

The First American Woman to be A Media Mogul

Katharine Graham, who died on July 17 at 84, was, for many years, arguably the most powerful woman in America. She was the first woman to be a true media mogul, running The Washington Post Company for more than three decades. For several generations of public officials and journalists, she embodied the Washington establishment.

She first gained true fame during the Watergate scandal¹⁾ of the early 1970s, when the Post's reporting helped bring down President Nixon. In 1998, her memoir, "Personal History," was a No. 1 best seller and won the Pulitzer Prize.

Just before World War II, she married Philip Graham, a brilliant Harvard Law grad and Supreme Court clerk. Phil, who took over The Washington Post from Katharine's father, Eugene Meyer, and began the paper's climb to greatness. But Phil Graham was a manic-depressive²⁾, and his flights of greatness were accompanied by terrible lows. When Graham shot himself in 1963, his widow had virtually no confidence in her ability to guide her family company or continue her husband's role as Washington power broker.

She was operating in a world that was still essentially male-dominated. Slowly, hesitantly, not always aware of what she was doing, Mrs. Graham began to challenge the social order. The custom at fancy dinner parties for many years in Washington and elsewhere was for the "ladies" to retire after dinner so the men could talk about important matters. At one dinner party given by columnist Joseph Alsop in the 1960s, Mrs. Graham finally, and at first meekly³⁾, rebelled. She was irritated⁴⁾ at being banished, she later wrote, because she realized she knew more about the subjects the men were discussing than they did. She told her host that she would rather go home and read than join the ladies in the drawing room. Alsop got the message — and an old and condescending⁵⁾ custom was cast away. It was not long before cabinet officials were begging to join the conversation at her table.

The Washington Post had just begun to come into its own in the early 1970s when a pair of young Post reporters, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, began to uncover serious wrongdoing in the Nixon White House. When the paper began reporting on the scandal that became known as Watergate, Nixon's Attorney General, crudely threatened Katharine Graham, warning Bernstein that "Kay Graham's tit is going to get caught in a wringer" if the paper persisted in investigating the president. Though the Post was at considerable financial risk — the Post Company had just gone public and the Nixon administration was threatening the Post's television licenses⁶⁾ — Graham stood up against the pressure from the White House. Months later, after Nixon had resigned in disgrace, humor columnist Art Buchwald jokingly give Graham a small bronze wringer⁷⁾.

A couple of years earlier, Graham had taken an equally principled and courageous stand in publishing the Pentagon Papers, the U. S. government's secret history of the Vietnam War, despite threats of criminal prosecution⁸⁾ by the Justice Department. Widely honored for her courage as a paragon⁹⁾ of the First Amendment, she also became an immensely successful business-woman. Acquiring TV stations, cable companies and other media outlets, she made the Post a well-established Fortune 500

company. Other media leaders turned to her as an example and an inspiration. But though she was a model for the advancement of women for some 40 years, she never modeled herself as a feminist¹⁰⁾ protagonist. She was, to the end, a gentlewoman of the old school, gracious and mannerly.

美国首位女性媒体巨子

凯瑟琳·格雷厄姆，于7月17日逝世，享年84岁。多年来，她可以说是美国最具影响力的女性。她是第一位真正成为媒体巨子的女性，苦心经营《华盛顿邮报》公司30多年。对于几代公共事务官员和新闻工作者来说，她是华盛顿权势集团具体的象征。

她在20世纪70年代初期的“水门事件”丑闻报道中初露锋芒，当时在《邮报》报道的协助下，尼克松总统被迫下台。1998年，她的回忆录《个人历史》创下最畅销书榜上名列第一的佳绩，并获得普利策奖。

就在二战前夕，她嫁给了菲利普·格雷厄姆——一个才华横溢的哈佛大学法学院的毕业生，在最高法院任职。菲尔从凯瑟琳的父亲尤金·梅耶尔的手中接管《华盛顿邮报》公司，并开始使公司走向成功。但是菲尔·格雷厄姆患有躁狂抑郁症，他成功的背后总是伴有可怕的低迷。1963年格雷厄姆开枪自杀后，他的遗孀对是否有能力管好她自家的公司或继续她丈夫的角色做华盛顿的权力经纪人，事实上缺乏信心。

她在一个基本上仍是由男性主宰的世界里运作着。慢慢地，犹豫不决地，格雷厄姆夫人开始向社会习俗挑战，但并不总是清楚自己所作所为的意义。许多年以来，有这样一条世俗的规矩，就是在华盛顿或其他地方举办高级的社交宴会上，女士们用餐后必须退至他处，以便男士们谈论重要的事情。60年代，在专栏作家约瑟夫·艾尔索普举行的一次宴会上，格雷厄姆夫人终于第一次温和地反抗陈俗。她后来写道，她对被排除在外非常恼火，因为她意识到，男人们正在讨论的话题，她比他们更了解。她告诉主人她宁愿回家读书也不愿在休息室和妇女们在一起。艾尔索普得知后，于是一条古老的男尊女卑的习俗淘汰了。不久以后，连内阁官员也请求在她的宴会桌上参加谈话。

70年代初期，在《邮报》的两个年轻记者鲍勃·伍德沃德和卡尔·伯恩斯坦开始揭露尼克松白宫的严重不道德行为时，《华盛顿邮报》才刚刚开始步入繁盛期。在报纸开始报道所谓的“水门事件”丑闻时，尼克松总统的司法部长粗暴地威胁凯瑟琳·格雷厄姆，警告伯恩斯坦说，如果报纸坚持调查总统，“凯·格雷厄姆这小妮子将会被卷进一台绞汁机。”虽然《华盛顿邮报》正处于巨大的财政风险当中——《邮报》公司刚刚上市招股，同时尼克松政府威胁不批准《邮报》公司的电视转播许可证——格雷厄姆还是顶住了来自白宫的重重压力。几个月后，尼克松不体面地辞职，幽默的专栏作家阿尔特·布克沃尔德开玩笑地赠给格雷厄姆一个青铜铸的绞汁机。

几年以前，尽管面临被司法部控告的威胁，格雷厄姆还是同样采取原则性的、大无畏的立场报道五角大楼文件泄密案，即美国政府越战的秘密历史。由于她无畏的勇气，她被大家尊为宪法第一修正案的模范，她也成为一位非常成功的女性实业家。拥有多家电视台、有线电视公司和其他媒体单位，她使《华盛顿邮报》公司成为声誉卓著的《财富》500强公司之一。其他的媒体领导尊她为榜样，并从她那里得到激励。但尽管40多年来她成为妇女进步的楷模，她从不认为自己是女权主义者。说到底，她仍是一位温文尔雅、礼貌可嘉的守旧派的贵妇人。

NOTE 注释：

学英语，练听力，上听力课堂！

1. scandal ['skændl] n. 丑行,丑闻, 事件
2. manic-depressive [,mæni:kdi`presiv] n. 燥狂抑郁病患者
3. meekly [mi:kli] adv. 温顺地, 懦弱地
4. irritated ['iriteitid] adj. 恼怒的,生气的
5. condescending [kɔndi'sendɪŋ] adj. 故意屈尊的, 卑微的
6. license ['laisəns] n. 许可(证), 执照
7. wringer ['riŋə] n. 敲诈者
8. prosecution [,prɔsi'kju:fən] n. 报道, 检举
9. paragon ['pærəgən] n. 模范
10. feminist ['femɪnɪst] n. 女权主义者