.

几乎没人看好杜鲁门参加 1948 年总统大选。《芝加哥每日论坛报》甚至在选举结果出来之前就宣布托马斯·德威获胜。但是杜鲁门笑到了最后。

Truman grew up in a region of Missouri that had supported slavery during the **Civil War** and that continued to treat African Americans as second-class citizens. Yet when he became president, he **integrated** the U.S. armed forces and urged Congress to pass civil rights legislation for blacks, saying, "We shall not ... achieve the ideals for which this nation was founded so long as any American suffers **discrimination**." This so angered Truman's fellow Democrats from the South that many left the Democratic Party, organized the States' Rights Party (also known as the "Dixiecrats"), and fielded a can-

应征参军，踏上了一条充满危险的道路——尽管他因为视力糟糕，本来是可以为自己找到理由不上战场殊死搏杀。



杜鲁门在密苏里州长大的那个地区在南北战争<sup>①</sup>期间拥护奴隶制，而且在战后还继续把黑人当成二等公民对待。担任总统后，他对美国军队进行了种族整合，而且还敦促国会通过了黑人民权法。他说：“只要还有人遭到歧视，我们就不能实现建国的最终目标。”这却让南方的民主党同僚大为恼火，他们纷纷脱离民主党，成立了“国家权力党”（亦称“南部民主党”），随后推举候选人与杜鲁

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注：① civil war，美国内战（1861~1865），史称南北战争。



didate to run against Truman in the 1948 presidential election. Surprising almost everyone, Truman beat both the Dixiecrat nominee and the heavily favored Republican candidate, Thomas Dewey, to win another term.

Another courageous decision that Truman made was to fire General Douglas MacArthur. Truman felt that MacArthur had been ignoring his instructions, and in the United States the president is commander in chief of all the armed forces. To protect this important idea, the president dismissed MacArthur. The outcry was enormous.

But Harry Truman never made excuses or apologized for doing what he thought needed to be done. On his desk in the Oval Office in the White House was a sign that summed up his attitude. It read, *The Buck Stops Here*—meaning Truman himself took responsibility for the actions of his administration, and if anyone wanted to blame someone for a particular decision, they could blame him.





门竞争 1948 年总统大选。让所有人都感到惊奇的是，杜鲁门不仅击败了南部民主党的候选人，还击败了人气甚高的共和党候选人托马斯·德威，从而赢得了连任。

杜鲁门做出的另一个勇敢决定，就是在朝鲜战争期间解除了道格拉斯·麦克阿瑟的职务。杜鲁门认为他常常不听自己的指示——在美国，总统是武装部队总司令。为了捍卫这一原则，杜鲁门解除了他的职务，结果招致了很高的反对声浪。

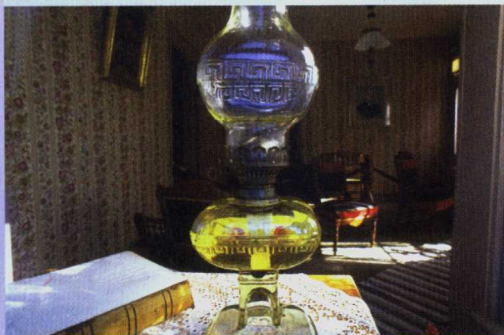
但杜鲁门是从不会为他认定要做的事找借口或道歉的。在白宫美国总统办公室他的桌上有一块牌子很好地说明了他的态度，上面写着“我负责”。意思是他本人承担任期内所有事情的责任，如果有人因为某一具体决定要责怪谁的话，那就责怪他好了。





## *“The Happiest Childhood”*

**O**n May 8, 1884, Martha Ellen Young Truman gave birth to her first child, a baby boy. As was customary in those days, the birth occurred not in a hospital, but in the home Martha shared with her husband, John Anderson Truman. The couple named their son Harry S. Truman (the middle initial stood for no actual name).



哈里·杜鲁门出生的小屋内部，没有电、自来水和室内管道系统。

Interior of Harry Truman's birthplace, which had no electricity, running water, or indoor plumbing.