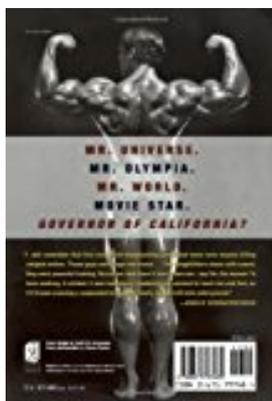


# [PDF] Arnold: The Education Of A Bodybuilder

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**Books Details:**

Title: Arnold: The Education of a Bo  
Author: Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Released: 1993-01-01  
Language:  
Pages: 256  
ISBN: 0671797484  
ISBN13: 978-0671797485  
ASIN: 0671797484

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**Description:**

**About the Author Arnold Schwarzenegger** served as governor of California from 2003 to 2011. Before that, he had a long career, starring in such films as the Terminator series; *Stay Hungry*; *Twins*; *Predator*; and *Junior*. His first book, *Arnold: The Education of a Bodybuilder*, was a bestseller when published in 1977 and, along with his *Encyclopedia of Modern Bodybuilding*, has never been out of print since.

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## **Chapter One**

"Arnold! Arnold!"

I can still hear them, the voices of my friends, the lifeguards, bodybuilders, the weight lifters, booming up from the lake where they were working out in the grass and trees.

"Arnold -- come on!" cried Karl, the young doctor who had become my friend at the gym...

It was the summer I turned fifteen, a magical season for me because that year I'd discovered exactly what I wanted to do with my life. It was more than a young boy's mere pipe dream of a distant, hazy future -- confused fantasies of being a fireman, detective, sailor, test pilot, or spy. I *knew* I was going to be a bodybuilder. It wasn't simply that either. I would be the best bodybuilder in the world, the greatest, the best-built man.

I'm not exactly sure why I chose bodybuilding, except that I loved it. I loved it from the first moment my fingers closed around a barbell and I felt the challenge and exhilaration of hoisting the heavy steel plates above my head.

I had always been involved in sports through my father, a tall, sturdy man who was himself a champion at ice curling. We were a physical family, oriented toward training, good eating, and keeping the body fit and healthy. With my father's encouragement, I first got into organized competitive sports when I was ten. I joined a soccer team that even had uniforms and a regular three-days-a-week training schedule. I threw myself into it and played soccer passionately for almost five years.

However, by the time I was thirteen team sports no longer satisfied me. I was already off on an individual trip. I disliked it when we won a game and I didn't get personal recognition. The only time I really felt rewarded was when I was singled out as being best. I decided to try some individual sports. I ran, I swam, I boxed; I got into competition, throwing javelin and shot put. Although I did well with them, none of those things felt right to me. Then our coach decided that lifting weights for an hour once a week would be a good way to condition us for playing soccer.

I still remember that first visit to the bodybuilding gym. I had never seen anyone lifting weights before. Those guys were huge and brutal. I found myself walking around them, staring at muscles I couldn't even name, muscles I'd never even seen before. The weight lifters shone with sweat; they were powerful looking, Herculean. And there it was before me -- my life, the answer I'd been seeking. It clicked. It was something I suddenly just seemed to reach out and find, as if I'd been crossing a suspended bridge and finally stepped off onto solid ground.

I started lifting weights just for my legs, which was what we needed most for playing soccer. The bodybuilders noticed immediately how hard I was working out. Considering my age, fifteen, I was squatting with some pretty heavy weight. They encouraged me to go into bodybuilding. I was 6 feet tall and slender, weighing only 150 pounds; but I did have a good athletic physique and my muscles responded surprisingly fast under training. I think those guys saw that. Because of my build I'd always had it easier at sports than most boys my age. But I had it tougher than a lot of my teammates and companions because I wanted more, I demanded more of myself.

That summer the bodybuilders took me on as their protégé. They put me through a series of exercises, which we did together beside a lake near Graz, my hometown in Austria. It was a

program they used simply to stay limber. We worked without weights. We did chin-ups on the branches of trees. We held each other's legs and did handstand push-ups. Leg raises, sit-ups, twists, and squats were all included in a simple routine to get our bodies tuned and ready for the gym.

It wasn't until the end of the summer that I got into real weight training. Once I started, though, it didn't take long. After two or three months with the bodybuilders, I was literally addicted. The guys I hung out with were all much older. Karl Gerstl, the doctor, was twenty-eight, Kurt Manul thirty-two, and Helmut Knauer was fifty. Each of them became a father image for me. I listened less to my own father. These weight lifters were my new heroes. I was in awe of them, of their size, of the control they had over their bodies.

I was introduced to actual weight training through a tough basic program put together by these bodybuilders. The one hour a week we had trained for soccer was no longer enough to satisfy my craving for working out. I signed up to go to the gym three times a week. I loved the feel of the cold iron and steel warming to my touch and the sounds and smells of the gym. And I still love it. There is nothing I would sooner hear than the sound of heavy steel plates ringing as they are threaded onto the bar or dropped back to the rack after a strenuous lift.

I remember the first real workout I had as vividly as if it were last night. I rode my bike to the gym, which was eight miles from the village where I lived. I used barbells, dumbbells and machines. The guys warned me that I'd get sore, but it didn't seem to be having any effect. I thought I must be beyond that. Then, after the workout, I started riding home and fell off my bike. I was so weak I couldn't make my hands hold on. I had no feeling in my legs: they were noodles. I was numb, my whole body buzzing. I pushed the bike for a while, leaning on it. Half a mile farther, I tried to ride it again, fell off again, and then just pushed it the rest of the way home. This was my first experience with weight training, and I was crazy for it.

The next morning I couldn't even lift my arm to comb my hair. Each time I tried, pain shot through every muscle in my shoulder and arm. I couldn't hold the comb. I tried to drink coffee and spilled it all over the table. I was helpless.

"What's wrong, Arnold?" my mother asked. She came over from the stove and peered at me. "What is it?" She bent down to look closer as she mopped up the spilled coffee.

"I'm just sore," I told her. "My muscles are stiff."

"Look at this boy!" she called out to my father. "Look what he's doing to himself."

My father came in, doing up his tie. He was always neat, his hair slicked back smooth, his mustache trimmed to a line. He laughed and said I'd limber up.

But my mother kept on. "Why, Arnold? Why do you want to do it to yourself?"

I couldn't be bothered with what my mother felt. Seeing new changes in my body, feeling them, turned me on. It was the first time I'd ever felt every one of my muscles. It was the first time those sensations had registered in my mind, the first time my mind knew my thighs, calves and forearms were more than just limbs. I felt the muscles in my triceps aching, and I knew why they were called triceps -- because there are three muscles in there. They were all registered in my mind, written there with sharp little jabs of pain. I learned that this pain meant progress. Each time my muscles were sore from a workout, I knew they were growing.

I could not have chosen a less popular sport. My school friends thought I was crazy. But I didn't care. My only thoughts were of going ahead, building muscles and more muscles. I had almost no time to relax and think about bodybuilding in any other terms. I remember certain people trying to put negative thoughts into my mind, trying to persuade me to slow down. But I had found the thing to which I wanted to devote my total energies and there was no stopping me. My drive was unusual, I talked differently than my friends; I was hungrier for success than anyone I knew.

I started to live for being in the gym. I had a new language -- reps, sets, forced reps, presses. I had resisted memorizing anatomy in school; now I was eager to know it. Around the gym my new friends spoke of biceps, triceps, latissimus dorsi, trapezius, obliques. I spent hours going through the American magazines *Muscle Builder* and *Mr. America*. Karl, the doctor, knew English and I had him translating anytime he was free. I saw my first photographs of Muscle Beach; I saw Larry Scott, Ray Rutledge, and Serge Nubret. The magazines were full of success stories. The advantages of having a well-developed body were incomparable. Guys like Doug Stroll and Steve Reeves were in the movies because they had worked out and created great physiques.

In one of those magazines I saw my first photograph of Reg Park. He was on a page facing Jack Delinger. I responded immediately to Reg Park's rough, massive look. The man was an animal. That's the way I wanted to be -- ultimately: big. I wanted to be a big guy. I didn't want to be delicate. I dreamed of big deltoids, big pecs, big thighs, big calves; I wanted every muscle to explode and be huge. I dreamed about being gigantic. Reg Park was the epitome of that dream, the biggest, most powerful person in bodybuilding.

From then on in my mid-teens, I kept my batteries charged with the adventure movies of Steve Reeves, Mark Forrest, Brad Harris, Gordon Mitchell, and Reg Park. I admired Reg Park more than the others. He was rugged, everything I thought a man should be. I recall seeing him for the first time on the screen. The film was *Hercules and the Vampires*, a picture in which the hero had to rid the earth of an invasion of thousands of bloodthirsty vampires. Reg Park looked so magnificent in the role of Hercules I was transfixed. And, sitting there in the theater, I knew that was going to be me. I would look like Reg Park. I studied every move he made, every gesture....Suddenly I realized the house lights were on and everyone else had walked out.

From that point on, my life was utterly dominated by Reg Park. His image was my ideal. It was fixed indelibly in my mind. All my friends were more impressed by Steve Reeves, but I didn't like him. Reg Park had more of a rough look, a powerful look, while Steve Reeves seemed elegant, smooth, polished. I knew in my mind that I was not geared for elegance. I wanted to be massive. It was the difference between cologne and sweat.

I found out ever...

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