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Section C

Adolescence at the Dawn of the 20th Century

The Invention of the American Teenager

- The American Teenager of today is a social invention of the early 20th century—a time very different from the present



America in the Early 20th Century

- America of the early 20th century created the teenager in its own image: brash, ebullient, idealistic, crude, innocent, greedy (T. Hine)



A Growing Youth Subculture

- The dawn of the 20th century
 - Movies and music 1900-1920s
 - “Flaming youth” of the 1920s
 - College fraternities and the shift of colleges from religious to “rugged” institutions
 - Automobiles

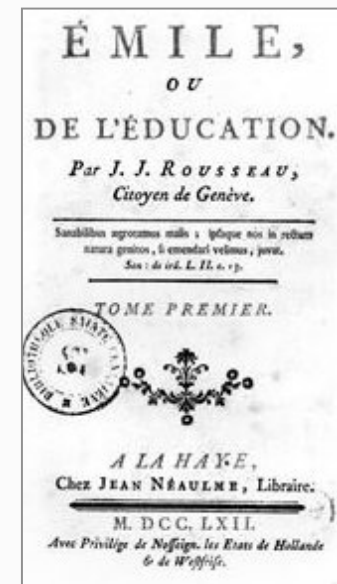
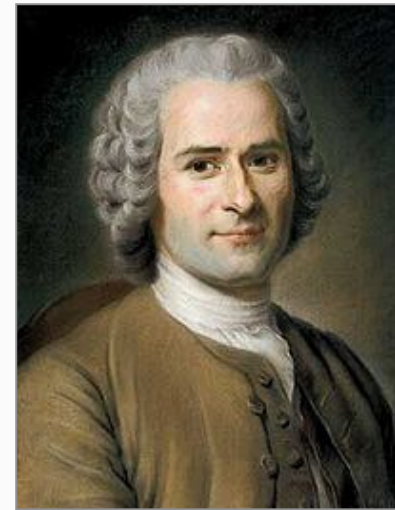


The Invention of 20th Century Adolescence

- Rousseau, Hall, and the invention of 20th century adolescence

Rousseau

- The notion of adolescence as a time of storm and stress stems from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile*, which describes the coming of age of a noble boy



Rousseau

- “We are born, sort to speak, twice over ... born into existence and born into life; born as a human being and born as a man” – Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile*

Hall and Adolescent Experience as a Dualism

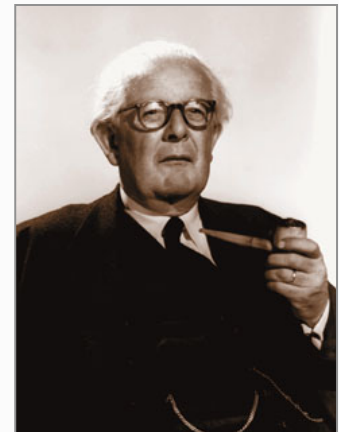
- Hall, like Rousseau, saw adolescent experiences as a dualism: hyperactivity and inertia; social sensibility and self absorption; lofty aspirations and childish behavior. Healthy maturation demanded that youth not experience adult pressure—a moratorium.

Recapitalization

- Hall's theory of adolescence was based on "recapitalization"
 - Children retraced the developmental course already traversed by humankind. Recapitalization tied in with the Darwin craze.
 - The notion of "fixed stages of development" emerged
- Hall's values: loyalty, courage, and discipline

G. Stanley Hall, Piaget, and Stages of Development

- G. Stanley Hall expanded Rousseau's concept of adolescence with the idea of recapitulation: That individual development mirrors the development of the species from primitive to reasoning. Adolescence would be a stage of life through which all must pass.
- Piaget's stages (and those of most other developmentalists) reinforce the construct of adolescence as a passing "stage"



Eric Erikson

- Eric Erikson described adolescence as a *moratorium*—a time for young people to integrate their skills, their knowledge of themselves, and their judgment of peers and of their elders. It was a time of *identity crisis* and *identity formation*.



Hall and The Effect of Urban Life on Youth

- G. Stanley Hall believed that urban life had a negative effect on youth—it matured them too fast
- His work ...
 - Led to the rise of compulsory education laws
 - Led to child labor laws
 - Created the field of adolescent development and psychology



Hall and a More Candid Discussion of Sexuality

- Hall forced a more candid discussion of sexuality. But to do so, he equated it with a “vital force”: romantic love. The conversion of adolescence resulted from biologic change to a new personality. Religious consciousness occurred at the same time as a shift from ambiguity to certitude. This was the conceptual precursor of Erikson’s “identity formation.”



Sexually Liberated Attitudes of the 1920s

Year born	Percent having pre-marital sex
Before 1890	13.5%
1890-1900	26%
1900-1910	49.8%

Courtship and Dating

- In the 1800s social relationships were courtships; dating (without expectations or obligations) started in the 1920s

Female Sensuality and Sexuality in the 1920s

- By 1920 female sensuality and sexuality were widely displayed
 - Movies
 - The dance hall
 - Ragtime
 - The Jazz Age
 - Authors like F. Scott Fitzgerald
 - The flapper
 - Prostitution declined

