

The Truth About Age

INTRODUCTION

This is another book about young people and their place in society. There have been many such books written, some good and some bad, but almost none seem to efficiently question the mainstream narrative on the place of youth in society. This book proposes that the status quo should be changed as there are a vast number of problems affecting both young people and older people that stem from where society currently places and classifies people typically referred to as adolescents. The number of myths and stereotypes which contribute to popular attitudes about young people that would prevent the measures proposed here from ever taking place are vast. I seek to debunk these myths in an efficient and total way so that there may be one volume for all these misconceptions.

I propose here that younger people be considered adults, and that adulthood be not seen as superior to whatever non-adulthood is. This would be in fact a return to the natural order of things. Without coercion backed age restrictions keeping young people from engaging in many important activities of daily life, they would surely begin to engage and succeed in those activities. And children naturally yearn to enter the adult world and to take on as many adult responsibilities as they can handle, most of which they are currently denied until an age where they are no longer in reality a child and have not been a child in any way but legally for a large length of time. Changing the status quo in the way proposed in this book will result in the curing of a vast amount of social ills and therefore greatly improve happiness and general quality of life.

So I ask you, I beg you, to read this entire thing and consider all that it has to say. If you let go of your biases, I have utmost faith you will come to know these things said here as true.

ON THE STRUCTURE

The first three chapters of the book are necessary background knowledge for understanding the rest of the book. Much of it contradicts what is in pop-culture knowledge. All of it uses reputable sources and is on my word, true. The rest of the book is much more political, although the beliefs are backed up by objective truths. The book ends with a conclusion that puts together the major content of each chapter.

CHAPTER I. HISTORY

History is a narrative or a story, and the story of how the world got to the point it is at now in regards to its young is of prime importance for understanding why it is wrong and what must be done in order to fix it. There have been some times throughout history that could be considered a golden age for young, although many of these times also feature horrors such as slavery that no modern man would want to go back to. Other times in history have not treated the young near as well. History makes one thing clear, however: today is one of the worst times to be young when compared to what it's like now to not be.

A person who wants to contribute to making the world a better place for today's young people who inhabit such a sufferable existence would be like a blind man trying to climb a mountain without understanding what has led up to this point. They say knowledge is power. In this case, knowledge of the history of the young will illuminate the path to better times for the young.

Anyone willing to fight for the rights of the young should know who caused their rights to be taken away in the first place and in what context that taking was done. Knowing these things also provides knowledge as to how the current system of discrimination operates, therefore showing its weaknesses and how it can be destroyed.

1.1 - The Place of the Young in History

Despite what many in the modern day would have people believe, the place of the young in society is extremely malleable. This has been shown all throughout history and it defies the contemporary thought that the young belong only in some form of education. History shows that young people could be doing far more important things with their time.

Alexander the Great was an ancient military conqueror born around 356 B.C. He was only formally educated for about three years by Aristotle, beginning when he was about the age of thirteen and ending at the age of sixteen. When his education ended and he was sixteen years old, Alexander was put in charge of his own army which he would use to prove his military genius and to begin his long career of military triumph.

While Alexander was sixteen, there was a rebellion by a Thracian tribe. In response, Alexander quickly drove them out of their Greek homeland and colonized the entire area, first proving his military might. Sometime during this conflict in 340 B.C., Alexander founded his first city, naming it Alexandroupolis.

By the time he was eighteen, Alexander had already put down another rebellion in Thrace and had reportedly saved his father's life with his military skills. At the age of eighteen, Alexander took partial command of his father's army, campaigning alongside him. Eventually, his father died, and by the time he was twenty years old, Alexander was the King of one of the most successful empires in history.

Just think, had Alexander been born in modern times, he would have instead been trapped in a high school living with his parents until the age of eighteen. In the best case scenario, he would get into some military University like Westpoint and thrive there, however still being in school at the age of twenty, instead of being the head of a large empire. Likely though Alexander would be bored to death by the modern day subjects he would be forced to learn about that would have nothing to do with military strategy. He would be condemned a failure in school and would never become a general of a modern day military like he ought to be considering his talents. The institution that would trap him is called the institution of Adolescence.

Instead of being allowed to enter the adult world and thrive like many figures in history have been able to do, today modern young people are trapped in a world that is a waste of time no matter what they do. The institution of Adolescence is the combination of the legal policies and social expectations like high school that keep the young from doing what is productive for themselves and the economy. They instead must focus on completing what is usually irrelevant education about extraneous subjects.

Another example of what would now be called teenage precocity being common is found in the life of Benjamin Franklin. When Franklin was about the age of twelve, he began a printing apprenticeship under his slightly older relative. Eventually, his relative left the city they were in and left Benjamin in charge of the shop at a young age. He was successful at running it, but eventually his relative came back and demanded control of the successful shop, as he had ownership of it when Franklin was seventeen years of age. This prompted Franklin to go to another city where he started a successful business (60). This of course contributed to Franklin becoming one of the most famous and accomplished men in history.

Again, had Franklin been born today he no doubt would have been successful in the education world but would have never been allowed to get in with his life like he had been allowed to in the 1700s. He would probably have never have achieved as great of things, being only a depressed servant to some school teachers instead of a successful entrepreneur. Think about how many young people today, with the advent of the internet, could start successful business ventures if not for the time they are made to waste learning subjects irrelevant to their lives in school.

In fact, the pattern of the lives of most of the people of the 1700s followed a similar pattern to Franklin's, albeit without the genius. Most people at about the age of twelve would be considered

old enough to learn the skill that they were going to practice for the rest of their lives in order to make a living. They would stop living with their parents at that age and take up an apprenticeship with a master of whichever craft. Usually, after a few years they would be able to begin work. (60)

This means that people were perceived as what would be an adult today at about the age of twelve or thirteen throughout the 1700s. Since there was no concept of “adolescence” until the early 1900’s, there was no big deal made about reaching “adulthood.” Children simply got bigger, and when they were big enough, they were sent off to learn to work. In other words, as soon as the young person was ready, they were expected to cease being cared for by their parents and to go to learn skills that would be directly valuable to their entire lives.

Men would typically marry when they had enough money to support a wife a child, usually in his late teens or early twenties. He would typically marry a woman in her teens after being granted permission from the woman’s father. Contrast these young marriages with today’s average marriage age of twenty-seven for women and twenty-nine for men! (61) Half of all men are now having their first marriage in their thirties, going their entire twenties a bachelor, while three hundred years ago they would have likely married in their teens.

There was no pretending that their grown offspring was still a “child” in some capacity. Today seventeen year olds are considered more childish than twelve year olds were in the 1700s. This is a sad state of affairs, which is made to seem even worse when it is realized that youth feel that they are wasting their time in schools. The new word for apprenticeship is internship, and those typically begin at the age of twenty-two, when a person graduates college, while it used to begin at twelve with no irrelevant training needed.

This perception of the young was relatively stable until one of the largest shakeups of society began to occur - the Industrial Revolution. The Revolution changed the economy and first allowed for institutions like Adolescence to be created. In fact some economic conditions at certain times encouraged this.

Still, going into the 1800s the position of the young in society was still far better than it is in contemporary times. The economy was only beginning to change the way the apprenticeship system had been working for centuries prior, and the thought of considering people past puberty as children was still far off into the horizon. The young were still capable of going to work as soon as they could.

As late as 1873, young people could still enter the adult world when they were ready despite growing rumblings of compulsory education and age restrictions “for their own good.” For example, in the Western United States, “through shrewd business dealings, or skill and luck at the gambling table, a fifteen year old could become someone to reckon with. Young men in their early teens also met with success in other fields. One thirteen year old Montanan was so successful at selling books that a publisher paid him one thousand dollars a year to be its representative. Others were merchants or wholesalers. Another ran a ferry, which was an essential, and sometimes lucrative, business. ... Stories of ten and twelve year olds sidling into the saloon for a morning snort were commonplace.” (60 , pg 136) Fifty years more and these young men would all be trapped in a school they’d likely hate, given their disposition towards actually earning money in the “real world.”

History is jam packed with time periods like these that show that it was commonplace for the young to operate, even competitively, in the “adult” world. Make no mistake, it was not only Alexander the Greats and Benjamin Franklins who would enter the adult world at

ages now considered too young to do so. They are simply the people who have biographies to show that they did.

The 1800s did show signs of the coming disaster for the young. When in the 1820s, women were entering the workforce for the first time, it drew some attention. What also drew attention, from the women themselves, was the age at which they would begin to work. They would usually begin factory work in their teens, which was not too young an age to begin working full time considering the historical context. Nonetheless, “the tract [published by the Lowell Female Reform Association in 1845] argued that the girls began at the factory ‘as mere children.’ Only a few years before, sixteen had been considered grown and virtually adult. And already, many children as young as seven and eight were laboring in factories.” (60, pg. 108) This is one of the first examples of the extension of the definition of child to people in their teen years, happening in the face of industrialization, coming from women no less. Both the changing economy and Feminism would come to play a role into making what may have been an odd statement at the time into a pseudo-reality for generations.

Fifteen years after the previously mentioned report, “mere children” were a common site on the Civil War battlefield. Infantry men were drafted when physically ready, with fourteen year olds among them not uncommon. Prepubescent boys were made to be drummers or flag carriers and were only sometimes shot by the enemy, as in those days of war it was dishonorable to kill an enemy without a weapon. This is why they are called infantry-men, and drummer-boys. This indicates well that people at the start of their teens or their physical maturity were deemed ready for adult responsibilities. Nowadays, men under eighteen years of age would be considered “child soldiers” by the UN if they were sent into the battlefield, and the public seems to consider soldiers even in their late teens as a little

too young, although their feelings haven't been able to get the military to sacrifice an large population of soldiers yet. The contrast in fighting ages shows the contrast between the ages of adulthood between times well.

CHAPTER II. THE BRAIN

It seems that the go to argument against youth rights in general, whether it be John Holt-style abolish childhood and all age restrictions or a tame proposition to lower the voting age a year or two, or even an opposition to the *raising* of an existing age restriction like tobacco in California or the gun ownership age in Vermont, is to say that young people have “immature”, “undeveloped”, or “still developing” brains. The age range given for young people however almost defeats the point of the person wielding this pop-culture argument as the media personnel and the researchers reporting findings from these “teen brain” studies often tout that their studies are finding that adolescence actually lasts until the mid to late twenties! (1) It therefore seems only logical to presume anyone taking the results of these studies so seriously as to use them to try to deny young people rights and responsibilities would surely go all the way and support the raising of all age restrictions, including the age of majority meaning that people below that age must have a legal guardian, to around the age of 25 or 26, maybe slightly higher. But these people never go as far to say that people in their twenties should be charged as “juveniles” when they commit crime or that parents must maintain responsibility for their offspring until such a late age, so it seems that those who use these studies as an end-all be-all argument as to why teens cannot have rights don’t even believe in the studies themselves!

2.1 - Misinterpretation of the Data

The truth is that what most people believe when they talk about adolescent brain development is whatever they saw reported on the news. And what is reported on the news about the results of these studies is not the same as the actual results of these studies. In fact, the

media and even the quotes of the researchers featured in the media have almost outright lied about the results of their studies. One motivation for this may be that many of these studies are longitudinal, meaning that they take many years and that to find, well, not much would be extremely disappointing, so the researchers may be inclined to loosely interpret their data. Take this for example,

“Unfortunately, news reports--and even the researchers themselves--often get carried away when interpreting brain studies. For instance, a 2004 study conducted by James Bjork and his colleagues at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, at Stanford University and at the Catholic University of America was said in various media reports to have identified the biological roots of teen laziness. In the actual study, 12 young people (ages 12 to 17) and 12 somewhat older people (ages 22 to 28) were monitored with an MRI device while performing a simple task that could earn them money. They were told to press a button after a short anticipation period (about two seconds) following the brief display of a symbol on a small mirror in front of their eyes. Some symbols indicated that pressing the button would earn money, whereas others indicated that failing to respond would cost money. After the anticipation period, subjects had 0.25 second to react, after which time information was displayed to let them know whether they had won or lost. Areas of the brain that are believed to be involved in motivation were scanned during this session. Teens and adults were found to perform equally well on the task, and brain activity differed somewhat in the two groups--at least during the anticipation period and when 5 (the maximum amount that could be earned) was on the line. Specifically, on those high-payment trials the average activity of neurons in the right nucleus accumbens--but not in other areas that were being monitored--was higher for adults than for teens. Because brain activity in the two groups did not differ in other brain areas or under other

payment conditions, the researchers drew a very modest conclusion in their article: "These data indicate qualitative similarities overall in the brain regions recruited by incentive processing in healthy adolescents and adults." But according to the Long Island, N.Y., newspaper *Newsday*, this study identified a "biological reason for teen laziness." Even more disturbing, lead author

James Bjork said that his study "tells us that teenagers love stuff, but aren't as willing to get off the couch to get it as adults are." (2)

Clearly what is being reported in the news media is not even lining up with the conclusions that the researchers are willing to draw in their academic research papers when their professional credibility is on the line. And interestingly enough, when they feel that credibility is not on the line, those researchers take much more leeway in the analysis of the modest results of their studies. The news should not be trusted when it comes to interpreting what the results of these studies mean in regards to the maturity and capability of young people.

Another more subtle tactic the news uses when misinterpreting the results of brain studies on people in their teen years is the misuse and abuse of two words: development and maturity. For example, an article from *Time* titled *Why Teenage Brains Are So Hard to Understand* used the words mature or maturing three times and the words developed or developing twelve times! This is not correct and reveals their heavy bias towards categorizing teenagers as immature. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines development, in the sense it is being used which is biological, as "to go through a process of natural growth, differentiation" and it defines mature as "of or relating to a condition of full development." So it would seem that researchers and journalists in the media could be claiming that in people in their teen years, the brain is still growing. However, this is far from the truth

of the matter. The very researchers who claim the “teen brain” is still maturing or developing have themselves found that the brain is actually done growing at an earlier age: “[Jay] Giedd gathered data from nearly 150 developing brains that showed the same thing. He published a paper on his findings in the highly respected scientific journal *Natural Neuroscience*, that reported that the first long-term look at a large number of teenagers had found that their brains were still growing much later than scientists had previously thought... Giedd found that the brain’s frontal lobes continued to grow, peaking at puberty at about age eleven in girls and twelve in boys.” (4, pg 16) Giedd then goes on to say that the frontal lobe may not stop development until the twenties. Therefore it would seem that perhaps these researchers mean something else besides growth when they discuss the development of the brains of people in their teen years. Later Giedd states that “the brain is pruned back to the essentials [after puberty], you know, like one of those poems, a haiku. It’s as if the brain says, hey, it’s time to specialize.” (4, pg 16) It seems like the brain actually begins to shrink in size after the start of puberty. However, neuroscientists say that when gray matter, the majority of the brain, shrinks that white matter, the myelin connections between parts of the brain, increases. Indeed, it is white matter that they claim grows in teenagers, while gray matter is reduced. And unless their data is fabricated, this modest claim holds true. Sadly for the news, however, this same claim holds true for people well into legal adulthood as well.

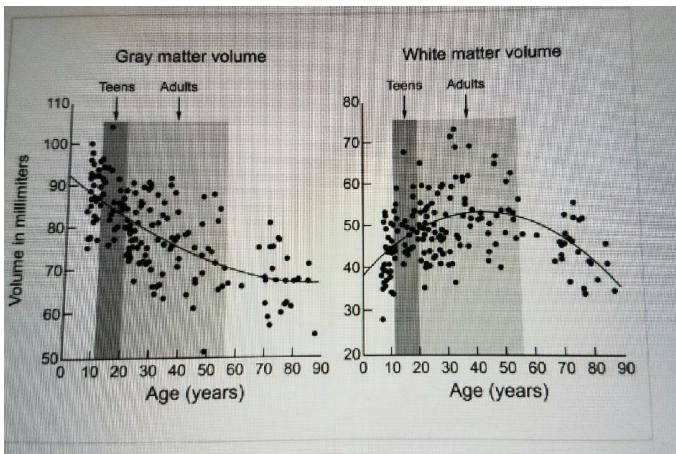


Figure 1. Gray and White Matter Volume by Age (5 , pg 77)

Figure 1. shows clearly that the amounts of myelination (white matter) and gray matter in the brain increase and decrease respectively until at least the age of 45. However, in the data above, the amount of participants above the age of 45 are sparse and so that may be obscuring a more linear pattern from emerging. At any rate, it's safe to say that the brain is always changing. The data gets as close to proving as possible that this statement is true for people at least up to the age of 45 years old. So when news articles discuss the “developing teenage brain”, what brain do they suppose the a young brain “develops” into?

There is no such thing as a mature or developed brain, at least not in the sense that the news and the researchers are using the words developed and mature. The pattern of gray matter reduction and increase in white matter occurs very late into life. This means that if a person in their teens is told that their brain has not developed yet, it is because they will still gain white matter and lose gray matter in the future. Since the same holds true for a forty year old, by the same standard, a forty year old has an immature brain. Since that standard is ridiculous, it is reasonable to say that teenager's brains are not developing or maturing, only changing.

Thus when you read in the news or on other websites that the "teen brain is still developing," it is dishonest to say that it is developing. The metrics that are being measured to claim that the brain is still developing never stabilize, meaning they never stop changing and so if change of those metrics indicates development, maturity never occurs. And while older people may start to lose white matter overall, that is likely caused by aging of the brain. The time overall white matter starts to decline correlates with the time that early onset neurological pathologies such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's will start to emerge, indicating that the pattern change may be a part of overall decline in neurological ability to prevent disease. (33) So that change in pattern doesn't indicate that maturity has been reached - it indicates a loss of health.

2.2 - The Brains of People in their Teen Years are Mature

An important question to ask is: why are brains changing in the way they do? The answer is that they are changing in response to experience in order to adapt to their environment. A 2003 study at the

Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience shows this well. After testing the brains of animals in two different environments, the researchers reported that “it was our expectation that there would be quantitative differences in the effects of experience on synaptic organization, but to our surprise, we also found qualitative differences. Thus, like many investigators before us, we found that the length of dendrites and the density of synapses were increased in neurons in the motor and sensory cortical regions in adult and aged animals housed in a complex environment (relative to a standard lab cage).” (6) It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that the brains of people in their teens change in response to experience such as a change in environment. Perhaps going to university or getting a driver’s license changes the brain of people in their teens. Moving out and living on your own teaches you multiple skills, which according to neuroscientists, change your brain.

If the brains of people in their teen years are changing in response to learning skills and having experience, that actually supports the thought that teenager’s brains are not immature. Neuroscientists state that the prefrontal cortex is the center of rationality and related to skills such as planning. The fact that teens are capable of learning to plan when they, for example, move out to live on their own shows that they could not possibly have underdeveloped prefrontal cortices like much of the media claims, because if they did, they would not be able to learn those skills. So when the psychiatrists studying the “teen brain” observe that the amount of white matter in the prefrontal cortex goes up with age, they are actually observing the results of young people learning vital life skills. They then go onto the news and get confused as to what came first: the skill or the ability to learn the skill. They unreasonably assert that the skill just pops into teenager’s brains, which is highly insulting to young people who make and learn from mistakes when it comes to things like losing items or

planning for the future. The truth is that the ability to learn to do things like planning is in the brain at least as early as the start of puberty, and the teenager's responsibility to then learn vital life skills. As the young person learns these things, the synapses, or myelinated fibers, in their brain will change and in brain scans psychiatrists will observe white matter increasing. And this also explains why white matter increases almost all throughout adult life - older people can learn things too. The very ability for a young teenager to make an attempt at planning something, perhaps but maybe not even make a few mistakes, and then explain how he learned from those mistakes disproves on its own the wild but popular assertion that this person has an undeveloped brain, as he is clearly in the process of learning that skill with a brain that is equipped to do so.

Dr. Beatriz Luna, a neuroscientist from the University of Pittsburgh, concluded the same thing from her research on the brains of people in their teens versus the brains of older people. She "found that the basic architecture of different networks in the brain is completed before adolescence sets in, but the way those networks talk to each other is honed during the teenage years. It is a time when the brain tries out different systems of communication among networks (such as visual and auditory), eventually figuring out what works best and using the most effective systems into adulthood. The refinement is important in developing adult behaviors." (7) This is just a fancy way of again saying that people in their teen years are equipped to be able to do "adult" tasks, they just have to learn how to do so.

That is an important distinction to make considering the popularity of using pop culture teen brain neuroscience as so-called "proof" of young people's inability to take on some adult task. Many will for example say that the driving age could not be lowered because younger people could not handle driving due to having an underdeveloped brain. This has been demonstrated to be not true. In

regards to the skill of driving, no one will have “developed” it until they start, and anyone who has the architecture of the adult brain can learn to drive. There will be more on the true capability on the young in following chapters.

So it would seem that people much younger than what is traditionally regarded as an adult are prepared and primed to learn any adult skill taught to them. Any 13 year old would learn to live on his own and be successful at it if he had to. He has the ability to learn the skill in his brain. Under the status quo however, he won’t learn that skill for half a decade, when it will finally show up on brain scans and be reported as proof that he had an undeveloped brain prior to that age in the news.

Perhaps we can teach people to use their brains efficiently much earlier than we do now. If experiences were accelerated, I believe we could do this. Sending younger people off to live on their own would therefore result in them simply “maturing” more quickly.

People in their teen years do not have immature brains and the brain science is not an argument against youth rights. If younger people were expected to behave more like adults, their brains would simply adapt and learn skills like planning at an earlier age than what is currently required.

But while the pattern of change falsely called development in people in their teen years is the same as in older populations, some scientists still claim that the brain of people in their teen years is different in other qualitative ways.

These ways include the way in which the brain of people in their teens responds to substances such as alcohol and marijuana, the circadian rhythm (sleep cycle) of the brain, the *process* through which the brain loses gray matter, and the excitability and inhibitory ability

of the brain. Either these differences are not real or they do not impact the ability of teenagers to take on adult roles. Where these differences exist, their cause is explained by things other than people in their teen years being underdeveloped or immature.

Two of the four of those ways were “proven” by performing experiments on adolescent rats. Sadly, adolescent rats are not the same things as adolescent humans and cannot be used to study changes in the brains of people in their teen years. For one, adolescent rats and pubescent rats are one and the same thing, whereas pubescent humans and adolescent humans are two different things. I will go into the definition of pubescent and adolescent in a later chapter, but what you need to know now is that they are not the same thing even though there can be about a year or two of overlap. Typically this overlap ends at the age of about fourteen. The researchers however try to extend the results of their studies to people as old as twenty five, as that is who they define to be adolescents. For people beyond the age of fourteen, adult rats would be more in line for study.

The second and more major issue actually disqualifies researchers from being able to use pubescent/adolescent rats to relate findings to even pubescent people. The issue is that adolescent rats used in studies are typically around six weeks old. No matter at what age something hits puberty, its brain a six weeks old will obviously be more vulnerable to things like alcohol and marijuana, which is one of the things they found in six week old rats and extended to people who have lived for over a decade. It takes only basic reasoning skills to realize that by necessity, though a two month old rat may be an adult and a ten year old human may be a child, the ten year old human’s brain should be more resistant to things like drugs and even changes due to experience simply because of how many more environmental pressures and chemicals the ten year old has been exposed to in his lifetime compared to the rat.

Furthermore scientists who do these studies themselves claim that one year in “rat years” is about thirty years for the rat, like it is seven years for a dog. (8) This means that a six week old rat would be about equivalent to a three or four year old human. Additionally, rats reach a stage called social maturity at about six months of age, where they stop playing with each other and begin to act more aggressively. That translates to about the age of fourteen or fifteen in humans. Therefore the only people that these findings in adolescent rats could even possibly be extended to are toddlers.

The findings found in rats are drug sensitivity and a difference process for losing gray matter. None of these claims have any actual evidence that they happen in people - they only know that they happen in rats who are maybe equivalent to three year olds. Not to mention the fact that rats may have different processes going on in their brains than what goes on in people’s brains. For example, increased excitability in adolescent rats could be why they play, and losing that excitability could lead to their loss of the desire to play. There is no parallel event in humans. People enjoy forms of play late into their lives such as sports and gambling games among other forms.

It is extremely dishonest to take these findings and apply them to humans. In research papers the researchers are always tentative, making no reference to humans and only a reference to whatever species they are experimenting on. They will then say of their results that there is still much that they don’t know and that the cause of these results could be environmental, genetic, experience, some combination or anything else you can imagine. The researchers then go on the news and claim they PROVED that teenagers react differently to some chemical or have more excitable neurons in their brain or some other wild and unsupported claim. These people and articles are not to be trusted, they have too much bias.

The claim that people in their teen years have less inhibitory neurons is often used to justify a claim that people in their teen years should not have certain dangerous adult responsibilities. However, this claim is difficult to sustain with legitimate evidence. Many research publications study this only in relation to pathology in younger people. Some articles have go as far to speculate the normal developmental route, but the majority of these studies simply compare pathological groups to non pathological groups, not healthy young people to healthy older people.

The most recent study (14) I have found that compares two healthy groups is from 2013. In the study, there is a younger group, labeled ADO, and an older group, labeled EA. The researchers found that in one area of the brain, the anterior cingulate cortex, the levels of inhibitory neurotransmitters are greater in the older group with $p = 2.9\%$. In the other part of the brain that was measured, they found that the difference what not significant between the two groups.

At first glance it would seem like this is a nail in the coffin. “That’s that!” the biased proclaim, “those dirty teenagers can’t inhibit their actions!” There are two main issues with that reaction to the results of this study.

The first issue is the age of the people in the groups. The younger group’s average age is 13.6 years with a standard deviation of 0.9 years, while the range of the younger group is 12 to 14 years. The average age of the older group is 21.6 years with the standard deviation being 1.7 years, and the older group’s range is 18 to 24 years old. Can you see the main issue? According to Giedd’s quote, many of those in the younger group might not even have fully *grown* brains! They are comparing children to adults, not people in their teens to older people.

The authors say the following about puberty, “While pubertal stage was not assessed in the present study, ADO were 12–14 years

old, a span overlapping with pubertal endocrine events. Thus, subtle pubertal stage differences may have existed within the ADO sample, however, EA were clearly outside of the pubertal window. It is therefore important that age-related differences in ACC GABA [inhibitory neurotransmitter in the front of the brain] be replicated in a study that empirically investigates the role of menstrual cycle phase, sex-specific hormones and pubertal stage on impulsivity and response inhibition.” (14) In fact, statistics on the ages of different puberty stages, which will be featured prominently later, show that roughly a third of their young group should be completed with puberty. And what do you know, about a third of the young group performs the same as the older group! So it would seem that this study at least supports the thought that a person in their teens who is done with puberty has inhibitory ability equivalent to that of someone around the age of 21 years old.

The second issue is the overlap between levels of inhibitory neurotransmitter between the groups. In short, the average for the young group is 0.130 ± 0.055 GABA/Cr (inhibitory neurotransmitter by a volume unit) and the average for the older group is 0.168 ± 0.063 . Using knowledge of statistics, you can come to the conclusion that roughly $\frac{2}{3}$, or 66%, of the younger group (which is mostly people who haven't even completed puberty) show healthy adult levels of inhibitory neurotransmitter. About $\frac{1}{5}$, or 20%, of the younger group have above average levels of inhibitory neurotransmitter for a person who has been done with puberty for many years. I hypothesize that the 33% of the younger group would have low levels of inhibitory neurotransmitter for an older person are very early in puberty and that if a group of slightly older people in their teens, say age 14-15 who are checked for completion of puberty, they would have the same levels of inhibitory neurotransmitter as people in their twenties at least. Perhaps it is sex hormones, which cause behaviors such as aggression, that

prompt the brain to have more inhibitory neurotransmitters to control behavior. This would likely be a learned skill and probably would not happen in a wild environment where violence is acceptable. The reason for prepubescents seeming to not have this inhibitory neurotransmitter in the same number as individuals who have gone through puberty is likely because they simply don't need them, because they do not yet have hormones that prompt behaviors that they should inhibit.

A nitpick to this analysis of this study is that, according to one 2001 study that rests behind a paywall (15), while inhibitory neurotransmitters reach adult levels earlier on, this study alleges that the receptors for this neurotransmitter don't reach "adult" levels until the age of about 22. The reason for this could be simple. In addition, the brain builds more synapses in response to a drug to become less susceptible to it. The body could simply be becoming less susceptible to the inhibitory neurotransmitters. This actually means that younger people in their teens should have a greater sensitivity to inhibitory actions in the brain.

Like most of the evidence that claims to "prove" that people in their teens cannot handle adult responsibilities, this evidence is not what it is cracked up to be. It doesn't show that people in their teens really do even have a deficiency in inhibitory neurotransmitters, and in fact the study seems to support the thought that inhibitory neurotransmitters are at least almost all in place by the end of puberty, which is around 14 as I will get to later. Finally, people who have not hit puberty yet may have less of this neurotransmitter simply because they do not need as much of it to inhibit their behaviors.

The last claim, that the circadian rhythm of teenagers differs, seems to be true but has one problem from neuroscientists. While the circadian rhythm is regulated partially by parts of the brain like the hypothalamus, it is more accurate to consider a function of the

endocrine system, meaning that it is mostly hormonal. Therefore psychiatrists probably are out of their comfort zone when discussing it.

I must address that the phenomenon that the circadian rhythm is delayed in people in their teens may not even be true. Falling asleep at a normal time never seemed to be a problem for young people historically. It is considerably likely that electronics could have caused young people's circadian rhythm to become delayed. According to the Sleep Foundation,

“Ninety percent of people in the U.S. admit to using a technological device during the hour before turning in, and children often use electronic media to help them relax at night. If you're among these nighttime technology-users, you may not realize the extent to which this can make it harder to settle down to sleep. But it can. The truth is, using electronic devices before bedtime can be physiologically and psychologically stimulating in ways that can adversely affect your sleep.

Here's what happens: Using TVs, tablets, smartphones, laptops, or other electronic devices before bed delays your body's internal clock (a.k.a., your circadian rhythm), suppresses the release of the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin, and makes it more difficult to fall asleep. This is largely due to the short-wavelength, artificial blue light that's emitted by these devices. The more electronic devices that a person uses in the evening, the harder it is to fall asleep or stay asleep. Besides increasing your alertness at a time when you should be getting sleepy, which in turn delays your bedtime, using these devices before turning in delays the onset of REM sleep, reduces the total amount of REM sleep, and compromises alertness the next morning. Over time, these effects can add up to a significant, chronic deficiency in sleep.”

(9)

It is common knowledge that younger people are more comfortable with the use of electronic technology than older people. Older people will be used to going to bed without using electronics, whereas people in their teen years today (2018) have a high probability of having been able to use electronic devices in bed since childhood. This makes falling asleep more difficult while also building the habit of using electronic devices in bed and falling asleep late at night at an early age. If electronics are the cause of the sleep delay, it is a cultural problem and not a biological phenomenon occurring in people in their teen years.

The other possible cause is hormonal. In this case the delay in falling asleep would occur beginning at the start of puberty when androgens begin to increase. It has been shown that there are difference in people's sleep cycles depending on their sex and their testosterone or estrogen levels. (10) This means that the level of sex hormones in the body beginning around the start of puberty could be responsible for the delay in the circadian rhythm of people in their teen years. Furthermore, this is not just a phenomenon occurring in people in their teens - it also is observed into the twenties and the delay only begins to yield as sex hormones begin to drop in the mid twenties. (11)

Whether the cause of the delay in the circadian rhythm of people in their teen years is biological or external to the body, the delay is not evidence of the brains of people in their teens being unable to take on "adult" tasks. The delay can also be worked around. Since the age of sixteen, which is an age reported to be in the midst of the delay, I have been successful in falling asleep before 10PM so that I can have enough sleep when I get up a 6:30AM to go to school.

If anything the delay attacks the schools and not the students in them. Whether it's biological or not, school start times should be

pushed back. Even for older people, getting up before sunrise is unnatural and that is what happens for most of the year at most schools.

At any rate, the ways in which psychiatric researchers claim that the “teen brain” is qualitatively different than the brain of someone older either have no real evidence for the support of their existence or if they do exist it doesn’t matter and it doesn’t mean that people in their teen years could not handle rights and responsibilities well.

2.3 - The Basis for their Mistaken Claims: The Teen Years as a Learning Period

There still hangs a question in the air. It’s the very same question that has led many people to studying concepts that really only exist in their minds like the “teen brain”, as the truth is that the brain of people in their teen years is hardly different in any meaningful way than the brain of those who are older. The question is this: why do teenagers act the way they do?

One major reason is certainly the fact that people in their teen years act like teenagers because they are expected by society to do so. This means that they feel pressured to confirm the stereotypes of their age group. I will write more on this in a chapter devoted people in their teen years and their relationship with society (chapter 5).

It is reasonable to think that behind every stereotype is some truth. So all these doctors and journalists aren’t too far out there when seeking a scientific answer to the question. They just have the answer wrong.

The truth is that there are skills that young people must learn in order to operate as an adult in society. People in their teen years are generally in the midst of learning many of those important skills.

Trying to learn causes much of the reckless and risky behavior that the older generations often fret about. The older generations fret because they don't see the need for it, mostly because they've already done those things when they were in their teen years! They look back and think that they would have been fine if they hadn't taken whatever risk they may be thinking about because nothing good really came of it anyway. But that is not true. The fact is that even if no concrete or tangible good came of some offshoot risk, they did receive an invaluable good in learning to never take that risk again. People must make mistakes to learn to never make those mistakes again. This is what people in their teen years are doing in regards to the skill of being an adult in society.

Think of learning to fly an airplane. Of course someone who has never done it before, no matter what age, will make mistakes when starting out. And airplanes are very high risk when it comes to the price of a mistake being made inside of one, so students are always guided by and with an instructor when they fly until they have learned to do it sufficiently on their own. It does not matter what the age of the student is. A student starting out at thirty will make the same mistakes in regards to flying as will a sixteen year old. In fact, as you will see later, the sixteen year old will probably learn to fly much faster than the thirty year old due to having un-aged cognition! Anyway, an experienced flyer is likely to look back on his learning days with a type of forgetful wonder - "why did I ever do that?" He did it so that he'd never do it again! It was only the experience of making the mistake that could teach him to not make it, not sitting in the cockpit waiting for some magical age caused change in the brain that prevents all mistakes.

Some students stop needing an instructor at different times than others. And imagine if the government mandated that students must have an instructor for half a decade despite them being proficient!

2.4 - Conclusion

In an October 2017 PubMed publication, Dr. Daniel Romer presented a framework for understanding risk taking among people in their teen years called the Lifespan Wisdom Model. Essentially Dr. Romer has good evidence for the rejection of the somewhat popular view that the so called “teen brain” causes poor judgement, which causes unnecessary risk taking and therefore would mean that people in their teen years are literally not equipped to handle the responsibilities of adulthood. Instead, Dr. Romer says that people in their teen years do not show poor judgement and their risk taking is simply sensation seeking, meaning exploration under conditions with little risk. The abstract of the paper states that

“the recent neuroscience models of adolescent brain development attribute the morbidity and mortality of this period to structural and functional imbalances between more fully developed limbic regions that subserve reward and emotion as opposed to those that enable cognitive control. We challenge this interpretation of adolescent development by distinguishing risk-taking that peaks during adolescence (sensation seeking and impulsive action) from risk taking that declines monotonically from childhood to adulthood (impulsive choice and other decisions under known risk). Sensation seeking is primarily motivated by exploration of the environment under ambiguous risk contexts, while impulsive action, which is likely to be maladaptive, is more characteristic of a subset of youth with weak control over limbic motivation. Risk taking that declines monotonically from childhood to adulthood occurs primarily under conditions of known risks and reflects increases in executive function

as well as aversion to risk based on increases in gist-based reasoning.”
(12)

This shows that people in their teen years have mature judgement and that their main downfall is a lack of experience. Since the emphasis is on the type of experience gained during the teen years, it is rational to think that people in their teens should probably spend their time learning to do what they are going to spend the rest of their lives doing instead of essentially living as an overgrown child.

Because it is the acquisition of experience and not the magical growth of brain structures that are responsible for the emergence of desired, “adultlike” behaviors, people in their teen years should be given the opportunity to do the exploration they need to do and gain rich experience.

Instead, under the status quo people in their teen years are prevented from doing these things. It seems all the actual “teen brain” science points to the fact that we must change the status quo and allow people in their teens into the adult world.

In the end it would seem that these media mistruths and faulty interpretations are just ways of using brain science to reinforce existing stereotypes about people in their teen years. If these stereotypes need such reinforcing, then how legitimate are they, anyway? The pure willingness of people to believe whatever they have seen reported on some only somewhat trustworthy clickbait pop-news website is astonishing. The number of people I have talked to both simply over the internet and in the flesh who will not let go of what seem to be downright lies is enormous.

Please, don't be one of those people. We need a better future for our children and young adults. The buzzword "fake news" is popular for a reason. While not all news is fake, it is extremely unwise to unquestionably trust anything it says, and then defend it to the death when there is great evidence to the contrary.

The fact of the matter is that in the news and in these researchers there is at the very least great bias and at the very possible worst dishonesty. I have not found a source I believe to be outright lying but some seem to come close. The people responsible for making brain "development" a matter of pop-culture knowledge clearly already thought of people in their teen years as people unable to become adults at their current age and these people are unlikely to be able to change their views. Maybe they're too old and their brains lost too much plasticity. Maybe they'll follow the status quo when it inevitably reverts to the natural order of things. Whatever the case may be, use your brain and look critically at what's in the media. If it's true, it will withstand your critical eye.

To quote Holt - *"It is never easy to change old ideas and customs. Someone wrote of her grandmother that whenever she heard a new idea she responded in one of two ways: 1. it is crazy, or 2. I've always known it. The things we know and believe are a part of us. We feel we have always known them. Almost anything else, anything that doesn't fit into our structure of knowledge, our mental model of reality is likely to seem strange, wild, fearful, dangerous, and impossible. People defend what they are used to even when it is hurting them."* (13)

The brain of people in their teenage years is not maturing nor is it still developing. It is simply changing and the observation of this change has been conveniently misinterpreted to be "adolescent brain development". The reality is that the brain of people past puberty changes but those changes follow the exact same pattern that will be sustained by the body until at least the age of fifty and possibly the rest

of life. It seems that the only thing that breaks this pattern is extreme aging which supports the thought that this pattern is a result of simply having new experiences. Because people in their teen years have many new experiences compared to people of older age groups due to their inexperience, this pattern shows up strongly in brain studies of people in their teens.

The qualitative differences between the brains of people in their teens and older people either do not matter or have not been shown to be true by even one shred of evidence in human beings. In fact in the case of the brains of people in their teens reacting differently than the brains of older people to substances such as alcohol or marijuana, reason would indicate that it's not true. And in the case of the circadian rhythm, the likely cause is hormonal, meaning that it's not the brain that's different.

These differences are also said by the biased researchers themselves to persist into population who are obviously biological adults and who have been considered social and legal adults for many years. The circadian rhythm delay persists until at least the age of twenty one. When misusing and abusing the words mature and develop, the researchers and news media claim that the brain "doesn't develop until 25", or more recently, some even later age.

So why debunk the differences when the researchers themselves show them to not affect the ability of someone to engage in adult responsibilities? The answer would be the same as the answer to the age old philosophical question: why does the truth matter?

Even mainstream researchers like Daniel Romer will write, in an article peppered with teenage stereotypes and the improper use of the word adolescence (which I will explain in a later chapter), have recently come to the realization that people in their teen years are fully physiologically equipped to handle adult decisions, rights, and

responsibilities. Romer highlighted that the perhaps the main source of teenage stereotypes is the lack of life experience of people in their teen years, not inability.

Imagine someone at the age of thirty-five years lost all the memories of his adult life, including learned skills and realizations from mistakes. Maybe his last memory would be the day before his second birthday, very early in childhood. Would this man be able to talk, walk, read, or write? It depends: only if he could do those things before he turned two! But two year olds may be capable of *learning* to do those things. Although they are considered precocious, many children learn to read at the age of three. And in the case of people in their teen years and the acquiring of adult life skills, the evidence clearly shows that their brains are ready.

CHAPTER III. PUBERTY & BIOLOGICAL ADULTHOOD

The fundamentals of human society are built on the back of our biology. It is from both our biology and the biology of the environment around us that we derive our culture. Culture evolves like animals and typically ends up being whatever ideas have worked out the best for a group of people up to a certain point in time. Rotten cultures either evolve or go extinct.

The culture of the West and specifically the United States is rotten and dysfunctional in many ways. But most cultures are. Most of the ways our culture has been rotten have been changed over the past few generations. But there sticks out one major rotten part of the contemporary core of our culture. This part is the way we treat and think of our young.

Sometimes we plain lie to ourselves about our young. Cultural lies typically stem from what was once true but has now changed. The major lie is that teenagers are incapable children.

This lie permeates among both those in their teen years who by the lie fancy themselves children and those who are out of their teen years and solidly consider themselves adults. A prime example of the former group can be seen in a USA Today news article (16) that reads, “David Hogg is 17 and a survivor of one of the deadliest mass shootings in United States history — and he's letting lawmakers know he wants action. ‘We're children’ the senior said live on CNN. ‘You guys are the adults. You need to take some action and play a role. Work together. Come over your politics and get something done.’” Hopefully what is to come in this chapter isn’t required reading to understand why this 17 year old isn’t a child.

Typically people lie whether they no it or not because it makes them feel better about something, whether that be themselves or something external. In the case of people in their teen years to pretend that they are children, it feels good to not have to take responsibility for your actions while at the same time having the potential to take very consequential actions. In the case of older people who say that people in their teen years are children, they do it because it either makes them feel superior to the people in their teens, or, in the case of many mothers, it allows them to deny the loss of their child. Anyhow, whenever the unpopular view of an issue is the more uncomfortable one, the fact that any group believes it typically means it is true, because why would anyone believe an uncomfortable lie? This is a simple and logical way to know what is said here is true - it hurts.

With all of this talk about children, I haven’t even defined it. Perhaps what those who call people in their teen years children are doing is redefining what the word child means. The scientific, objective, and therefore unabusable definition of the word child is a

person who has not yet hit puberty. What people mean when they call people in their teens a child must be some kind of arbitrary, made-up definition based on a law. Perhaps they think a child is anyone who is under the age of eighteen, or anyone who has not graduated high school. Allowing stages of life to be controlled by popular opinion, or worse, the government and not nature, or what many would call God, leaves these stages of life open to being changed with the result being suffering. Indeed, this is happening currently in our society and will be gotten into more in depth later on. In order to prevent abuse, it is important to allow nature to define the stages of life and have social events line up with natural and biological ones. Therefore, biological development must be properly understood.

3.1 - What Puberty is And When it Hits

A period of biological development that is of utmost importance is puberty. Puberty is defined as the process of developing to sexual maturity, (17) and sexual maturity means the ability to reproduce. A biological adult is an organism that can reproduce.

One main logical justification for biology being so important is evolutionary psychology. Essentially, this justification states that in the early days of the species, before language allowed us to socially control our perception of biology to some extent, a very young person who was visibly sexually mature, or what we would think of when we think of a twelve or thirteen year old today, would have been considered an adult for all intents and purposes. Those young men and women would become sexually active and ultimately reproduce. Young men would be expected to help whatever tribe they were in to hunt. The young women would become quickly pregnant and be expected to begin motherhood nine months later. Young people of this age have lost their cuteness and would be perceived as threats by the

older humans instead of cute children to take care of. So it is only natural and instinctual, ingrained within us, to think of people far below the current ages of social and legal adulthood as adults. It is also ingrained within people of this age to think of themselves as adults.

This evolutionary psychological history supports the thought that there are a number of instincts that emerge along with the sexualality at the time of puberty. These instincts essentially push the young man or woman to become an adult. As observed in myself, these instincts I have dubbed the worker's instinct, the parenting instinct, and the independence instinct. The worker's instinct drives, at least young men, to want to gain social status, wealth, and to do meaningful work. It is best when the two first items can be gained through meaningful work. The parenting instinct drives a desire to parent your own children, and the independence instinct drives the will to break away from the parents. Without these drives emerging in young people, society would be doomed. Without the worker's instinct, there would be very little competition and most people would be content with simply doing whatever gives them some food at the end of the day. There would be no overachievement. Without the parenting instinct, parents would simply ditch their children. While this does happen somewhat frequently in modern day society, it is not as frequent as many imagine. This instinct is much stronger in females, while the worker's instinct is much stronger in males, although both exist in both sexes. Mothers almost never abandon their children. Only a minority of children - 33% - don't live with their father. (18) The reasons for this are typically death of the father or some pathology such as drug use. Without the independence instinct, offspring would simply leech off their parents as long as they could. Leeching off parents in fact is becoming a more and more common occurrence. This is because suppressing these instincts too long after they have awoken

from being dormant in children leads to a psychological self suppression of them.

An ideal society would line up the emergence of these instincts with the time in which young people can fulfill them. Our society is far out of whack, however.

Our cultural delusion is so heavy that we delay even this basic fact. Some have tried to redefine puberty, as calling twelve year olds sexually mature just isn't fashionable, to mean the period of time in between when sexual maturation begins and when *bone growth* stops. Ages given for this cessation of bone growth are typically sixteen or seventeen years. (19) Covert changes like this are wrong on many levels. First, bone growth does not actually stop at the ages of sixteen or seventeen. In fact, many bones, including the bones of pelvic and pectoral girdles, grow until about the age of twenty five (20). Second, using this wrong definition of puberty, the term puberty would become biologically meaningless, as no matter what the definition is the word is simply a way of dividing up what is really one grand continuum. However, it is actually useful to use the word puberty to discuss the time when the sexual organs are developing. The word becomes nearly useless if it means the time when the sexual organs are developing and over ten years after that of what is for all intents and purposes, adult life.

The real age when puberty over is much lower. In fact, many in pediatrics agree on this basic statement, accepting sexual maturity as the end of puberty. However, most in medicine define sexual maturity as reaching something called the fifth Tanner Stages. It seems that they have managed to make even a self evident biological process into a social construct. The fifth Tanner Stages (the two stages being pubic hair, or PH, and genital, or G) are almost always reached after the ability to reproduce is achieved. Regardless, whether you use the definition of sexual maturity accepted for every other animal species

on the planet, the ability to reproduce, or if you use the Tanner Stages, the ages at which puberty is completed at typically are much lower than sixteen or seventeen.

According to the 1970 longitudinal study performed by Dr. Tanner himself in Britain, the average age for reaching the fifth genital stage in males is 14.9 years with a standard deviation of 1.1 years. (21) It took on average three years to go from the start of puberty to the fifth stage. A longitudinal study performed thirty years later revealed the same average age for the reaching of the fifth genital stage. (22) Given that females mature earlier, it seems that almost the entirety of the medical field would agree that puberty typically ends before the fifteenth birthday. It can take longer, but again, the majority of people finish it before they turn fifteen even by the standard of the fifth genital stage.

Puberty could be considered to end somewhat earlier, however. The difference between the fourth and fifth genital stages are incredibly minor and obscure. People will tend to be able to reproduce and begin to see themselves naturally as physical adults by the reaching of the fourth genital stage. Additionally, the instincts will have already been emerging from the onset of sexual desires earlier in puberty. The objective difference between the two stages is that at the fourth stage, the testicles should be 4.0 to 4.5 mL in volume, while at the fifth stage the testicles are supposed to be above 4.5 mL in volume. This change in size, given that the ability to reproduce is typically already present before it, seems to not be a function of sexual development but rather an extraneous change. And some studies don't consider the testicles - it's just vaguely decided based on penis size. (23) Even more damning is that some races, including Asians, never reach the fifth stage! (24, pg 40) The fourth stage was measured to be reached on average at the age of 13.8 years in Tanner's study and 13.6 years in the more recent study.

So it seems that the majority of 13 and 14 year olds are actually done with puberty, and above that age, nearly all people have finished save a few extreme minorities. If they are done with puberty, than what is stopping them from taking on a role as an adult? Only a law. They are equipped otherwise to become adults if they so choose.

3.2 - The Biological Stages of Life and How They are Denied

Still the vast majority of people who cannot see past the cultural climate of how the young are regarded down to the objective biological aspect of whether they are capable or not pretend through subtle (but many times not so) language. There is an entire range of vocabulary that directly or indirectly denies the realities of biological adulthood in young people and allow those who are typically parents, educators, and news personnel to pretend that people in their teen years are anything less than capable of learning to be a fully functional social adult. These words are (I may miss a few) *adolescence*, *adolescent*, *adult*, *puberty*, *teenager*, *mature*, *develop*, *boy*, *girl*, *kid*, and while not a word, *the use of numerical age to provide information on or about people*. Some of these words should never be used as they have no proper meaning. The words *adult*, *puberty*, *mature*, *develop*, *boy*, *girl*, and *kid* are appropriate in some contexts, but the majority of the time they are redefined and used in a subversive way.

To discuss each of these words, I will go through each and provide a proper definition, a common definition and why the word should not be used including what the intent is when they use it. To begin, the word *adolescence* is typically used to describe a period of life in between childhood and adulthood. This is conveniently not far from the truest definition of the word **adolescence**, which describes the socially constructed period of life in between reaching biological maturity and being legally and socially recognized as an adult. The

frequent problem with this word is the attempt to biologically justify the existence of an adolescent stage of life. And because there is truly no biological justification, adolescence is in reality just a socially constructed stage of life that only maintains its existence through social and governmental threats and use of force. There is no reason to use the word, even in its truest definition, because such a socially constructed stage of life should not exist, and as you will see, only does harm.

When misusing the word adolescence, the parties doing so will typically try to falsely objectify its existence through talk of biological and psychology “development.” The biological development often referred to is a confused mix of what is actually two separate biological stages of life. These stages are pubescence and the first part of adulthood, which as of now has no recognized name besides the one I have given it: relative adulthood.

In general life can be biologically divided into three major stages: prepubescence, pubescence, and postpubescence. More common names for these stages would be childhood, puberty, and adulthood, however these common names are often confused and conflated with socially constructed stages of life. Biological childhood, or prepubescence, can and should be divided into substages distinguishing times like infancy from times in later childhood. Pubescence typically only lasts about three years, but there are different developmental milestones of sexual development within the stage. Postpubescence, or biological adulthood, is the longest but paradoxically the most uniform stage of life biologically. This is because there is no biological development that occurs once adulthood begins. However, there is a stage of adulthood that lasts from the time after puberty ends to about the mid-twenties that includes growth the body has not been able to stop and features hormones at the highest levels of life. At the end of puberty, drops in growth hormone and a

peak in androgen production signal the bones to stop growing, but this process can take a decade in the case of bones such as the clavicle. At the same time, at least in males, hairs put in place in areas such as the chest, pubic region and face continue to become darker. This change is a simple color change, like in the case of the greying of hair later on in life. For example, I cannot grow a substantial amount of dark facial hair. However, when I go without shaving, parts of my face will be covered in light hairs that are hard to see. Over time I have observed these hairs darken. This is not a function of puberty - it is simply aging. Eventually, they will all darken and later in life they will again change color due to aging. I term the stage of adulthood where bone growth continues (albeit it is being stopped by the body) and where hair tends to continue to darken relative adulthood, whereas the part of adulthood where there is no more of either absolute adulthood. Relative adulthood, at least in males, is typically from the ages of fourteen to twenty-four.

Some try to include the mild forms of growth found in relative adulthood in some strange, over-extended definition of puberty. There are three solid reasons debunking this being a part of puberty. The first is that the types of changes observed in mild adulthood have nothing to do with achieving sexual maturity. The second is that the body is already trying to stop the changes by the time puberty ends. It simply takes time. In addition, women experience less changes in relative adulthood as do certain races. While the function of puberty is to develop to sexual maturity, the function of relative adulthood seems to be an unnecessary capitalization on the ephemeral withstanding ability of the body to squeeze out a little more strength and inches. Finally, grouping these changes in a definition of puberty would mean that puberty lasts until the mid-twenties, which as discussed above, would make puberty an almost useless word and would be biologically

dishonest. There would be no term of the specific development towards the ability to reproduce.

So when the World Health Organization says that the age range for adolescence is ten to nineteen, they really show there is no biological basis for the age range. Within that time period, a person passes from prepubescence to pubescence to postpubescence. Perhaps these passings are what they are referring to. But the end of a stage is not a stage itself. Anything resembling a stage in the head is due to a social construct. What's more, postpubescence typically starts at fourteen. Why then is "adolescence" said to last five or ten years after biological adulthood starts? There is nothing happening on a biological level at the ages when adolescence is said to end, unless you claim adolescence ends with relative adulthood. However, relative adulthood is a part of *adulthood* for a reason.

So adolescence is not a biological stage. At most, it's a conglomeration of three separate stages. But psychologists claim there to be psychological "development" during adolescence. The first problem with this claim is that there is no such thing as psychological development. Don't take this the wrong way - people change and even become better psychologically. But they also become worse. Development is change towards becoming a finished, final product. The mind is never finished. A core tenet of psychology and psychotherapy especially is the changeability of the mind. The second problem is that the psychological change claimed to be observed during people in so-called adolescence is not universal. Changes include learning to think more abstractly and learning emotional control. But anyone who has worked in a jail or prison knows that some people never *learn* to control their emotions, and famous psychologist Jean Piaget pointed out that many normal people never learn to think abstractly. (25) Psychologists may think these things are universal because many people will first learn these skills in their teen

years and because in current Western society people's lives at this age tend to be uniform as they are regimented to life within the institution of education. Perhaps the changes the neuroscientists typically observe in the brain that were explained in the previous chapter could be called "Your Brain on High School." Therefore it seems that there is neither a basis for psychological or biological development occurring during so-called adolescents, further revealing the stage to be only something constructed by society.

Additionally, claiming that there is psychological "development" in this stage implies that psychological betterment does not happen later on in life. This is discouraging for older individuals and outright wrong.

The true definition of the word **adolescent** is a person who is regarded by his society to be in the socially constructed stage that is adolescence. Typically though this word is used to relegate a biological adult to an stage of life other than one where he can take full responsibility for his own actions and for himself. The connotation that the one called an adolescent is being purposefully held there by society is lost - instead the word has become a sort of a slur, with a connotation that it is unfashionable on the fault of the one called this word to be an adolescent. This word is of no good use and I propose it and words like it should be regarded as a sort of slur or curse word. People should not be referred to based on their stage of life in the first place, much less should they be referred to based on a stage of life that is only forced upon them.

The true meaning of the word **adult** is a biological adult - a person who has completed puberty. However, many use this word to refer to legal or social recognition of an adult. This use of the word almost always is used to contrast with an adolescent or a child. This use can be seen in common phrases such as, "I'm an adult so you can't tell me what to do." This is not referring to biological adulthood - this

is the use of the word to imply that they *aren't* adolescents and therefore cannot be told around. Implying this of course implies that it is acceptable to treat adolescents differently than “adults” - specifically that those marked adolescents are to have less control over their own lives. This is not right and this use of the word should be watched out for. The word adult should only be used to refer to a person who has completed puberty.

As defined earlier, **puberty** is the process of developing to sexual maturity. And again, people have attempted to redefine this word to have some vague definition like “whatever happens during adolescence.” People have actually tried to defend this redefinition. Some say it helps practitioners to better consider the needs of “adolescents.” No excuse is good enough to excuse the manipulation of language that would leave us without a word to reference sexual development and that would bend the public psyche in a 1984 style type of *NewSpeak* fueled *doublethink*. Be careful to know that the proper definition of puberty is simply the process of the development of the ability to reproduce.

Teenager is a word that is used like the word adolescent to slander people in their teen years. The true definition of the word is simply a person from the ages of thirteen to nineteen. However, the word itself was created to denominate an age group. Even the definition of the word with no implied connotation of irresponsibility or incapability segregates one group of the population arbitrarily from another. Twenty is not in nature a magic birthday, only artificial attitudes could make it so. It is unhealthy for a person to think “you/I are/am a teenager.” Your age is not what you are, you are simply a person in their teen years. You happen to have been on the planet for a certain period of time. People should be seen as *who* they are, not white or black or male or female or young or old. What people really are is their personality, what they have done and what they can do and

so much more that goes far deeper than superficial qualities that they cannot control.

This doesn't mean that knowing someone's age won't tell you a lot about a person. In this day and age it will. Where it can be correlated with biology, such as in very young children, it also can tell a lot about their capabilities. However, most of what we think we know about age and capability after puberty is bunk. As you will see in a later chapter, people in their teens are easily capable of handling the full range of adult responsibilities. Instead what knowing a postpubescent person's age will tell you beyond that fact that they are no longer a biological child is simply how society thinks of them.

The way society at large thinks about people around this age can be extremely confusing. There are many double standards and the way they are regarded is out of sync with the biological reality in almost all regards. There is a stigma directed at being a "teenager", no matter the specific age, a stigma toward being a minor which is typically under eighteen, and there are different expectations for people at each age.

For people in their teens as a whole, the stigma is as broad as the age range. In general there is a stereotype that they will be highly likely to disregard elders and fight with parents. Irresponsibility is also assumed, however this scales back with age within the range, like incapability. Moodiness is a key stereotype, and the wider stereotypes towards youth will also be in play, meaning that people in their teen years are seen as highly energetic people who love, perhaps too much, to have fun.

I'm not saying that stereotypes are complete lies. Many are based in truth, but many are also based on social constructions. While some stereotypes are truer than others, there will always be a significant number of people of a group that do not conform to

whatever can be called a stereotype about their group. Thus, when meeting a new person and when drafting laws, even the most popular or self evident stereotypes should be considered only stigmas, not automatically true things about a person. And indeed, many more stereotypes are results of only artificial attitudes and not underlying human biology.

Stereotypes that are really harmless anyway are also the most likely to be based on reality. People are different, but most of the time those differences aren't bad things. Young people are energetic but that alone would probably be agreed to be a good thing by the majority of people. However, most stereotypes that reflect extremely poorly on the group they are referring to should be scrutinized and refuted if they don't stand up to that scrutiny.

When it comes to irresponsibility and incapability, there will be an entire chapter devoted to that later. Suffice it to say they are not true. In regards to fighting with their parents, this is often not the fault of the offspring, or if it is, it is not in the vast majority of cases. In my personal experience, fighting with parents often occurred over needless restrictions. There is evidence to support that this is probably the case around the country, as in his book, Dr. Robert Epstein shows through empirical data that the average person in their teen years faces more restrictions in their daily life than an active duty soldier or even an incarcerated felon. (26) As restrictions that I claimed were needless such as bedtimes and restrictions on media vanished, so did fights with my parents. And people in their teens almost never start fight. It is the parents who attempt to use coercion and face resistance who then name the event a "fight".

As for moodiness, the people in their teens that I am around daily are almost never moody. Therefore this stereotype has no basis. Often people in their teens are moody at home. If they are moody at

home but not in other environments, maybe the home is the cause? At any rate, it's not the brain and it's not hormones.

Minor specific stereotypes are simple. They will be seen overall as more irresponsible and childish than eighteen and nineteen year olds. There is also the simple fact that because of social coercion, less opportunities for responsibility will be available to them. Of course people become less skilled at life as they go down in age on average, so this stereotype may have some truth to it. However, there are many sixteen year olds who act more mature than most nineteen year olds. There are many future oriented fifteen year olds that I know, one who is starting a business with money earned himself through work (restricted work too on account of his age) and another who is successfully planning to graduate high school five semesters early, that compare very well when compared with the multitude of nineteen year old or older drug addicts there are. Therefore, this stereotype is not of much use and should be exposed for what it is: just a stereotype.

Finally there are stereotypes related to each age of the teen years. These are often centered around perception of physical development and allowances made by the law. Thus I will describe how the perception of a person in their teens changes each year, although starting with twelve as it is an important year.

12 - You enter secondary school. You can stay home alone. This is the last year before being considered a teenagers so some of the teenager bias radiates downward to this age. You are expected to be experiencing sexual development and to be interested in sexual activities. You are expected to be out of primary school.

13- Considered a teenager, meaning they have left an earlier sociological age group and have joined the age group of 13-19, or more specifically 13-17, minor teenagers, or even more specifically middle school teenagers. Considered old enough for some media, such

as T rated ESRB games and PG13 movies. No longer considered by society as a “true child” but still considered a child in a distorted sense. Yes, even society recognizes teenagers aren’t “true children” BUT they often time refer to them as another type of child.

14 - This is typically when high school is started, meaning school performance actually starts to influence your future and you are considered old enough to do this. Generally by this time you are considered old enough by parents to go out without their supervision although 14 year olds typically cannot drive (hail North Dakota for being the exception). While not official, most parents likely consider their child capable of watching R rated media even though they’re below the age. Expected to be even less of a child but far from being expected to appear “adult.” Heavy awkwardness is still tolerated. They are considered to still be very irresponsible. Most states will charge them as adults in heavy circumstances when it comes to crime.

15 - In most US states you can get your driving permit but not a license. There is not much of a ratcheting up 14 at this age. Some expectations may radiate down from the big 16.

16 - You can and usually are expected to drive and get a job. Awkwardness is no longer expected. You are considered responsible (for a teenager) at least versus the awkward “middle school teenagers.” Let me be clear that you are not considered as responsible as an “adult”. You typically begin your 2nd half of high school where you are usually expected to take much harder classes. You are also expected to take much harder classes. You are more likely to be charged as an adult for a crime. You can consent to sex in many states. You are typically not referred to as a true or fake child anymore but you are still not referred to as an adult. You may be considered something like “almost an adult” whereas younger teenagers are thought of as false children. You can drop out of school in many states with parental consent.

17 - Not much here. Some age restrictions radiate down from 18 to 17 such as R rated movies. This was done because there is the NC 17 rating which is 18+. They instituted R as 17 and up and NC 17 as 18 and up to make NC 17 movies not an option and the rating essentially function as pure censorship as theaters typically don't play them. Some expectations may radiate down from the huge 18.

18 - You are considered a legal adult. You typically move out and graduate high school at this age. You no longer have legal guardians. You are considered an adult teenager basically. In the United States however you are still considered somewhat irresponsible but much less so than before. I could describe a million things but the 1st sentence of this paragraph essentially sums it all up.

19 - Last year of being called a "teenager," considered the most mature of the age range.

On account of the fact that every odd year tends to not see much change in regards to legal status and therefore stereotypical perception, the ages can be grouped into groups of two:

12/13 - "Teenage Children"

14/15 - "Middle School/Awkward Teenagers"

16/17 - "High School Teenagers"/ "Almost Adults"

18/19 - "College Teenagers" / "Adult Teenagers"

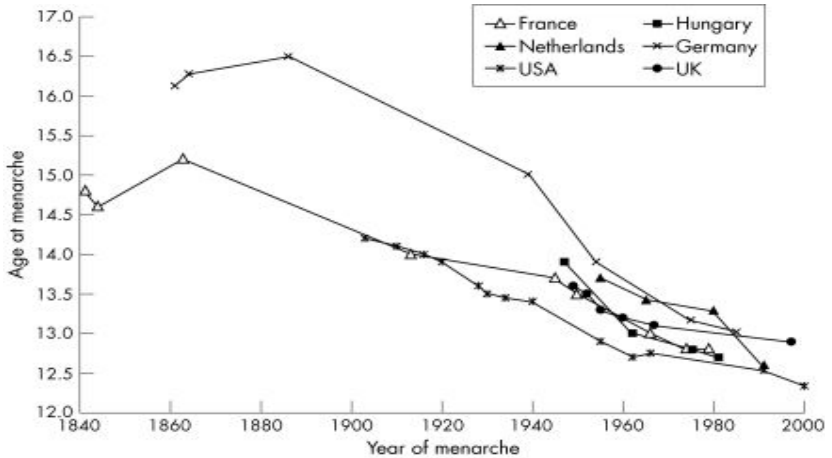


Figure 2. Decline in Age of Menarche by Year.

Source: NHS

This is how people in their teens are typically viewed based on their age, and it is out of line with biology. An in-line view would take into account the three year shift. This shift refers to roughly the amount of years that puberty started to hit earlier. There is substantial evidence that puberty used to occur much later, with it occurring now about three years earlier. See Figure 2. for more information. Tied with the historical perspective, this means that the eighteen and sixteen year olds of the time when the age restrictions were decided resembles today's fifteen and thirteen year olds, respectively.

I hypothesize the the framework outlined above that society at large uses to stereotypically judge people in their teens is derived from the past. To be fixed, most of it should be done away with and what remains of each group should be lowered about three years. And perhaps we should judge individuals, not age groups.

At last, on to the words **develop and mature**. As outlined in the previous chapter, these words are used to label people in their teen years as immature, while that is far from the truth. These words should only be used as biological descriptors, as their true meanings are to change to completion and a state of completion respectively. People in their teen years after puberty are not changing towards completion - just death. So really, only those who have passed on are truly mature.

As for the words **boy, girl, and kid**, these words are used to again relegate people in their teen years to something less than adult status while at the same time mocking them. The true meanings of these words are simply male, female, and androgynous children, respectively. As normal people in their teens do not fit the true definition of biological child, it is wrong to describe a “teenage boy or girl” or to say “they’re just kids.” These words are also used in an attempt to change biological maturity with the reaching of legal age. Often the cutoff for saying “__teen year old boy” is seventeen. At eighteen, they begin to be called men in the news. As it turns out, however, the majority of even thirteen year olds are not boys. They are young men. This practice gives a law that must be changed undo power, and therefore these words should not be used in these improper ways.

The phenomenon of reporting ages in the news is a strange and disturbing one. Imagine if a leading headline ran with the title, “Three black men arrested for murder of Mexican woman.” There would be outrage across the country from a cornucopia of racial groups. But we know all too well that titles like “three teens arrested for murder of nineteen year old woman” are abundantly common. The truth is that what both these titles do are morally wrong. They describe not the people doing the crimes but rather the groups they are associated with, shifting the guilt to those groups. The first title makes blacks look unduly guilty, while the second does the same to people in their teen

years. Both groups should rightfully be upset when headlines like these come out. But no one bats an eye when it's "teen" in the headline. It's time for a change, and for this reminiscently wrong practice to stop.

3.3 - Conclusion

It seems that our biology and our legal ages are out of line. There is at least a three year gap in natural development and the way people in their teen years are perceived at large by the world around them. While the government says, "eighteen," Nature says, "thirteen or fourteen." This means that we as a society are holding younger people back. This is morally wrong and has many negative effects both on the people being held back and the people doing the holding.

It is time for a change. People must open their eyes up to what they, their son's and their daughter's bodies have and are telling them. The next time you see a person in their teen years, see them. Not their age, and not their stereotypes and stigmas. When you do this, you will see an adult.

CHAPTER IV. THE TRUE POTENTIAL OF THE YOUNG

In the vast majority of nations around the world, those nation's young people are held back in a large variety of ways. Not in the least is one of these ways the way in which these people are perceived. The most nightmarish way in which these people are held back is legally - through force. If they try to do, they find that because others think they cannot, they shall not.

And perhaps changing the perception that young people cannot will stop others from trying to prevent them. Many times, preventionists grudgingly admit that young people can do something, but not without being a greater danger to themselves or others than someone who is older. This is not true.

4.1 - Learned Skills

In regards to many of the things that people purport that the young cannot do without unnecessary risk, there is a great logical flaw at play. This is specifically talking about learned skills such as driving, as many people are scared of the young on the road. They falsely think that people under a certain age cannot learn to drive safely. They fallaciously attribute this to accident statistics that show that the youngest drivers often have the most accidents. Of course the youngest and least experienced drivers have the most accidents! This holds true no matter what the driving age is. In the case of what happened in California because of these people's ignorance, it costed many lives. *"In 1996, the state had enjoyed a decade of record declines in traffic crashes and fatalities among teenaged drivers to all-time lows. Then, the legislature, after terrifying lobbying by safety groups, implemented a new, severely restrictive law subjecting drivers age 16-17 to multiple, highly supervised stages before licensing. What happened? In the 1996-2005 period, fatality rate declines among 16 year-olds slowed, 17 year-olds' leveled off, and drivers age 18 and older previously subjected to the new law as teens **showed significant increases in traffic deaths** (27). A major study showed similar post-law trends toward higher death rates among young drivers nationwide (28). When we presented these findings to the California legislature in 2008, safety and law enforcement lobbies that had lobbied for the law sat silently and later admitted they were aware of the dismal trends – but hadn't spoken up. What did the legislature do? Attempted to extend the law to 18 and 19 year-olds!" (29)* The driving age could be raised to thirty, and thirty year olds would experience as many driving deaths as sixteen year olds do currently, because they would have no experience.

Some still wouldn't believe that the thirty year olds' driving death rate would be as high as sixteen year olds' because they think

people in their teens make more risk. This has gotten as close to being proven false as anything in the world can be. In an analysis of brain and behavioral research published in October of 2017, Dr. Daniel Romer of the University of Pennsylvania claimed that only one type of risk taking rises during the teen years - exploratory risk taking under unknown risk. Data from behavioural and neurological research showed that the types of risk that would motivate car crashes - risk under known conditions - declines linearly from childhood: “risk taking that declines monotonically from childhood to adulthood occurs primarily under conditions of known risks and reflects increases in executive function as well as aversion to risk based on increases in gist-based reasoning.” (12) It seems this stereotype about risk only exists because younger people are more open to experience - which is what risk under ambiguous conditions entails.

In fact, the world’s infatuations with age restrictions as an acceptable concept should stop. It is not morally right to judge people based on a shallow aspect about them, much less one they cannot control. In fact, people with extreme mental deficiencies often have more rights than people in their teens! Someone over the age of twenty one who is challenged to the point where they could not complete high school may hold a basic day job and walk into the bar at the end of the day, perhaps on the way to their own apartment, but an over-achieving fifteen year old cannot by law walk into a bar, hold a day job, or live without his parents.

Thus, many skills that have age restrictions on them are learned skills. Low experience causes deficiency at these skills, not age. People in their teen years should not get a bad reputation for simply being new to a skill such as driving.

4.2 - Potential and Experience as Concepts and the Potential of the Young

A perception may be that young people are not mentally capable of handling any of these responsibilities. This is a ridiculous falsehood with no base in reality.

There are enough examples of people in their teen years doing things intellectually that the vast majority of people, period, will never do to fill an entire book. The most recent exemplar that comes to mind is named Jack Andraka. In 2012, Andraka, at the age of fifteen, discovered an advanced way of detecting a form of pancreatic cancer that is predicted to save thousands of lives. The news article, of course, describes him condescendingly referencing the “silver glint of a retainer” and that “his shaggy haircut is somewhere between Beatles and Bieber.” One line stands out in particular: “In calculus, he does not join the other students who cluster around a blackboard equation like hungry young lions at a kill. ‘That’s so trivial,’ he says, and plops down at a desk to catch up on assigned chapters from *Brave New World* instead. Nobody stops him, perhaps because last year, when his biology teacher confiscated his clandestine reading material on carbon nanotubes, he was in the midst of the epiphany that scientists think has the potential to save lives.” (31) Shame on that high school teacher! Even an article demonstrating the capabilities of people in their teens in the same breath shows perfectly just how horrible they are treated!

Another somewhat well known example of a person in their teen years showing the true capability of people their age is a household name: Alexander the Great. Alexander was sixteen years old when he was charged with his first of many successful military conquests. One of the most powerful men in history got his start when today he would be stuck in a high school, asking to use the bathroom.

But anecdotes only prove so much. Most of the people who achieve great things in their teen years will do so their entire lives.

Some tragically fall off. However, these anecdotes only go to show that whatever someone is capable of, they can do it in their teen years.

A person's capability is extremely important for understanding who they are as a person. It is an extremely large part of who a person really is at the deepest level, like it or not. In the modern day, however, most people make the grave mistake of judging people based on other more superficial characteristics. These characteristics can and do include items such as race, ethnicity, nationality or hometown, gender or sex, and more and more these days, age. The unfortunate truth is that age cannot tell you much about a person, and if it can, in an ideal society it wouldn't.

I have come to the understanding that what a person *is* - that is to say, who they are, their identity perhaps - is really just two concepts: potential and experience. There really is nothing else. Potential can be defined as what a person is able to do, while experience is what they have done.

Potential and experience can interact with one another and change one another. Raw potential drives what experiences an individual will be able to have, and in turn those experiences can boost potential, for instance through learning, or lower it, like through injury. Thinking about a person like this is an easy way to simplify all that they have done and all that they will be.

Now what do superficial concepts tell us about a person's potential or experience? Mostly nothing, and where they say something, that can and should be changed.

Think about race. If someone is black or white, how can you tell what of their potential or experience is different? You cannot reasonably tell if their potential to perform any given task or to have an experience is different. While some people claim that on average, those two races have different IQs, the variation between individuals is too high to determine who has what IQ or who has a higher IQ

between two people. Perhaps you may be able to guess that the black person is more likely to have experiences something like poverty while the white person is more likely to have not. In this case, that is something that should strived to be fixed. It is the same with age.

Let's do this thought experiment between two people of different ages. On one hand, there is a fifteen year old man, and on the other, there is a thirty-five year old man. What does their age tell you about their potential? Who is stronger? Who is smarter? It seems that age does not tell anything about potential, at least past puberty. Now it comes down to experience. Hopefully, the thirty-five year old has been out in the world and has twenty years more experience than the fifteen year old. But what type of experience, you shouldn't be able to guess. Say it's a job interview - both probably don't have any experience doing that job, or if they do, it would be on their resumes. For the fifteen year old however, I bet some reading this have already thought that they know what his life looks like. Perhaps you calculated that he would be a freshman or sophomore in high school. This underlines a major problem in society: that the lives of youth are regimented.

Some may think that the older man is likely to be more intelligent. This is not the case. Although a quick and simple Google search for the age at which IQ peaks will immediately bring up a result list that says it conveniently peaks at the age of majority, eighteen, the truth is that it actually peaks a few years earlier.

In 1944, the creator of the most widely used IQ test in the world, David Wechsler, claimed in his book titled *The Measurement of Adult Intelligence* that results from his tests showed that intelligence peaks around the age of fifteen. Even more than that, Wechsler wrote that intelligence scores on his tests actually seemed to go down by age in adulthood! Wechsler also wrote that the highest mental age, a concept important for IQ testing in children, that anyone can reach is technically fifteen and a half, but that "beginning as early as age

fourteen, the differences between succeeding half year scores are so small as to make them unreliable.” (32)

But although Wechsler's test is the most highly used IQ test, it is not considered the most reliable. The test, called the WAIS, is known to suffer from an issue called culture bias, where crystallized knowledge or the lack of such knowledge can increase or decrease a test taker's score. Another test, called Raven's Progressive Matrices, are considered to have little to no culture bias. They are also considered to be more *g* loaded, where *g* refers to raw intellectual capability, meaning they measure that raw ability better.

In 1948, J.C. Raven published a paper in the *British Journal of Psychology* that indicates that intelligence actually peaks before the age of fifteen. The data collected by Dr. Raven actually indicates that intelligence peaks at around the age of thirteen - right around puberty.

TALK ABOUT MEMORY

4.3 - Stereotypes and the Obfuscation of the Potential of the Young

While it seems that cognitive functions actually peak during the teen years, some people in those years may not seem to act like they're at the peak in their functioning. This is likely due to a phenomenon termed by sociologists as *Stereotype Threat*. This concept is essentially explained by the idea that, for different reasons, where a stereotype exists those who it targets will ultimately conform to it. (32)

A motivator for perhaps subconsciously conforming to a negative stereotype is fear of not conforming, while another is the preservation of an aspect of identity. These can be illustrated using examples of people in their teen years conforming to stereotypes about their age groups.

Take for example all forms of peer pressure, which is stereotypically considered to affect people in their teen years more intensely than it does older populations. It's a classic example of conforming to expectations due to fear of not conforming. If someone is being tempted by peers to smoke some marijuana, two fearful thoughts will at least subconsciously pop into his or her head. The first is that his or her peers will think less of them if he or she doesn't do what they want. This tends to be a large risk for people who exist in populations where the people you must associate with cannot be freely chosen. This is the case for most people in their teen years - they have to associate with the people they attend compulsory education with for at least eight hours every week day. Therefore, making these people think less of him or her would be worse for him or her than just taking a drag on a blunt. This form of fear of peers would be resolved by giving young people more freedom of association. The other fear that will pop into his or her head is more abstract - roughly he or she will fear missing out on the so-called happiest days of their lives and will feel culturally pressured to act like a teenager.

This second fear may be both unique to age related stereotypes and be the strongest motivator of them at the same time. This fear of missing out on the "best time of your life" should not be understated. Most of the stereotypical things that I have done personally were motivated primarily by this factor. One day on a highway with a friend I somewhat suddenly decided that I should see just how fast my car would go. My reasoning for doing so was that if I didn't do such things at a certain age I would age out of the range where it is socially acceptable to do such things- I wouldn't be able to go over 100 mph in my car without being mocked by the time I am twenty - five.

Even though older people shake their heads at stereotypes about people in their teen years, they expect and even accept the behavior. Perhaps one of the most harmful attitudes towards people

this age is that they can't help themselves, or in other words, "kids will be kids." This allows people in their teen years to do things that if we're honest everyone would like to do sometimes, which are a fun and thrilling activities. This seems to be one minor upside to being denied all forms of responsibility by society. The downside is that, when pressured by these forces, young people end up promoting harmful stereotypes about themselves.

This is exemplified perfectly again by Dr. Romer who explains that driving with friends isn't what causes accidents: "simply placing adolescents [people in their teen years] behind the wheel with peers in the vehicle does not necessarily produce riskier driving (see Romer et al., 2014, for a review). In particular, greater risk taking in the presence of peers is consistent with a group polarization effect of peer influence, such that when drivers think peer passengers expect them to drive aggressively, they are more likely to do so. However, when peers are not expected to hold these preferences, adolescent drivers are no more likely to drive in a risky manner" (12) This shows perfectly what has already been explained, at it's backed by data.

What all of this explains is that people in their teen years have a great potential that commonly goes unaccredited to them - they have the potential to make competent decisions and avoid unnecessary risk. While it is already apparent that people in their teens have great mental capabilities - the evidence is endless- many would still claim that they cannot make proper decisions. Common sense and empirical data however shows that the teen years are not a time with damaged judgement nor does it entail unnecessary risk. It is only the stereotype that people in their teens are "kids" that allows for risky and reckless behavior.

This stereotype and other ones like it may in fact drive cases of poor behavior by people in their teen years. They also serve to shine a spotlight on anything unwise that a young person does for all the world

to see, which further harms the perception of the young. At any rate, stereotypes lower the public perception of the potential of the young artificially.

4.4 - Poor Experience Stifles Potential of the Young

The only deficiency that younger people really have is a deficiency in total life experience. This experience is somewhat important when it comes to ability. Good experience boosts potential. Therefore the most important thing for our young people is to allow the to gain good experience.

Gaining good experience is not what we allow the young to do under the status quo. Instead of rich life experience that will carry on its use for the rest of their lives, young people are shackled up in compulsory education centers. A common contrast between the world of education and life outside education is it vs. the “real world.” If experience is so important, and often used as a reason to deny young people rights, than why aren’t they allowed to gain useful experience?

Reflecting on my childhood, I realized I had virtually no experience from it that will be useful for the rest of my life. I was prevented from gaining work experience and experience with operating independently in any minute way. I even recall my parent hiring a babysitter for me at the age of eleven - which is more than old enough to stay home alone for a night. I would have had a much better ability to operate independently at a much lower age if I had gained proper experience when I was small.

You would think that society at large would want as many people as possible to operate independently, essentially having “adult” status. This does not seem to be the case considering that experience is a major reason for denying rights from young people that they deserve,

and that these young people are prevented from gaining any of the experience it is said that they need.

People in their teen years should be allowed by society at large to gain useful life experience. This means that they should not spend their days couped up in the compulsory education center, doing the same useless tasks over and over again. These compulsory education centers do not teach useful experience. They teach next to nothing.

Many in education seem to think that knowledge is an end and not a means to an end. In other words, they claim that knowledge as a concept in and of itself is salutable and that any type of knowledge should be desired to be gained. This is how they rationalize wasting copious amounts of they and their student's time teaching things like trigonometric functions to loads of people who will never use them again in their lives.

Good experience is experience worth a person's time. In general, this experience is the type that either helps you survive or thrive. Experience that helps a person survive include things that will in the future help you to prevent death. Learning something that will make you money or doing something that makes you money are the most popular experiences that help you survive. Like it or not, at the end of the day if you have no money, you have no food. Experience that will help you thrive is experience that increases your quality of life directly. School does not automatically qualify under this definition just because we live in a credentialist society. Most school experience may indirectly increase quality of life through a second handed means - people may give you a job they otherwise wouldn't have if you didn't have a degree. The way to test if experience *really* helps you thrive or if it does only through indirect means is to imagine whether or not the experience could be lied about having while still yielding its benefits. If you lie about your degree to get a job that had nothing to do with your so called major, then the experience getting

the degree did not help you thrive - it was unnecessary. Real experience that helps you thrive - like learning how the world works - cannot be simply lied about and still yield benefits. The experience yields benefits itself.

This isn't to say that some experience gained in schools doesn't help students to survive or thrive. What school really should be is a place where a person learns skills to make money later on in life. Most of what is learned in school, especially grades 7 -12, will not help a person to survive or thrive.

It's no wonder then that many older people say that people in their teen years lack the necessary life experience to operate as an independent social adult. The vast majority of experience gained in school is useless. This is why people in their teen years should be allowed to go out into the world and garner experience that will be of use to them for the rest of their lives, instead of wasting away the days of their youth.

4.5 - Conclusion

Until standard views are changes, this cannot happen. There is a destructive and nearly demonic narrative used by those who oppose these facts to justify why people in their teen years should be treated as if they have no potential.

They say that people in their teens are dangerous. They say they are irresponsible. They say that they're stupid, claiming they cannot handle university until late in the decade. They say they're just kids. They say they take too many unnecessary risks. They say they need to be protected, from others and especially from themselves. All of these things they say are wrong.

They are essentially saying that people in their teen years lack potential. To this I've always said, "name one skill that a thirteen year old cannot learn." Any such skill simply cannot be named.

This is not the case with actual, biological children, which serves to further outline the fact that a whole subset of biological adults are being denied their lives when they are frequently seen being treated as if they were children. Don't take this to say that I condone how children are treated - if children were treated properly as it were, treating people in their teen years like children would be near as bad. But as it stands it is useful to observe when people in their teen years are treated like children. After seeing this in action at a play, I wrote about it: "a group of 10 year olds and a group of 17 year olds; 4th and 11-12th grade. The groups were like Shakespearean foils: superficially similar with deep differences. Both came from a regular school, most likely public. Both had teachers as supervisors. Both probably needed parental permission to attend. Both were school classes of people. Legally, both are considered minors, or not adults. Both are more or less compelled to attend school. Both needed parental permission. Both had to have teachers with them. Only biologically can one see the differences. Upon the end of the performance, one 10 year old, referring to his black friend Cristian, asked his friends if Hamlet "looked like Cristian." Hamlet was played by a black actor, for context. This demonstrates the level at which those children think on. They don't understand that Hamlet had no skin color, only that it could be inferred that Hamlet is white because he hails from Denmark. My group can have children while their group are children. We can relate to other people on an adult level, they cannot." Children not having reached their peak in cognitive abilities and lacking in some potential does not excuse the horrible ways in which they are treated now, but people in their teen years not sharing in this burden serves as a way to show all the more why it least people who have reached biological

adulthood should not be treated as if they were less capable than they are.

Again, many people justify it, partially by claiming that people in their teen years are dangerous. This is not so. Some observe that almost all of the mass shooters in recent American history have been in their teen years, or rarely when not, just out of them. This may be true, but how many people in their teens do you know who have committed a violent crime? It's likely none, and if you know some, it's probably a lot. That's because their violence is just a reflection on who they are as a person, not their age. It is simply likely to be reflected for the first time in a serious way after puberty - in the teen years. The young as a group aren't dangerous.

As shown by intelligence testing, people in their teens have peaked in their intellectual ability. Many wouldn't deny that this happens near the time of starting college, but the reality is that it happens when many young people are still trapped in "middle schools." There they are not even given the opportunity to make the classes they take count in the pursuit of impressing the next educational institution, university, so that they can take more classes so that they can be handed a degree that will satisfy employers and government bureaucracies that now demand these pieces of paper. Although most of the classes offered in high schools are not good experiences, they can at least indirectly, albeit unjustly, affect a person's future. In middle school, when intelligence has peaked, students are not even offered this luxury. They are *only* wasting their time and potential.

Dr. Romer's behavioral analyses showed that people in their teen years do not lack good judgement and do not take unnecessary risk. Therefore, it would seem a lie to say that in general young people are risky or irresponsible. Just like everyone, people in their teen years want to stay alive, and just like everyone, they have good enough judgement to do so! To let them live on their own, at least if they have

the money, would do no harm to anyone. And when given meaningful responsibility, like everyone else, people in their teens act in a way that anyone would call responsible.

What are now derogatively called teenagers or adolescents are in reality and biology equal to their counterparts, adults. It is a great myth that they are not. People in their teen years do not need to be protected from themselves - if anything, they need protection from the people who seem to want to do them the harm of tying them up and not letting them go out into the world to become the next generation of people that whatever country they reside in will inevitably need.

The true potential of the young is great and in this age held back, imprisoned. Inmates residing there called adolescents are kept in the dark, deprived of life outside the prison walls. To have a truly righteous, just, and good society, this prison must be closed and the light inside will shine on the world.

CHAPTER V. THE HARMS

As people grow older, the way they were treated in their younger days that almost certainly affected them greatly grows more and more distant. They begin to forget their younger days and they stop caring about what they would continue to care for greatly if it went on for their entire lives. Anna Freud wrote that she found it was typical for people to suppress memories of their “adolescence”, code

for the time they were denied their rights, because they suffer so greatly. It is a tragedy that many forget why this is perhaps one of the greatest issues of our time.

There is a great ocean of harmful effects that stem from this placement of a population of young people in the coercive institution called *Adolescence*. They are as broad as they are deep. Many of these harms effect people other than those in *Adolescence*, and typically those harms are said to be caused by those in *Adolescence*. The truth is that the institution itself causes these harms.

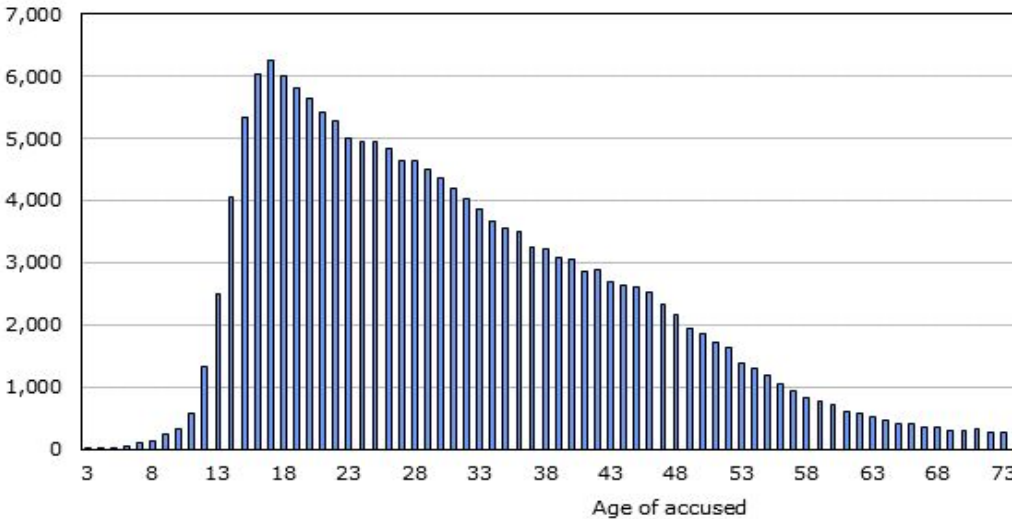
It is the existence of these harms that provides the rationale as to why the status quo should be changed. These ills are what will be remedied by treating the young as they should be treated. In short, the existence of these great many harms is the reason why change is a necessity.

5.1 - Normal Crime

It is somewhat commonly known that people in their teen years have higher crime rates than other age ranges. The pattern the crime rates by age typically follows in North America shows a rise beginning around puberty, with the curve peaking around the ages of eighteen and nineteen, and then declining for the rest of life. See Figure 3.

Chart 4
Rate of persons accused, by age, 2014

rate per 100,000
 population



Note: Rates are for all *Criminal Code* offences (excluding traffic). Rates are calculated on the basic population at each age. Populations are based upon July 1st estimates from Statistics Canada, December 31, 2014. Accused under age 12 cannot be charged with an offence under the *Criminal Code*.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Crime Reporting

Figure 3. Crime Rate by Age (34)

The cause of this pattern is often attributed to factors that cannot be changed, like hormones or the brain. And there does seem to be an increase in crime committed around the time of puberty. But besides that, there is no evidence to suggest that biological factors contribute to increases in the rate of crime after the age of puberty which is about twelve or thirteen.

In fact it would seem that the truth is that this spike in crime is not caused by biological factors but rather social or cultural factors. Take for example the rationale a friend of mine gave me for why he

got caught shoplifting when his age was fourteen: “I began to shoplift because I had a lot of anger in me. My parents were always telling me what I could and couldn’t do. It was always with stupid stuff, too. I still had a bedtime! School and people in general also made me angry. I just didn’t see the point to life when the stuff I would do in school wasn’t relevant for me in any way. I began to steal because I figured that people in general were bad and that they deserved it. They also wouldn’t let me make any money so I was broke. I figured I deserved to steal if I couldn’t even work. Besides, I knew that if I was caught, I would just get a slap on the wrist because of my age. And that’s what happened.” Later my friend was allowed to train in a trade and begin to work, and he was much happier. This seems to indicate that young people are driven to commit crime because of how they are treated. While they may not vocalize it into a political opinion, their anger still drives them.

Some may look at Figure 3. and wonder why, if the young being treated poorly is what causes the crime, does crime peak around the age of eighteen, when the young are finally starting to be accepted into the adult world, at least legally? The answer is that it is highly unlikely that the graph reflects the ages at which people start committing crime. It’s hard to find statistics, but common sense dictates that the majority of crimes go uncaught, which means that most of the people finally getting caught at eighteen probably began a career in crime before that age, when there were still many more restrictions telling them what they can and cannot do in life.

There is also strong scientific evidence that the crime spike found in the late teen years in North America is not caused by biological factors because it does not occur throughout the entire world. Researchers have found in Taiwan, that crime does not peak in the late teen years, showing that the pattern is not universal as they say they once thought. Instead, they say that,

“In a study of age and crime statistics in Taiwan, the researchers say that the Asian country’s youth crime pattern differs from the model seen in most western countries. In the United States, which tends to be more individualistic, for example, involvement in crime tends to peak in middle-to-late teens and then declines, says Darrell Steffensmeier, liberal arts research professor of sociology and criminology at Penn State. In Taiwan, which has more of a collectivist culture with less separation between generations, however, the crime rate does not dramatically peak at the same ages as it does in the US. Participation in most crimes in Taiwan tends to reach a high point in the late 20s or early 30s, he adds. ‘The overwhelmingly most acceptable view now is that the age-crime association is invariant. It’s universal—crime peaks in late adolescence and then drops—always and everywhere. But our findings suggest that, in some countries and cultures, the age-crime association is different, so it can’t be invariant,’ he explains.” (35)

This comes as close to proving that crime by age patterns are not caused by biology as anything possibly can! So what else could cause this pattern? As I said, it must be the socially constructed institution of Adolescence. More specifically, it is likely fact that here, as opposed to Asia, our young are held from doing even beneficial adult activities, like specializing for a career.

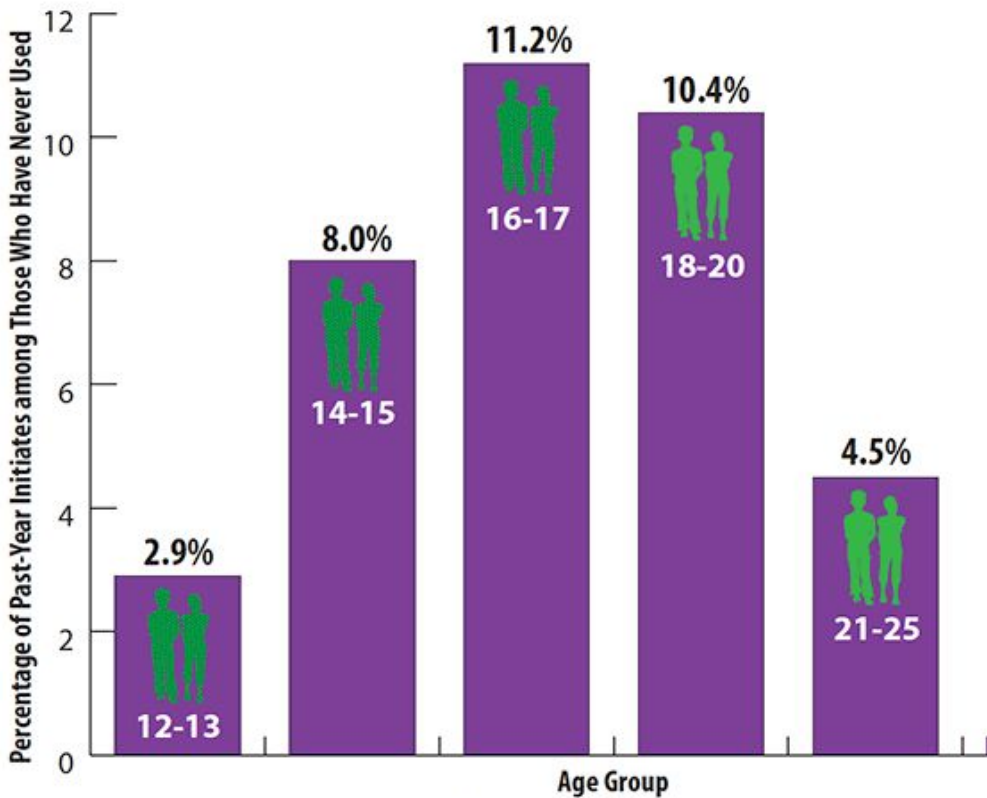
Not only then is Adolescence harming the young by driving them to commit crime, for there to be a crime there must be a victim, so therefore Adolescence is directly harming even older individuals through the crime it causes! Stuff stolen from your store by the young? Without Adolescence, that’d be far less likely to happen. Get mugged by someone in their teens? You’d still have your wallet if it weren’t for Adolescence!

5.2 - Drugs

Drug use, abuse, and addiction are seen as huge problems in the United States. The War on Drugs has been waged since the Nixon administration, with poor results to show for itself. This War itself can be seen as a War on the young. Nixon has even been recorded as saying that the War was designed to target Vietnam protesters, who were mostly baby boomers in their teens and early twenties.

The War on Drugs is not the subject here, however. Whether legal or illegal, because of the way we treat our young, a subset of them would turn to hard street drugs and become hooked, which harms themselves and others in a variety of ways.

The Drug Danger Zone: Most Illicit Drug Use Starts in the Teen Years



Source: SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2011 and 2012.

Figure 4. Most Drug Use Starts in the Teen Years (36)

Drug addiction often starts in the teen years. People often falsely indicate that this may be because of something in the brain of people in their teen years. They usually say that people in their teens are more likely to take the risk of trying a drug and that they become addicted easier. Only a small part of that statement is true. People in their teen years are actually not more likely to take risks, especially with known consequences, such as drug addiction. (12) And people in their teens may be more likely to become addicted, but it's not because of a difference in their brains. See chapter two for more information on the brain.

People in their teen years are more likely to become addicted to drugs because of the institution of Adolescence, not because of biology. God wouldn't be so cruel, only man. Specifically, loneliness caused by Adolescence (and therefore society) is making people in their teen years more likely to become addicted to hard drugs.

The evidence that young people are very lonely and more so than in the past is rich. Even the Huffington Post reported that "While we are still trying to figure out the whole impact of social networks on teens, a study has come out showing some alarming information. The University of Houston released results of a study it did, which showed how long and how often people spent on social media affected their mental health. This was a study on Facebook and it showed that people compare themselves with others. This social comparison creates feelings of envy, loneliness, and depression. The feelings of loneliness often come from people posting only happy and positive things in life, such as parties and hanging out with friends or going on vacation." (37) The study referenced disturbingly reported that "Overall, almost half (45%) of the people in our sample said that they felt lonely at least some of the time in the two weeks prior to the survey, and almost a fifth (18%) said that they feel lonely often or all of the time." (37) These figures that are higher than they have found in the past. On the

young specifically, the study reports that “ of respondents aged 16-24, 32% said that they often or always feel lonely.” And that sample included people out of the education system and out of Adolescence! Just think, if a third of people aged 16 to 24 feel lonely, how much worse it must be for people aged 13 to 19! Let me point out that 14% more of the young feel lonely often or all of the time compared to the general population.

Let me point out what has been blamed for this spike in loneliness - social media, or in other words, Adolescence. Large swaths of young people end up taking up the same vices, like social media, because they are mandated to go to compulsory education centers with other people their age, who reject them if they dare to be different in any important way. To have friends, people in their teens virtually have to be on social media in some form or another. If people in their teen years were commonly allowed to associate with much older people, they would likely be on social media much less as it is not a prerequisite for a relationship with people older than their twenties, at least right now. Because young people are forced to associate mainly with others their age (a part of Adolescence), literally 99% of them are on social media (whereas about 80% of the rest of the age groups are on it, and they use it far less) (38), which certainly in large part contributes to making them at least 14% more lonely than older people.

This loneliness caused by Adolescence in turn makes people in their teen years more likely to become addicted to drugs. The evidence for this was found in rats (it's legitimate because it doesn't try to measure human brain development with a different species) :

“In the 1970s, a professor of Psychology in Vancouver called Bruce Alexander noticed something odd about [an] experiment [on the addictiveness of cocaine]. The rat is put in the cage all alone. It has nothing to do but take the drugs. What would happen, he wondered, if we tried this differently? So Professor Alexander built Rat Park. It is a lush cage where the rats would have colored balls and the best rat-food and tunnels to scamper down and plenty of friends: everything a rat about town could want. What, Alexander wanted to know, will happen then? In Rat Park, all the rats obviously tried both water bottles, because they didn't know what was in them. But what happened next was startling. The rats with good lives didn't like the drugged water. They mostly shunned it, consuming less than a quarter of the drugs the isolated rats used. None of them died. While all the rats who were alone and unhappy became heavy users, none of the rats who had a happy environment did.” (39)

This study pretty much showed that among social animals, painful feelings of loneliness drive the desire to abuse drugs to the point of becoming addicted. It seems that those with happy social lives don't need hardcore drugs to cope. This is commonly observed in people as well, as a website to prevent drug addiction wrote “Loneliness and substance abuse are viciously intertwined. A person may abuse drugs or alcohol in order to alleviate the painful emotions associated with feelings of loneliness and alienation. People who are lonely often have self-esteem issues, as they cannot keep their commitments to themselves and will continue to drink or use in order

to bolster their confidence, or at least to escape any feelings of unworthiness.” (40) This writer experienced with seeing drug addiction in people also mentions low self-esteem, which is something that is all too common in those trapped in Adolescence. Not being allowed to do anything of use for anyone will tend to lower a person’s self esteem.

Disturbingly then it seems that the institution of Adolescence is causing loneliness in the young people that inhabit it and therefore becoming a major contributor to drug addiction in the young. While some may report that drug abuse in teens is on the decline, drug use is still a major problem for the young, more so than for older people, and it’s not going anywhere. In 2013, “64% of teens say they have used opioid-based prescription painkillers (e.g., Vicodin, OxyContin, etc.) after getting/stealing them from a friend or family member.” (41)

Drug addiction obviously ruins the lives of those addicted, but its harmful effects stretch beyond the body of the liver that metabolizes the drug in question. It ruins the lives of the loved ones of the drug addict, and state government typically spend about 15% of their entire budgets on drug related programs (42).

Clearly, attacking a main root cause of drug addiction in the young, Adolescence, would help reduce these harms. I am not going so far as to say that drug addiction in the young could completely cease if things were changed, but giving people in their teens things to do besides school work they hate and drugs that take their pain away would surely significantly reduce the amount of drug users who start young.

And with all of these psychological effects of Adolescence coming to light, it’s not surprise that the mental health of the young is now in jeopardy...

5.3 - *Mental Illness*

Psychological health is commonly known to be poor in young people. Many say that “storm and stress,” as Anna Freud put it, is unavoidable during the time when a person is put in Adolescence. In reality the storm and stress is far from unavoidable in the absolute sense - over one hundred cultures around the worlds seamlessly integrate their young into adulthood too quickly for them to ever brood over typical “adolescent concerns.”(26) But if a person has the misfortune to be born in the West these days, they’d have to leave their country for a deserted island at the age of ten to successfully avoid being placed in Adolescence.

In the West, young people suffer from high rates of mental illness, and on top of the already high baseline, it’s been getting worse. A Time article features an eighteen year old woman's perspective on what drove her to cut herself when she was younger: “The pain of the superficial wound was a momentary escape from the anxiety she was fighting constantly, about grades, about her future, about relationships, about everything. Many days she felt ill before school. Sometimes she’d throw up, other times she’d stay home. ‘It was like asking me to climb Mount Everest in high heels,’ she says.” (43) Pay keen attention to the fact that going to school in the morning is what would drive her to vomit and otherwise stay home, and that grades were the first stressor mentioned. Education is the primary prison guard in the prison of Adolescence, so it’s unsurprising that it seem to be a key driver of mental illness in the young. The article goes on to say that “Anxiety and depression in high school [students] have been on the rise since 2012. It’s a phenomenon that cuts across all demographics—suburban, urban and rural; those who are college bound and those who aren’t,”

and “In 2015, about 3 million teens ages 12 to 17 had had at least one major depressive episode in the past year, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. More than 2 million report experiencing depression that impairs their daily function. About 30% of [females] and 20% of [males]—totaling 6.3 million teens—have had an anxiety disorder, according to data from the National Institute of Mental Health. Experts suspect that these statistics are on the low end of what’s really happening, since many people do not seek help for anxiety and depression. A 2015 report from the Child Mind Institute found that only about 20% of young people with a diagnosable anxiety disorder get treatment. It’s also hard to quantify behaviors related to depression and anxiety, like nonsuicidal self-harm, because they are deliberately secretive.” (43) It’s disturbing to see how bad the condition of the minds of the young are. Stopping what is causing this turmoil would benefit everyone.

Use of social media has been scientifically linked to higher rates of mental illness. A research publication titled *Increases in Depressive Symptoms, Suicide-Related Outcomes, and Suicide Rates Among U.S. Adolescents After 2010 and Links to Increased New Media Screen Time* said, “In two nationally representative surveys of U.S. adolescents in grades 8 through 12 (N = 506,820) and national statistics on suicide deaths for those ages 13 to 18, adolescents’ depressive symptoms, suicide-related outcomes, and suicide rates increased between 2010 and 2015, especially among females. Adolescents who spent more time on new media (including social media and electronic devices such as smartphones) were more likely to report mental health issues, and adolescents who spent more time on non screen activities (in-person social interaction, sports/exercise, homework, print media, and attending religious services) were less likely. Since 2010, iGen adolescents have spent more time on new media screen activities and less time on non screen activities, which

may account for the increases in depression and suicide. In contrast, cyclical economic factors such as unemployment and the Dow Jones Index were not linked to depressive symptoms or suicide rates when matched by year.” (44)

Again, use of social media and especially the mental illness tied with it is linked to the constructed social conditions within Adolescence. Back to the time article, another young person says, “she’s relieved when she goes on a trip that requires her to leave her phone for a while. ‘It’s like the whole school is in your bag, waiting for an answer,’ she says.” The article also describes how college pressure, a part of the Adolescence construction, provides a major fuel for anxiety: “school pressures also play a role, particularly with stress. Nora got counseling for her anxiety, which became crushing as the college-application process ramped up. She’d fear getting an answer wrong when a teacher called on her, and often felt she was not qualified to be in a particular class.” (43) It doesn’t get more direct than this - the education system and therefore Adolescence is causing her mental issues. In regards to social media, again, that’s a symptom of only allowing young people to associate with other young people. At least as of now, social media is really not a problem among older populations, and if at the genesis of social media there was no Adolescence, young people today would not feel like their entire social lives depended on social media (which is what is causing all of the anxiety - nonstop social pressure) because they would have connections with older people who wouldn’t be as consistent with social media use.

Obviously this epidemic of mental illness affects more people than just the young. For one, mental hospitals go up in population, placing on the staff what they hopefully perceive as a burden and not a money making opportunity - “A 1988 study reported that although the under- 18 population actually declined from 1980 to 1984, adolescent

admissions to private psychiatric hospitals increased—450 percent!” (45) Of course the effects on loved ones will be high when mental illness is severe. At any rate, everyone would be helped by ending what is majorly contributing to this epidemic - Adolescence.

And sometimes, mental illness drives violence so extreme that dozens wind up killed in a brutal massacre.

5.4 - School Shootings

For the last twenty or thirty years (since 2018), the United States has faced what some would call an epidemic of mass shootings. Within this epidemic of mass shootings, there are in general two different types of shootings that occur: school shootings and non-school shootings. This is an important distinction to make, as the evidence shows that school shootings are at least partially caused by Adolescence, while non-school shootings seem to bear no relation.

The usual differences between these two types of shootings are the age of the perpetrator and the location. In non-school shootings, the location is not a school and the perpetrator is typically older. An example of a non-school shooting is the 2017 Las Vegas shooting, committed by an older man out of the window of a high rise hotel. School shootings on the other hand happen in schools and are perpetrated by people in their teens or sometimes very early twenties.

School shootings are far more common than non-school shootings. Think about it - for every non-school shooting that comes to mind, probably three school shootings can be thought of. So why are schools such popular targets, and why are the shooters almost always young people? The answer is in the name of the type of shooting: school.

In other words, it is school that causes school shootings. That's why these shooters' hate is always taken out in the school. It's a

symbolic manifestation. Many of them don't know this because the shooters don't tend to be the type to be able to verbalize their deepest thoughts. They are all of course psychologically disturbed, which is why it is only a very small subset of the population that commits massacres. The point is that school is what sends them over the edge.

Most of the people who end up shooting up a school don't do any writing, and they usually kill themselves during their massacre, meaning their motive may never be known. However, in one rare and significant case, the perpetrator did write: Eric Harris, one of the Columbine shooters, kept a journal starting from about a year before the shooting. In this journal, Harris wrote,

“ever wonder why we go to school? besides getting a so called education. its not to obvious to most of you stupid fucks but for these who think a little more and deeper you should realize it. its societies way of turning all the young people into good little robots and factory workers thats why we sit in desks in rows and go by bell schedules, to get prepared for the real world cause "thats what its like". well god damit no it isnt! one thing that seperates us from other animals is the fact that we can carry on actual thoughts. so why don't we? people go on day by day. rutine shit. why cant we learn in school how we want to. why cant we sit on desks and on shelves and put our feet up and relax while we learn? cause thats not what the "real world is like" well hey fuckheads, there is no such thing as an actual "real world". its just another word like justice, sorry, pity, religion, faith, luck and so on. we are humans. if we dont like something we have the fucking ability to change! but we dont, atleast U dont. I would. U just whine/bitch thoughtout life but never do a goddamn thing to change anything. "man can eat, drink, fuck, and hunt and anything else he does is madness" - Based on Lem's quote. boy oh fuckin boy is that true. when I go NBK [code for the shooting], and people say things like, "oh it

was so tragic," or "oh he is crazy!" or "It was bloody!" I think, so the fuck what, you think thats a bad thing? just because your mommy and daddy told you blood and violence is bad, you think its a fucking law of nature? wrong, only science and math are true, everything, and I mean everyfuckingthing else is man made. my doctor wants to put me on medication to stop thinking about so many things and to stop getting angry. well, I think that anyone doesnt like me is just bullshitting themselves. try it sometime if you think you are worthy, which you probly will you little shits, drop all your beliefs and views and ideas that have been burned into your head and try to think about why your here.but I bet most of you fuckers cant even think that deep, so that is why you must die. how dare you think that I and you are part of the same species when we are soooooo different. you arent human you are a Robot. you dont take advantage of your capabilites given to you at birth. you just drop them and hop onto the boat and headdown the stream of life with all the other fuckers of your type. well god damit I wont be a part of it! I have thought to much, realized to much, found out to much, and I am to self aware to just stop what I am thinking and go back to society because what I do and think isnt "right" or "morally accepted" NO, NO, NO GOD FUCKING DAMIT NO! I will sooner die than betray my own thoughts. but before I leave this worthless place, I will kill who ever I deem unfit for anything at all. especially life. and i fyou pissed me off in the past, you will die if I see you. because you might be able to piss off others and have it eventually all blow over, but not me. I dont forget people who wronged me. like [Censored by J.C. Sheriff Office] he will never get a chance to read this because he will be dead by me before this is discovered -- 4/21/98" (47)

This entire entry is important. He begins by criticizing education, which was at the time central to his life. He then transitions into his

plans to commit the massacre. The important thing to realize here is that his valid critiques of school are driving his hate. Perhaps if he were allowed to be free, he would not have committed a massacre. Undoubtedly, Harris needed help he only could have gotten outside of Adolescence.

Another entry of his starts out by saying “The human race sucks. human nature is smothered out by society, jobs, and work and school. instincts are deleted by laws,” going on to say “ Society may not realize what is happening but I have; you go to school, to get used to studying and learning how youre "supposed to" so that drains or filters out a little bit of human nature. but thats after your parents taught you whats right and wrong even though you may think differently, you still must to have more of your human nature blown out of your ass. society trys to make everyone act the same by burying all human nature and instincts. Thats what school, laws, jobs, and parents do If they realize it or not and them, the few who stick to their natural instincts are casted out as psychos or lunatics or strangers or just plain different. crazy, strange, weird, wild, these words are not bad or degrading.” Again, school is central to his motivation for having enough hatred toward society to commit a massacre. It is also likely why he chose to shoot up his *school*. How would Harris have felt if he wasn’t trapped in school, the institution of Adolescence? After all, that is the his most discussed driver of the “burying of human nature.” Think how similar that sounds to the section in Chapter 3 that discusses the emergence and suppression of the various instincts in pubescents. Harris was seeing the same thing, only his extreme dispositions drove him to commit a massacre.

Finally, the last sentence of the last entry into his journal on April 3rd, 1999 is extremely telling: “I hate you people for leaving me out of so many fun things. And no don't fucking say, ‘well thats your fault’ because it isnt, you people had my phone #, and I asked and all, but

no. no no no dont let the weird looking Eric KID [the emphasis on kid is his] come along, ohh fucking nooo.” This entry has provided support for what I call the mainstream bully narrative. The story goes something like this: “adolescent boys shoot up their school in a fit of rage at being bullied by other kids.” Before I attack this narrative, let me point out that I really don’t need to because bullying is simply an extension of the school. Does bullying ever happen outside of a school or a prison? Bullying only happens because everyone is coerced into being at the school. In normal civil society, bullies and their victims simply do not associate with each other. In schools, however, they have to put up with one another. The issue with the narrative is that it is only partially correct, as many school shooters were bullied (which that alone is caused by the school), but a number of other external factors lead up to the shooting. Without a doubt, perceived rejection from peers was one reason for Harris’s rage. But again, it was only that combined with a deeper rejection of his culture and the idea of school at large that led to the him perpetrating the massacre. The final thing to notice about Harris’s last entry is his emphasis on the word kid. Harris hated being perceived as weak, which is evident all throughout the rest of his journal. As explained in Chapter 3, “kid” is a word used to patronize young people. I’m sure that Harris hated being essentially called a child, and so it appears yet another aspect of the institution of Adolescence, the language of it, drove him to commit the shooting.

Most school shooters are very similar to Harris. Many even idolize him and are no doubt familiar with his ideas. The final aspect of the institution of Adolescence that drives school shootings is its values system. Young people are told that they are worthless if they aren’t excellent in pretty much at least one of two areas: athletics and academics. It’s fair to say that on top of everything else, most school shooters come to feel that they are worthless if they aren’t good at one

of these narrow areas. This gives them the idea that they have no future, and when many of them at least subconsciously recognize that it is the institution of Adolescence that has taken their future from them, they attack the symbol of the machine - their school and all those who play along.

If we give these people a future outside of sports and school and start treating them with dignity, there will be far fewer school shootings in the United States. This and the fact that these young people often begin the decline in mental health long before their shootings in the early part of their time in Adolescence, meaning without the institution, they may never devolve into mental health so poor they are thinking about mass homicide. No amount of security or gun regulations will end the epidemic of mass murder, only dignity for the young can do that.

5.5 - Degeneration of the Family

The socially constructed institution that is Adolescence doesn't spare families from its wrath. This social construct is in fact responsible for degrading thousands if not millions of familial relationships every year, many of which never recover once the offspring is out of the institution.

Most people are knowledgeable of the fact that people in their teen years often have issues with their families, but most people don't properly understand what causes these issues. Some wrongly say that people in their teen years are "wired" for conflict with their family, as if it is some kind of abnormal pathology within them, often blaming the brain or hormones. There is, however, no rebellion hormone or brain region, so it would seem that something else must be causing these problems.

The source of these problems is the parents inability to adjust to their new reality. Most parents do not want to accept the loss of their child who has been replaced by a biological young adult living in their house. They continue to treat these new people like the children they were years ago, and usually the young person being mistreated by the parent realizes what is happening and “rebels”, or in other words, refuses to accept being treated as if they had to capability of a toddler. This causes conflict, as parents typically think they have the right and even the duty to escalate the situation with their now young adult offspring. This is the lie the institution of Adolescence is telling them, and they escalate and degenerate the relationship with their young at their own peril.

Most people observe that family conflicts tend to cool down as offspring veer into their later teen years. They usually attribute this to the young person becoming more “mature”. Since the word mature is incredibly vague and has no real meaning, other than meaning “whatever young people don’t do,” I must explain what they mean when they say this. There are actually two things that can be responsible for the drop in the amount of conflicts. The one they are referring to is when parents essentially break the young person and the young one gives in, usually because they are convinced that they are children and deserve to be treated like a mixture of trash and a two year old. They call this “maturation”, or getting what they want. The other reason for a decline comes from the parents “maturation”: they usually realize after a year or two of their offspring telling them they don’t need useless restrictions that maybe if they don’t want to fight, they should get rid of the needless restrictions. When they do this, a miracle occurs - they stop having fights with their offspring!

Sometimes parents truly do have a person in their teen years who is irresponsible and would probably be better off having someone tell them what to do. The problem here is that nobody wants to bother

keeping them out of trouble for their entire lives, so their years in the institution of Adolescence should be used by the parents to teach them how to be more responsible, if possible. Most young people who make destructive choices continue to do so for the rest of their lives (12), meaning it is a part of who they are, not their age. Most people in their teen years won't make truly destructive decisions. Sure, most people can look back to those years and see mistakes, but the majority of people learn from those mistakes after making them instead of making them again and again. If they are the type to make the same mistakes many times, that tends to continue into old age. If anything, a good relationship is more important with those who make bad decisions because they will need parental guidance well past eighteen.

So it seems that the institution of Adolescence is causing families to degenerate by pitting parents and their offspring against each other. It is not the natural order for offspring to stay in the home after biological adulthood has been reached, and the natural tension resulting from this violation of the natural order combines with pop-culture parenting tips results in oppositional relationships between the young and the old within families. When people see through the fog and figure out how people in their teen years really should be regarded, families will have far less conflict than they have now.

And the poor relationships with parents that modern day young people suffer from due to the institution of Adolescence mean that the young have two choices: suffer alone or turn to their peers. Those who suffer alone come down with mental illnesses, and those who turn to their peers introduce a whole new set of problems for themselves and society.

5.6 - Youth Culture

Some of the discussion in regards to youth culture may be repeated from Chapter 1, but it is important to place it here nonetheless because of how relevant it is. Essentially, the modern compulsory education system is responsible for the formation of a youth culture because it allows the young to be only with their peers, causing them to care much more than they would otherwise about the acceptance of their peers and about the latest fads. This demographic is also extremely profitable, as they get money from part time jobs and parents and spend it frivolously since they have 100% expendable income. Therefore, marketers also help to drive youth culture apart from the rest of adult society.

Some people say that youth culture exists because “adolescent kids naturally seek out peers of the same age.” Not only is this way of talking about young people as if they were lab rats strange, it’s also just downright false. We can see this by examining both our own history and other societies that exist today. One widely known disprover of this fantasy from our history is the apprenticeship system, in which people in their teens would work under a tradesman much older than them, with little contact with people their age. Contact with people they could learn something from was enough, even if those people were a little bit older than them. And when looking at other societies, it’s important to know that over 100 of them don’t even have a word for Adolescence, which implies that there is no such period and that their young are assimilated in with all the adults of the society, meaning there is no youth culture. (26) All of this seems to point to the thought that the young would probably spend time with people they could learn from instead of similarly inexperienced peers if given the chance.

The separation of the young from the rest of society has a myriad of ill effects that comes along with it. It makes people in their teen years seem like a different species. People wonder how they could

ever be adults when they don't act like their parents at all. It also means that young people are deprived of the chance to learn valuable skills from elders, meaning that they will be stranded longer in a position where it is easy for the older people in their society to look down on them because of some vague lack of experience. Finally, because young people are placed around only people their age and nowadays even expected and encouraged to only listen to their peers, the real influence that societal elders have over the young is weakened, which of course applies to the parents, contributing to the degeneration of the family. This weakening of the persuasive power of the old over the young leaves the old with only one form of power - coercion, which creates a horrible positive feedback loop: as the old treat the young worse, the young respect them less.

So youth culture, and by extension the process of sectioning off the young into a separate social group which creates it, is bad for the young as well as the old. Who benefits from manufacturing a lack of respect for elders and keeping the young inexperienced? Clearly not the elders who ideally want to truly influence the young, and certainly not the young themselves. There is money that is being made from youth culture, and not just a little bit either. Those marketing to people in their teen years collectively rake in over 250 billion dollars every year! (48) Historically, before youth culture was created, people in their teen years were barely a demographic. Upon the entrapment of the young into Adolescence, they no longer had to support themselves but many could still work low paying jobs and spend all the money on frivolous purchases. Thus advertisers started targeting people in their teen years and reinforced youth culture with special clothes and styles, further entrenching the thought that young people were a different species than "adults" in popular opinion.

Because only wealthy businessmen benefit from youth culture while both young and old otherwise suffer from it, youth culture

should be gotten rid of. Doing so will help to restore the bonds between the young and the old in society, and it will help young people come to be seen as “mature” more quickly as they will learn how to “walk like a man” from people who have been doing it for decades and not those who just like them are fresh out of childhood. Getting rid of youth culture can only be done by shutting down the institution of Adolescence, which creates youth culture mainly through high school. In other words, the young should be allowed to primarily spend time in environments alternative to high school, where they can be with elders as nature intended.

5.7 - Political Apathy

The environments we live in affect how we will think and act for the rest of our lives. How then does the education system affect the way we think? The answer isn't pretty.

Reasonably, how *would* sitting around all day, doing busy work and responding only to outside instructions like the ring of a bell or a teacher's demands affect the mind? For one, it would seem that it sucks the initiative out of people like a vacuum cleaner sucks dirt off the carpet. Instead of teaching the young to take the initiative and do things for themselves, we teach them that the way to survive in life is to take orders! Imagine dropping them off in the middle of Alaska - they'd sit around and wait for a bell or an authority figure to tell them to go get food. Because that'll never happen, they'd probably starve to death! Obviously most people make it through indoctrination without becoming quite this bad, but the effect is still there.

People from the ages of 18-29 have the lowest voter turnout of any age group, and the three other age groups used are larger than eleven years! (49) One main reason why this is could be these people's recent experience in the education system. And it's not just voting -

think how stereotypically apathetic Americans are. Men sit around all day on Sunday and drink beer and watch football. It's a stereotype that people stay poor because they don't care. Drive throughs were invented so Americans don't even have to walk to get food.

Maybe we should think about why we tell our young from childhood to be apathetic. It's one of the earliest lessons they are taught. Routinely the young are told that they better shut up because no one wants to hear them and they won't make a difference anyway. Again, it is commonly believed that the lives of the young should consist of following orders as if they were soldiers. They're told to not care or think for themselves, because society will do those things for them and if they reject society they'll get in trouble by being labeled troubled themselves.

If we taught the young to act instead of to be acted upon there'd surely be more voter turnout. People would take the initiative in their own lives. More people would pull themselves up by the bootstraps. So who is benefiting by holding back the young and teaching them to be thought for? Those doing the thinking: the marketing media.

5.8 - The Vain Worship of Youth

Ever notice how sentimental people get over their "glory days?" To quote Bruce Springsteen: *"I had a friend who was a big baseball player back in high school - he could throw that speedball by you - make you look like a fool boy - saw him the other night at this roadside bar - I was walking in, he was walking out we went back inside sat down had a few drinks but all he kept talking about was glory days."* There's not an even spread in regards to the times of life people like to reminisce about. Instead of finding fifty year olds who like to look back on their twenties or thirties, most people seem to only talk about looking back on their childhood and their teen years. This is psychologically damaging.

Some say that this is because of some real special difference in life that exists during childhood and the teen years. For childhood they may seem to have a case, and for the teen years there is no difference beyond the way you are perceived by society. Even in childhood though it's mostly not true that some special difference between a child and an older person make the older person looking back on childhood more reminiscent. What does the older person miss - lack of cognitive ability, physical weakness, threat of arbitrary and possibly physical punishment from parents and others who could physically dominate you? These things aren't exactly nostalgia material. And what does a person miss from the teen years - being forced to go to middle or high school and being legally restricted from doing a ridiculously wide variety of activities? So it seems that even the differences that do exist between the young and old aren't exactly good differences. Things seem to naturally get better as you get older, except of course your physical health. But thinking about how much less wrinkly your face was isn't nostalgia material either.

People treat the thoughts of their childhood and "adolescence" differently in their mind than their young adulthood because they have been convinced by society that they were innately different during those periods. Society does this because they must in order to remain consistent with thinking of people in their teen years as somehow not able to be adults. It is also a form of denial about the turmoil given to the young. Consequently, those differences that they are convinced of are seen as things that were somehow better when they were in their teen years. Because it is not true that they have lost anything, these things tend to be vague: innocence, happiness, naivety, irresponsibility, and more. Even convincing people they have lost vague, abstract things is damaging to their psyche.

Notice that happiness was one of the things listed. It is standard procedure to think that you were happier in the past. But why would

you be happier in your teen years when you are put down in every which way? Hence, it's not true. Anyways, because people think they were happier and more innocent in their teen years due to some magical difference between them then and now, they wrongly think they can't be happy. This is a dangerous thought for society to propagate considering people tend to look back on the past when they are in poor moods. While in a state of depression or sadness, looking back on the past while believing you life can never be as good as you perceive the past again only leads to more chronic forms of mood disturbances. This is the vain worship of youth - thinking that your youth is the happiest days of your life. And believing in this lie only leads to despair when you inevitably turn thirty.

You would think that while this vain worship of youth as a period in your life would have a negative effect on older people, it would actually positively affect young people. This is not so. Young people actually are also harmed by this lie because while they know that their days may well be the happiest of their lives (not true but they believe it), they usually fail to feel any content with their circumstances whatsoever considering how horrible they usually are. This makes them think that everyone else must be happy and that there is something wrong with them. When they ask older people about their youth, many older people have bought the lie and will cherry pick memories to make it seem like they loved not having civil rights. After this, something does become "wrong" with the young person in the scenario, all because they have been held back by society to the point where they are not happy but society must tell them that they are being held back in part because they are supposed to be peaking in happiness.

There is no reason that the teen years should be looked back on more fondly than the twenties, thirties or beyond. The only reason people do so is because of a societal lie that has been invented at least

in part to deny the reality of being young and to further enforce the fallacious thought that people in their teens are somehow a separate breed compared to slightly older people. Some people may think that they look back fondly to childhood and “adolescence” because they can never go back. That is true, they cannot go back to being discriminated against and to being treated like they are less than human. A thirty year old also can never go back to the time when he was twenty five. This defense makes no sense if you use it to explain why you look back on your teens fondly and not years beyond them.

The truth is that any year of life has the potential to be the happiest year yet. And under today’s status quo, childhood and the teen years are likely to be the least happiest times of life. It is time to stop the vain worship of the time when you were “young”. It’s psychologically damaging and stems from the separation of the young from the rest of society, making it a harm of Adolescence and just another reason why that institution should go.

5.9 - Conclusion

Not allowing the young to reach their full potential and using coercion to hold them back and make sure that their asses stay in a high school desk and away from the real world clearly has many harms, almost all of which harm both the young and the old. Only few people benefit from the retention of the status quo, and they do so at a high price for everyone else.

Mental illness and crime, including massacres, have been linked to having stemmed from the institution of Adolescence by solid evidence. This institution of keeping young men and women out of the real world tears families apart. Many young people start using hardcore drugs that ruin their lives because of the institution of Adolescence. Why is it still around?

Obviously those whose livelihood depends on “education” benefit from holding back the young, as do marketers. The entire rest of the population should be all for the abolishment of the institution of Adolescence and by extension at least some form of youth rights and education reform. It seems that perhaps the only way to have a deep impact on getting rid of many of these harms that have affected the people for the better part of the last century is to get rid of Adolescence.

CHAPTER VI. PARENTING

Modern parenting as applied to both children and people in their teen years is dysfunctional. Pop-culture advice as to what to do with your offspring will only produce failed results. This chapter is about how parenting should be done, which is obvious when you take a *real* look at the capabilities and needs of young people, discarding the lies society at large tells and believes.

Being a good parent to your children is one of the most important tasks in the world. The effect you have on your children will

affect generations to come. They will partially be formed by you and therefore your effect will help shape your grandchildren, great grandchildren and beyond. Obviously then if this is true, the impact of child abuse or even just otherwise poor parenting can have a disastrous impact, harming the lives of hundreds or thousands of people as opposed to one or two.

Therefore it is of utmost importance to understand how to be the best parent possible. Sadly, many people don't care. These are the people whose children become often times even worse parents than them and work to make the world worse, one family at a time. By doing it right, the world will become a better place, partially because proper parenting weakens the institution of Adolescence by opposing it.

6.1 - The Role of the Parent

One of the reasons why modern parenting is so poor is that modern parents are very confused as to what their proper role is. Many believe that their proper role is to be a kind of dictator to their children. This is not true. They hear often repeated pop-culture phrases such as "be a parent, not a friend" or some version of that. This phrase implies that parents are to strive to be disliked by their children, contrasting them with a friend that their child would actually like. Therefore parents become little Stalins to their children, policing and investating them like the NKVD of the home. To be a disliked tyrant is not the role of the parent.

Parents should actually want to be liked by their children. After all, unless they die hating you, they will grow old enough eventually to move out of your house and never speak to you again, which they will do if their parents are nothing but hateful during all their time living in

their household. Thus popular modern parenting actually tears the family apart.

Parents often wonder how they can both control their child and be liked by them at the same time. They're correct in wondering that, because a parent cannot set out to be a controller of their offspring and expect to be liked by the person whose life they are dictating at the same time. When told this, many parents think that whoever is saying these things to them is crazy or stupid or both. This is because they do not realize that what their child at any age needs to learn from them, to have guidance, not to be controlled by their parents.

“If I'm not supposed to control my child, how can I keep him safe?” many parents wonder. This is a fair question, but only for a small minority of children. Of course if a parent has a toddler who likes to run into a very busy street, the parent should control the child to the extent needed to get him to not run out into the street. But coercion should only be used in matters of life and death. This is where many parents make a grave mistake, and they tend to be mostly the mothers. Parents these days like to bubble-wrap their children for a very long time before letting them make their own mistakes and get hurt. Here's an example from my own life: when I was *eleven* years old, my parents still made me be with a babysitter whenever they would go out for just an evening. For one, I must point out for clarity that eleven years old is too old to need a babysitter - eleven year olds are still “children” but barely. After over ten years on the Earth they should be able to manage not to kill themselves if left alone for a night. To make the situation even more absurd, I went to a middle school in the 5th grade and the people they often hired would attend the very same school in the 7th or 8th grades! I know puberty is a big deal (that's why there's a chapter on that) but when it comes to not killing yourself in the span of five hours alone, those two or three years don't really make a huge difference. The reason my parents did

this was to *make sure* I didn't get hurt in some way. But who cares if I did get hurt in some minor way (there was nothing major that could have happened)? Keeping your children from making minor mistakes is no reason to control them - let your child get hurt. They'll learn their lesson real quickly and they won't be bitter about it for the rest of their lives like they would if their parent had punished them for trying to do something "dangerous" in order to "keep them safe."

This point has an especially large importance when it comes to people in their teen years, who I have not talked about yet. When I say children, I mean *children*, which pretty much means prepubescents. Parenting *should* mainly apply to children, because in nature at puberty the now young adult should start to move away from their parents and find their own niche in order to start their own family. Of course this natural drive is disrupted by society. In short, people in their teens really shouldn't be *parented*. This doesn't mean that they don't benefit from relationships with older people and the guidance received from those relationships, it just means that those relationships should not be only or primarily with just their parents. Applying that to today's society means that the role of parents of teens should be minimal. *No* coercion should be used, as opposed to a little being acceptable with a toddler. Where it is relevant I will add how parents should treat people in their teen years in regards to an aspect of parenting. So in relation to danger, parents today usually become more concerned with the risk taking of offspring in their teen years as compared to later childhood. It is vital that parents do not use coercion to prevent what they perceive as danger coming to their teenage offspring. Instead they should act as one of those guides, giving advice where applicable but letting their teenage offspring make mistakes. Failure to allow mistakes to be made will result in teenage offspring ditching the parents as people and role models at the first opportunity, and going off on their own to make their own mistakes. Additionally,

the thought that people in their teen years need to be protected from mistakes at all is ridiculous. These young people are *more* than old enough to know when something is deadly or not. They simply do not take dangerous risks unless there is something wrong with an individual, something that will persist into older age. For more on the clarification of the myths around risk taking, see chapters two and four.

Even with children the role of the parent is to let their child actually grow up, not to do the growing up for them. Children should be allowed to make mistakes, and parents should be *scared* to coerce their child, as it can have disastrous effects on the family as a whole, causing a bitter rivalry that in some families never dissolves. Parents must always be thinking about if whatever situation their child is actually calls for oversight or not. Most of the time it does not.

Essentially, to actually grow, children must be given much more space and independence. This is true in regards to both the school system and the parents. But while the school system is a giant inert institution, parents can make their own decisions to take on their proper role and shed the false one thrust upon them by society. So can a flower grow in a pot too small? No! Parents who keep their child's pot (world) small in the name of safety will just stunt what their child could be. The proper role of the parent is that of a good gardener: to allow their child all the space they need to grow to their full potential.

And there is one thing that modern parents have been mostly tricked into accepting into their families that would be equivalent to a gardener spraying Roundup on their plants...

6.2 - Punishment

PARENTS SHOULD NEVER PUNISH THEIR CHILDREN.
That sentence is really all the knowledge that is needed in regards to

punishment. But most people these days would be skeptics of this sentiment. Indeed, just saying *these days* is not accurate - there's never been a time in history where it wasn't popular to beat children. At least nowadays punishments tend to be less physical (although spanking is still common), but these punishments can be just as bad for the family as a whole.

To start, punishment at large is unethical. They actually justify evil in the world. As Gandhi once said: "an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind." Christians should automatically agree here - it's in their faith. Jesus Christ preached forgiveness, not punishment. Often though the religious are the worse of all when it comes to punishing their children. Some of them cite Proverbs 13:24, which roughly says "spare the rod, spoil the child." But Proverbs was almost excluded from the Bible because of its numerous contradictions. Also, who is more important in Christianity, Solomon (the sayer of the Proverbs) or Christ himself? Anyway, the Bible isn't needed to see why punishment is unethical. The issue with punishment is that it is difference from justice. Justice is making things right, and punishment is malice to the one who is deemed deserving of punishment. If someone steals, justice is returning the stolen item and making the identity of the thief known to the victim. The only punishment is natural - people will not trust the thief any longer. To enact punishment would be to hurt the thief or lock him in a cell for years. This only makes the criminal more hateful, convincing him there is nothing wrong with stealing from the people who have made his life horrible. One the other hand, if he is received with care and he perceives that people really just want him to do right and not steal, there will be no hate.

Statistics actually back this position up - just compare recidivism rates among criminals in punishment focused nations like the United States versus "rehabilitation" focused nations such as many in Europe. While over half of all criminals in the United States

reoffend upon release from prison within three years, “Australia, Singapore, and Norway all have recidivism rates in the 20s, clearly the result of their more humane treatment and attitude towards prisoners. The prisoners in Australia, for example, mostly work outside the prisons. The country has 33,000 inmates and the prisons are operated by corporations, but with almost opposite results of prisons-for-profit in the United States.” (50) It seems that punishment isn’t effective at getting what authorities want - something closer to justice is far more effective.

So punishment needlessly causes suffering, which makes it unethical. The whole intent of punishment is to harm the one being punished to the point where they won’t do anything that could end up getting them punished again. But approaches with more care work better at getting people to stop doing certain things, making punishment dumb and malicious.

Punishment of course has a whole myriad of bad effects on children. To start, punishing children teaches them the wrong lessons. Instead of teaching children why they shouldn’t do something, it teaches them to not get caught. Some think that many children are too stupid to pick up on this lesson, that getting punished for something by their parents will make children think that “doing X action *causes* my parents to punish me,” as if their parents are a part of some law of nature. These people color me a liar because I clearly remember knowing when I was around four years old that my parents were not some law of nature and that their punishment was not a natural consequence to any of my actions. Convincing them to not do something to me or just not getting caught were seemed like better ways to avoid punishment to me than to regulate my own behaviour to suite what I saw as their whims. Children will respond to things other than punishment better.

To teach children the right lesson of why they shouldn't act a certain way instead of teaching them to lie, a parent must show that they genuinely care about their child. Parents should talk to them (children over about the age of four are old enough to understand) and demonstrate why certain actions are bad. They should *teach* their children. The way to reach an understanding differs between every two individuals. And of course it is much easier to simply spank or ground or put in a time out or whatever, which is why what is being said is almost never done.

Another horrible effect punishment has on children is the effect on the perception of the parents. Punishment doesn't convey caring - children will pick up on the fact that their parents don't really seem to care about *them*, only about whipping them into shape. This of course drives wedges in families of long periods of time and tears them apart.

The worst effect of all that punishment has is that it teaches children that it is okay to punish others. Dissenters will say that it is only meant to show that someone in a position of authority can punish others. Even if that is how children perceive it, they are then going to get older, gain power and abuse that power. At the very least, punishing children runs a high risk at creating a cycle of punishment, neverending until someone decides to be the better man. This is the same as the cycle of abuse. In fact, where does the line in between punishment and abuse go? Non-physical punishments can be considered mentally abusive. How is spanking any different than abuse? Is it okay to only bruise your child a little bit, or just on their rear ends? This is why you should never punish your children - punishment *is* abuse.

Many will agree with most of what is said here ethically but then turn around and apply a different standard for children. People who see no wrong in the physical punishment of children are the clearest examples of this - most would never condone the torture of the

average citizen by authorities, which is what spanking is, a torturing children, whether it's mild or not. Almost all double standards in regards to children versus older people are arbitrary or ridiculous, but this one is both absurd and disgusting. To not condone punishment but for some of the physically weakest and most mentally vulnerable people in the population shows an extreme lack of virtue and character. In most cases Nazi allusions are overdone, but this attitude is extremely reminiscent of the attitude of eugenicists, including the Nazis - kill off the weakest in the population, they deserve it because they are weak.

Everything here of course applies to the parents of people in their teen years as well as children. Parents should not punish their teens. The main objection to this will be, "how can parents teach people in their teens to follow rules like curfew?" The answer is that if following curfew cannot be taught, then it is an arbitrary rule and punishing for the violation of it or other rules like it is cruel and will result in ruin to family relations. Only if the young person is doing something that is harming themselves or others should parents intervene. When they intervene, they can convince the young person to stop by highlighting the harms of their behavior.

Parents should only try to teach their children the virtue of justice, not teach them to punish others and to simply deceive to avoid punishment. Punishment of the criminal population works not where near as well as justice aimed rehabilitation, so even parents who are deficient in some kind of character should not use punishment, as it is not in their best interests to use it. Punishment drives hate into the hearts of children. Parents should use love instead.

6.3 - Parenting and Age

Yet another pitfall of modern parenting is the failure to keep up with their children's age and what that age means in regards to the responsibilities of the parents. This first came to me a few months ago during 2017's Christmas season. It was a feeling I had experienced as a child but after a few years I had forgotten it. I was heavily thinking about how age should be seen at the time, trying to separate my thought from predominate social thought, which I knew to be wrong. One day I saw a part of the popular movie, the *Christmas Story*. Essentially, the main character of the movie is a nine year old boy. I saw this scene where he starts crying like a little baby to fool his mother into thinking that an icicle broke his glasses and not his own gun. Two things stuck out about this scene: the first is that the mother believed him and thought the behaviour to be normal, and the second is that he was clearly too mature for that and him planning it for manipulative use pretty much proved it. This helped me to support the idea that I had been forming at the time that there is about a three or four year delay between reaching an age and being treated like you should be at that age. In other words, parents and society at large tend to treat nine year olds like they should be treating five or six year olds. This principle tends to hold true for any age between about seven and twenty five, as before about seven it would be ridiculous for parents to treat their child like an infant until they were four, and like a small toddler until they were six while above twenty five it doesn't matter as hopefully no one lives with their parents and there are little to no age restrictions beyond twenty five years.

The possible reasons for this delay are numerous. One is that the age that puberty is hit is about two or three years earlier now than about a hundred years ago, but this only explains the treatment of

people in their teen years. Another is the educational system - the delay tends to start when children enter school and ceases to matter about three years after they get out. And of course the education system is known to infantilize children, see other chapters for more information. An underlying mechanism in people for the proliferation of this delay could be nostalgic memory formation, which from my own experience seems to be at about three and a half years. In other words, memories start to have nostalgic qualities once they are three and a half years old. This may indicate that parents like to treat their children as whatever age they think of them in a nostalgic way that is most recent in their minds. All of these reasons and more ultimately probably just combine to produce horrible but popular parenting adages that are followed with blind obedience by parents.

The effect this discrepancy has on the young is not small. It stunts their mental growth, keeping them acting in less capable ways than they could be. At puberty, the friction in this delay is highlighted as the body is demanding rapid changes in regards to how the parents recognize their offspring that mirrors the rapid changes of the body, but instead parents try to keep treating their offspring like a much younger and more vulnerable child. Unsurprisingly, fighting typically ensues and family relationships are weakened. The young person is also launched into a state of turmoil because of what can be downright disgusting treatment at the hands of his parents and society.

So how should parents raise their children with respect to their true age and capabilities? There are a few areas of parenting that can be used to more easily explain this. These areas are responsibility, discipline, and freedom. As the child ages, their responsibility and freedom as given by parents should go up and the discipline given by parents should go down.

When the child is a baby, roughly under two years old, they should really be given none of these. They are too young to learn any

type of self discipline and legitimately cannot handle personal responsibility or freedom. Every mother knows that they should keep an eye on their child at all time at this age. The problem in modern society is that mothers and fathers alike typically extend this infantile stage far past its lifespan. They generally give their child of even 10 or more years no responsibility, freedom, or discipline. Some parents may think they give discipline, but in reality they are just punishing, which is not giving (teaching) discipline.

When the child is a toddler, roughly two to four years old, all of these areas should increase in the frequency that they are given by the parents. Types of responsibility that can be given includes responsibilities over basic life functions. They should be expected to dress themselves and learn how to start feeding themselves. Bathroom training of course should be thrown in there. When it comes to freedom they should be allowed to play unsupervised, especially with other children. This is a hugely important thing that most parents neglect to do. Other freedoms should be given as well. Your child does not need constant supervision - just use reason in order to keep them from mortal dangers like poisons. They should also be allowed decide for themselves on more personal choices, such as when to sleep or not within reason. Believe it or not they will sleep when they are tired, especially if late nights aren't encouraged with electronics. When it comes to discipline, children this age are beginning to speak and therefore understand reason. When communicating with children about behavior, parents should use some reason and a lot of emotion. Children are empathetic, so show them how they make others feel. If you punish them, they will only begin to hate you at a very early age. They are old enough to figure out their parents are the source of their pain if they are punished.

When the child hits mid/late-childhood, roughly ages five to ten, again all of these things should increase. The child should now be

capable of handling much more responsibility. This includes possible schoolwork. While I recommend homeschooling, no matter if the child is homeschooled or not, their schoolwork should be completely their responsibility. This will teach them to set their own goals in life and it will lead to success in the real world. Parents being overbearing on schoolwork become punishing and teach their children that work cannot be enjoyed, that it should be done for people other than themselves, and that work should not come from themselves and instead should always be demanded from an outside source. More freedom should come with more responsibility. Children this age can be allowed to walk to and from destinations alone, and there is especially no problem in a group. Many parents fear the abduction of their child if left alone, but the odds of this happening are all very slim. You hurt them more by treating them like they are still infants and not allowing them to be on their own. Children in this age range are also responsible enough to stay home alone for an evening - what's the worst that could happen? By now they know what can and cannot kill them if they consume it. They are more intelligent enough to still be alive when their parents come home. Finally, when it comes to discipline, children this age are old enough to listen to reason. When they do something wrong, do not punish them. Simply talk to them about it. You can think that their punishment is having to talk to you about how they act. If you cannot come up with a reason why they shouldn't act the way they acted, then *your* morals are wrong. There must always be a reason for why certain behavior should not be done. Children will understand it if there is one. For example, say a child was mean to their little sibling for no reason. Many times there will be a reason, and you should try to find it. But in the rare case there is truly no reason, explain to them why their behavior is wrong. They will understand if you talk to them about how they would feel if they were treated that way. They will stop. Too many parents don't even try this - they just

proceed straight to punishment. “Quit messing with your sister, go to your room.” That is one of the worst things a parent could ever do. The best thing a parent could ever do is to teach them instead.

Next up, the most important thing for a parent to admit about their child beyond the last mentioned age group is that their child is not a “child” anymore. When they hit puberty, they move on. This age group is roughly ages eleven to thirteen. Now both freedom and responsibility should skyrocket while discipline fades out more evenly. Most parents, however, do the opposite, keeping responsibility and freedom too low or even plummeting them, while at the same time increasing on discipline (which to these parents again usually means punishment). Parents typically do this because subconsciously they realize they have lost their child at last. Consciously they reject this realization and begin to treat their offspring even more like children than they did before in many respects to try to cheat reality. The only lucky thing is now the former child is old enough to not be absolutely ruined by this treatment, but this will ruin their relationship with their parents. Their relationship will be ruined because when puberty begins, instincts emerge that essentially tell the person they are now an adult or soon will be and that they should begin to move away from their parents. See Chapter III for more information. It is vital for the health of the parents and their offspring that the parents treat their son or daughter accordingly. People in this age group are able to handle much more responsibility than is typically thought. They should not be told when to sleep or where they can and cannot be - those decisions should be their responsibilities. At the same time, this means they should have much more freedom than they do currently, but that freedom should come with the burden of being responsible for what they do and what happens to them. There is no threat of abduction by pedophiles in this age group, because pedophiles are actually only interested in children, meaning people who have not even begun

puberty. Therefore people in this age group should not need near as much supervision as children - in fact, they really *need* none. When it comes to discipline, the role of the parent is now to guide and that is it. If the pubescent will not listen to their parents, their parents should warn them and allow them to suffer the natural consequences - they should absolutely never punish, same as with children. It is absolutely vital that parents of pubescents heed these words and stop punishing, coercing, denying responsibility and freedom, and overall stop fighting nature.

The last age group to mention is the last one that typically lives with their parents. This age group are the biological adults, those who have completed puberty. This is roughly ages fourteen to eighteen. They should be treated the same as pubescents, as it really isn't possible to give any more responsibility or freedom and any less discipline. The difference that parents should keep in mind is that now their offspring is firmly in the realm of biological adulthood. If parents do not heed these words the relational consequences tend to be major. There is no excuse for treating one in this age range like they're ten years younger.

A parent who is skeptical of this information should simply try it. It will work. Your child and relationship with them will both be much better because of it. Stop treating your increasingly older and aged offspring like they were born yesterday. It wasn't and it never will be no matter how much you treat them like infants.

6.4 - Advice to Those Living With Bad Parents

Most of this advice is aimed at pubescents or older because they are the only people I know that any of this works for. If you are reading this and you are younger, then you should try it. Only some of it comes down to physical ability. Obviously the part that is physical

ability related should only be tried by males of at least about thirteen years of age. Children and women who try the physical aspect won't like the results. Hopefully your parents aren't bad enough for you to need to try it though.

All of this is predicated on the thought that your parents are the issue, not you. You must be sure of that and you must have already tried to reason with them in order for this to be effective.

The advice is this: you have to go to war with your parents. They've been parenting like idiots for the past decade or more and nothing you say will work. They're not reasonable people. You've been turning the other cheek your whole life to them. You must hit back.

When they start a fight with you, keep escalating it and don't stop. If you back down they win and your life stays horrible. The goal here is because your life is bad due to bad parents, you have to make your parents life equally as horrible before they will concede. If they try to punish you, do not take the punishment. If they try to ground you, ignore it. If they try to seize items that are rightfully yours (don't do this with things that are theirs, only things that reasonably you should own. Things you bought and/or need) prevent them.

Here is where it can get physical. If your parents have ever shown themselves to be okay with any type of spanking or hitting of you, there is pretty much a guarantee they'll get physical with you even if they haven't in years. You have to make sure that you can put up a good fight with the strongest person of your house. You don't need to win, just rough them up in the process as long as you don't mind ultimately losing and getting a little hurt. This will make physical encounters with you a pain even if the other party can ultimately win, because they know it won't be easy. If you're too weak to win in the

end, the fact that you are driving your parents to be downright abusive will help your case if the law becomes involved.

To do all this you have to be willing to hurt your parents in one way or another. If this is needed, you'll be willing. If you're not willing, then enjoy living with whatever bullshit your parents put you through now until the end of your time living with them.

Another thing that must be mentioned is that this will take about a year before the fighting will begin to cool down because your parents have learned the lesson. Therefore this is not recommended for anyone over the age of sixteen. You're better off if you just wait until you can legally move out, because your life will be worse during this process than simply tolerating your parents at least looking at it the way most people look at it.

The worst thing that can happen to you doing this approach is your parents can send you away to a teenage prison camp. These exist and are called the troubled teen industry. What happens is that they will hire some people to "transport" (abduct) you in the middle of the night or sometimes during the school day and they will take you to a facility usually in the middle of nowhere where you must comply with incredibly strict rules or face punishments like severe paddlings, solitary confinement and revocation of bathroom rights for an extended period of time. All of this is perfectly legal to do to anyone under the age of eighteen. Upon a prisoners eighteenth birthday, these places commonly allow the prisoner to leave because what they are doing to them ceases to be legal. It is disgusting. Do not worry though, because most parents will not do this. If they do, they do not love you, they never loved you and never will. So if you embark down this path and this happens, at least it tells you the truth about your parents and whether or not they care about you or if they see you as a mistake.

There are ways to prevent this from happening when taking this approach, even if your parents are willing to do it to you. First, be

armed. Sleep with a knife that is a large and sharp enough to to kill someone. If you go to school, take that knife there but tell no one about it. Do not tell your parents about the weapon. It is only for self defense. If you can somehow get ahold of a firearm, sleep with that but do not take that to school. Only take a knife to school. If someone tries to take you, kill them. It's self defense, they deserve it and you will go to the justice system instead of some private concentration camp somewhere. Second, have an escape route. Be able to get away from these people if they come. If you attack them and possibly kill them, try to get away. The third measure is preventive and therefore the most important so no one has to get hurt: monitor your parents phone and internet activity in secret. This way if you find out they have initiated this, you can run away before they ever come.

This approach worked for me although I never had to deal with abductors. Most don't have to deal with abductors, only the worst of the worst parents resort to that disgusting measure. I started when I was thirteen years old. My parents didn't get the message that I wasn't still a toddler, so I went to war. When they tried to take things I had worked for an bought with my own money away for petty reasons, I physically prevented them. When they fought with me verbally and physically, I fought back giving my all. There was no restraint.

What they did do was drag me into a psychiatrist's office and try to force me to take medication. I pretended to take it for two years as they had stopped fighting with me over most things. After all of it, it worked and they became much less strict and my life was much better because of it.

If reason has not worked with your parents this is the only other method to end their mistreatment or abuse of you. There are downsides, but the upside is that your life will be better and you will end this if you go to war.

6.5 - Conclusion

It is the duty of parents to allow their children to grow up. Anything more or less than that is mistreatment or even abuse. To not allow your child to grow up is the worst thing you can do to them. While it may be concealed as “concern” in reality helicoptering and the treatment of older people like infants is extremely damaging to everyone involved.

Relationships are destroyed and children age to become worker drones who lack personal responsibility and initiative. Love your children, and care for them by giving them freedom and responsibility.

CHAPTER VII. EDUCATION

CHAPTER VIII. AGEISM AND PARALLELS WITH RACISM AND SEXISM

Everyone knows what racism and sexism are. Everyone knows that racists and sexists are the boogeymen of the world. It's been ingrained deep into the pop-culture psyche that to be racist or sexist is one of the greatest wrongs a person can commit.

Racism is simply discriminating against someone based on race while sexism is discrimination based on sex. Of course these actions

are wrong - they make someone's life much worse than it should be based on irrelevant characteristics. However, there is another popular form of discrimination that has yet to be condemned by the public: ageism. Ageism is the discrimination of someone based on their age.

While there have been a few laws that prevent the discrimination of people based on *old* age, the usual targets of ageism have no protection. These targets are the young and there are many examples of laws that actually are ageist in and of themselves. Somehow, although racial segregation was done away with generations ago, although women were given the vote a hundred years ago, society has yet to figure out its double standard of condemning discrimination against groups except for the young. Somehow, society avoids this vital realization.

8.1 - The Origins of Ageism

Some believe that discrimination is the natural urge of human beings. Racism and sexism have been practiced for many centuries more than the one they have been condemned for. By that logic, ageism might also be natural.

To say these attitudes are natural is to grant them too much power, however. Clearly they can be taken away by public opinion, meaning they are not inevitable. It is more accurate to say that these attitudes are visceral and they are what the first instinct is. They tend to be emotion based and can be overcome using reason.

Ageism exists because people tend to be scared of the young because they falsely believe the young to be incompetent. Look at any age restrictions and this can be seen. A class of younger people cannot vote because older people are scared of how they might vote. There is an age restriction on driving because people are scared of the competency of the drivers. One old man I talked to even recommended

raising the driving age all the way to twenty one! When asked why, he cited his feelings. The list goes on and on forever.

Racism existed because people were scared of people of other races. That's why there was segregation. Even today some people fear monger over the crime rates of minorities as they do the crime rate of people in their teen years. The truth still is that the vast majority of minorities and young people never commit a crime.

Sexism existed because people presumed women to be incompetent. They also liked to

have women under their thumbs as a power play. This is similar to a reason for compulsory education - to plainly control the young and indoctrinate them into whatever some committee believes they should believe.

These attitudes tend to be held by those who have little ability to replace their emotionally held beliefs with more reasonable ones. Thus the way racism and sexism were eradicated was through changing the law first and public opinion second, because public opinion was never going to be changed through discussion. Groups of the oppressed became powerful enough to get laws changed. After those laws changed, the less bright fell in line with the new status quo. It's time to do the same with ageism.

8.2 - Racism and Ageism

Racism has perhaps the worst track record when it comes to human rights abuses compared to sexism, ageism and other -isms. Racism helped motivate the Nazis and the genocides they committed. Racism drove slavery in the United States, and afterwards blacks lived in unequal segregated communities. Wars have been fought because of racism, including the United States Civil War and World War II, two

of the bloodiest wars of American history. In the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin targeted racial minorities, including Jews which mirrored the Nazis. Despite this awful track record, racism can still be convincingly compared to ageism.

In fact it is ageism that allows wars to be fought. Who is drafted, older or younger men? While the drafting itself may not be ageist (it's due to physical capability), the fact is that many young soldiers go and fight for a country that doesn't even allow them full rights back home. Take the 2003 invasion of Iraq for an example. Thousands of men aged eighteen to twenty went and risked their lives so Bush and friends could get their hands on some oil and depose of the Iraq Ba'ath Party, a party that followed a form of socialism. In their home country, these men could not even drink alcohol, and only within the last year or so had fundamental rights like the right to vote been granted to them. A nation that stingy with its rights is no nation to die for, rather, it is one to die fighting. Young men who fight on behalf of a nation that won't even recognize them as full people should be ashamed - they are fighting for evil and idiocy.

Don't take this to mean that I hate the United States. As far as governments go, it may be one of the better ones. But it has its own serious problems that must not be overlooked in place of blind patriotism.

Blacks also died for a country that didn't really care for them in wars of the past. A black World War II soldier wrote a poem about this topic:

“Looky here, America / What you done done / Let things drift / Until the riots come [...] You tell me that Hitler / Is a mighty bad man / I guess he took lessons from the Ku Klux Klan [...] I ask you this question / Cause I want to know / How long I got to fight / BOTH HITLER — AND JIM CROW.” (51)

Make no mistake - fighting Jim Crow could be as bad as fighting Hitler. Many black men, women, and children died horrific deaths at the hands of angry crowd lynchings. One black man was accused with no evidence of assaulting a white woman in 1919. Here's what happened to him: "Brown ended up in the hands of the crazed mob. He was beaten into unconsciousness. His clothes were torn off by the time he reached the building's doors. Then he was dragged to a nearby lamp pole on the south side of the courthouse at 18th and Harney around 11:00 p.m. The mob roared when they saw Brown, and a rope was placed around his neck. Brown was hoisted in the air, his body spinning. He was riddled with bullets. His body was then brought down, tied behind a car, and towed to the intersection of 17th and Dodge. There the body was burned with fuel taken from nearby red danger lamps and fire truck lanterns. Later, pieces of the rope used to lynch Brown were sold for 10 cents each. Finally, Brown's charred body was dragged through the city's downtown streets." (52) What's worse, taking a bullet to the head on D-Day or this?

Ageism may not seem to take a toll on people in this fashion, but make no mistake because it does. Many young people face horrible abuse due to ageism and many have even died due to it.

There are in existence concentration camps for people under the age of eighteen. What a person has to do to get sent to one of these places is be disliked by their parents. That is all. There's a book that plays off this real-life concept called *Unwind*. The book is an YA action novel but the premise is pretty disturbing - there was a civil war over abortion and the compromise was that abortion of fetuses was made illegal but that a child could be sent off to a death camp and killed if they were in between the ages of thirteen and eighteen at the

whim of their parents. At real-life teenage concentration camps, prisoners *usually* come out alive on their eighteenth birthday, at least physically.

The following is an account of the process young people go through at these places:

In fact, Aaron was dead. After collapsing on the trail, he had died in the back of a North Star pickup truck on Hole in the Rock Road, 15 miles southeast of Escalante. An emergency evacuation helicopter summoned by North Star took Aaron's body to a medical facility in Page, Ariz., where a doctor made the death official.

When law enforcement officials arrived at Hole in the Rock Road from tiny Panguitch, the Garfield County seat 70 miles to the west, they had no reason to suspect wrongdoing. Aaron Bacon, they were told by students and counselors alike, had collapsed without warning and had died despite repeated efforts by North Star's staff, and then an ambulance crew from Escalante, to revive him with CPR. At the same time, these officials--Sheriff Than Cooper, Deputy Sheriff Celeste Bernards and County Attorney Wallace Lee--knew something that Bob and Sally Bacon did not: Two teen-agers had already died while trekking through the desert with other Utah-based wilderness groups. A third death would need careful looking into.

Deputy Bernards, a mother of three as well as an officer with 2 1/2 years of homicide-investigation experience in Salt Lake City, interviewed counselors from Aaron's group in her patrol truck. A day later, she asked the students to prepare written statements and collected them along with the daily journals that students and counselors alike had kept on the trail. Everyone seemed reasonably cooperative, and everyone told more or less the same story, of a death that had occurred without warning.

The story soon received support from an autopsy, performed in Flagstaff, that found a perforated ulcer in Aaron's large intestine. The contents of his digestive system had leaked through the hole into the abdominal cavity, causing severe damage and acute peritonitis. In the bloodless lexicon of forensic medicine, this was considered natural causes.

But there was nothing natural about the spectacle that greeted Bob and Sally Bacon at a Phoenix mortuary. They might have mistaken their son's body for someone else's, were it not for a childhood scar above one eye. For Aaron, already thin at 131 pounds on his 5 foot, 11 1/2-inch frame when he entered the North Star program one month before, had wasted away to 108 pounds. With his sunken cheeks, toothpick legs and bulging knees, he looked for all the world like a concentration camp victim. Sally covered her eyes, screaming hysterically. Bob tried to comfort her, but he felt the same mixture of horror and bewilderment that she did. Aaron had never complained of stomach problems, let alone manifested symptoms of an ulcer, and it seemed inconceivable that an ulcer, in itself, could account for his emaciated state. Something else, something inexplicably sinister, they sensed, had killed their son.

A few days later, horror piled upon horror when a Phoenix television reporter called the Bacons at home to tell them of two previous wilderness-therapy deaths, both in 1990. Then a woman named Cathy Sutton called from Northern California to offer her condolences and some appalling details. Her daughter, Michelle, had died, Cathy Sutton told them, of severe dehydration during the first desert trek organized by a provisionally licensed, poorly equipped Utah outfit called Summit Quest. Six weeks later, 16-year-old Kristen Chase, from Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., died of heat stroke while participating in another wilderness-therapy program, the Challenger Foundation, which was run, out of Escalante, by an entrepreneur named Steve Cartisano. A

hugely profitable enterprise while it lasted, Challenger operated without a license and lost two of its key employees in the statewide outcry that followed Kristen Chase's death. Those employees, the Bacons learned, were Lance Jagger and Bill Henry, both of whom turned state's witnesses when Utah tried, and failed, to put Cartisano in jail for negligent homicide.

[After arriving], Aaron soon began to acknowledge some harsh realities. He was alone. He yearned for his girlfriend, Carrie Colburn. He was cold: "I have been shaking with cold since I got here I feel like I'm going to die." And as early as March 5, he was in pain: "My stomach really hurts. I've had gas all day. This isn't really pleasant stuff to read but o well it's my day and my journal".

On March 11 he moved to North Star's so-called Primitive Section, which plunged new students into the actual wilderness phase with desert hikes and a two-day fast. Aaron was scared, but he tried to psych himself up: ". . . my self-discipline is going to skyrocket, as the staff obviously doesn't take any breaking of the rules."

While some of his earnest, upbeat entries were written for the benefit of the counselors, who reviewed student journals every night, Aaron was also reconsidering his relationship with his parents. "I wonder if they miss me," he wrote. "They haven't written. I wonder if they are still angry at me for my behavior when I left. I should have told them I love them & I'm sorry I didn't. I didn't even hug them & that was terrible. I sure wish I could hug them & tell them I love them now."

His second day in the Primitive Section was marked by the onset of obvious physical distress. He fell on the trail and couldn't get up by himself because his pack was too heavy. Falling a second time, he sensed his whole body go numb. "I was down for so long that I began to lose sight. Not go blind, but I couldn't keep my eyes open." He felt bad for being "the wimp" who impeded the group's progress, but two days later, March 14, his pride seemed less important than his

persistent pain. "I'm just so enveloped in pain," Aaron wrote after slipping on a slick rock and bashing his chin. "Now all I can think about is heat, sleep & food."

The next day Aaron lost his pack and was forced to go without supplies until someone returned it on March 17. During that time, according to investigators, he often collapsed on the trail, where counselors revived him by dousing him with water. On March 17 he managed to do well on the hike--probably because he got something to eat after having been deprived of food, apart from a can of peaches, for the previous five days--and his spirits rallied. "Today has been my first good day here at North Star. I wondered if I'd ever have one, especially in Primitive. My legs are still in some total pain but other than that it's been a good day."

It was the last good day of his life. On March 18, Aaron's group forded a gulch through chin-deep water. Because he was too weak to lift his pack over his head, everything in it got soaked, including the food he needed to survive. That night, still wet and shivering, he sat as close to a fire as his counselors would allow--not close enough to get dry--and recorded his growing terror of what he had later termed "legal child abuse": "I am so scared here of everything, staff, slickrock, nights, the cold, my pack, everything . . . my nose has been bleeding for the past couple of days & even that scares me. I never had nosebleeds at home . . ."

Anyone with half a brain, plus a heart, could see that Aaron was too enfeebled to cope with the program's basic demands. He couldn't walk fast enough, couldn't carry his supplies, couldn't wash his clothes or build a fire. Yet, according to investigators, his agony was greeted by the group's anger that he was slowing them down with taunts--several students, along with their counselors, told him they thought he was gay--and by endless lectures about the need to work harder. Then came new, Draconian punishment. Counselors took away his sleeping bag,

forcing him to sleep in the open on two windy, icy-cold nights with the temperature as low as 25 degrees. (53)

Part of the reason why this happens is hinted at with the language of the article. This sixteen year old man was not a child and it is not acceptable to send him to a camp. The abuse was not the problem - the problem was the premise of the place that abused him. For as long as society deems people in their teens so incompetent that they can be incarcerated by their parents at a whim, there will be abuse and there will be innocent deaths.

These places are like slave plantations or Nazi concentration camps. The parallels with race are therefore clear for all to see. What happened to Aaron Bacon was probably worse than what happened to Brown, it's hard to say though which caused more pain and suffering. However, one of these injustices is still going on systematically in the United States today, and it's not racist lynching.

In another case, a man named Scott Chandler who owned and operated one of these prison camps has been accused of murdering one of the prisoners who died there. The government has refused to charge him with a crime, however. This is the kind of man Scott Chandler is:

“Chandler slowly upped daily exercise to extreme levels and cut rations down to just rice, canned beans and tortillas “

“Chandler and his staff started waking the boys [prisoners, not boys, in their teens] up in the middle of the night to run.”

“Chandler says he doesn't practice what he calls the ‘medical model’ of treatment. And while he's contracted with therapists in the past, he's never hired one on staff.”

“That evening as we drove back towards town, I asked Chandler about some of the most troubling allegations against him. He didn't deny subjecting kids to intense exercise or cuffing them.”

“We drove in silence for a few moments, and then his wife spoke up from the back seat of the truck. "Let's just say this," she said of the incident. ‘Do you remember when you were a kid in the school yard and there was some kid out there who just drove everybody crazy and a few of the boys got together and just gave him a little dose of medicine?’ ‘Yeah,’ I said. ‘Things like that happen sometimes,’ she said.” (54)

A righteous government would round up this man and his family and end their drain upon society. His views are incorrect and immoral, just like many would say of a slave owner from two hundred years ago. That’s what he is - a modern day slave owner. He gets paid to keep young people on a ranch in the middle of nowhere where he makes them work for his profit.

As for how a prisoner got to Chandler’s ranch, “Over her shoulder, two men in cowboy hats and Wranglers hovered near his bedroom doorway. Other kids, he would later learn, freaked out in this moment. They yelled, they swore, they swung wildly at the two strangers. But Bruce did none of this. He quietly got dressed as instructed. ‘You're going away with these men,’ his mom told him. ‘This is for your own good.’ They headed west, towards the Black Range, a rugged and remote stretch of mountains in southern New Mexico. After a few hours of driving, one of the men put a black pillowcase over Bruce's head so he wouldn't know where they were going.” (54)

Can you even imagine any of this being done to a thirty year old? I can - on a ship to the New World coming out of Africa or on a plantation in Alabama if that thirty year old happened to be black. Even the articles that report this garbage and the survivors of the abuse at these places refer to people in their teens as boys, girls, and children. It’s like the abolitionists who still hated “n***gers,” but thought slavery was a little too far off their Christian moral compass.

Obviously none of this is quite as widespread as the terrors of slavery and the Nazis. There is however a connection to draw between what is happening now to some young people because of ageism and what happened then because of racism. And for those who fall victim to ageism, they might as well be a slave.

8.3 - Sexism and Ageism

Rape and domestic abuse are problems that plague society, but they are not institutional problems. While the beating of people in their teens is sanctioned in homes and schools, beating your wife will land you in a cell. Not only does this highlight the hypocrisy of being able to beat your seventeen year old with a belt but not your wife (both are disgustingly immoral), it also highlights that sexism was more about incompetence as somewhat less about dominance like racism was. Ageism of course is contributed to by both dominance motivations, as outlined before, and the motivation to protect the young from themselves unnecessarily, which is eerily similar to the rationale for sexism.

The evidence for this being a primary motivator for sexism could come from almost any non-feminist writing that mentions women that was written before the twentieth century. Even in the politically correct climate of today, writing assigned to be over-analyzed in English courses that are more than a hundred years old are usually filled with it. Two main examples are *The Great Gatsby*, in which all women are called liars, and *Heart of Darkness*. The latter has this to say about women: "It's queer how out of touch with truth women are. They live in a world of their own, and there has never been anything like it, and never can be. It is too beautiful altogether, and if they were

to set it up it would go to pieces before the first sunset. Some confounded fact we men have been living contentedly with ever since the day of creation would start up and knock the whole thing over.” and “ They—the women, I mean—are out of it—should be out of it. We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse. Oh, she had to be out of it. You should have heard the disinterred body of Mr. Kurtz saying, 'My Intended.' [his wife] You would have perceived directly then how completely she was out of it.” (55)

Women were perceived as incapable of handling the man’s world and therefore it was thought that they should be kept out of it. The same thing is thought of the young due to ageism. John Holt had this to say about the plight of the young in regards to being perceived incapable:

“Most people who believe in the institution of childhood as we know it see it as a kind of walled garden in which children, being small and weak, are protected from the harshness of the world outside until they become strong and clever enough to cope with it. Some children experience childhood in just that way. I do not want to destroy their garden or kick them out of it. If they like it, by all means let them stay in it. But I believe that most young people, and at earlier and earlier ages, begin to experience childhood not as a garden but as a prison. What I want to do is put a gate, or gates, into the wall of the garden, so that those who find it no longer protective or helpful, but instead confining and humiliating, can move out of it and, for a while, try living in a larger space. If that proves too much for them, they can always come back

into the garden. Indeed, perhaps we all ought to have walled gardens to take refuge in when we feel we must.” (13)

Make no mistake, this “garden” refers to the institution of Adolescence as well as Childhood. The young who are denied the ability to begin their life while residing in whichever coercive institution face the same plight that women did. The young live in a “walled garden”, while women lived “in a world of their own ... too beautiful altogether ... [that if it were real] would go to pieces before sunset.”

Just like with women, this walled garden is unnecessary and evil to force upon an individual. Just like with women, nobody is going to die from not being protected from themselves upon the destruction of this prison. It’s time to set the young free from the garden when they are truly ready and end this facet of ageism.

8.4 - Ageism is as Morally Wrong as Sexism and Racism

Some people will admit that ageism parallels sexism and racism, but they will still deny that ageism is as wrong as sexism or racism. The rationale they use for their denial is the fact that we all grow older, meaning the discrimination ends upon the arrival at a certain age. To this I say, “but what about the temporary nature of age restrictions, you ask? Doesn’t that make them less immoral than discrimination against groups like blacks, who never stop being black? The answer is no. Consider slavery: was it only not okay because it wasn’t temporary? Would slavery have been fine if it was only imposed on blacks until, say, the age of 18 or 21? Of course not! And let’s not ignore the fact that while the person who is suffering changes when it comes to ageism, the suffering never stops. It’s someone’s 13th birthday today. They’ll suffer for 5 to 8 years, hell maybe more the way we’re going, and then probably stop. But the day he turns 18 or 21 or 25, another kid’s turning 13, destined for the same path.”

Discrimination and outright evil is never alright just because it ends at a certain age. Just because the prisoners of the camps can leave on their eighteenth birthday doesn't mean that everything done to them is excusable or shouldn't be stopped by the few people who seem to care. Not to mention sometimes the abuse doesn't stop, as many cannot make it through the institution of Adolescence without mental health issues, much less could they make it through one of the prison camps! Suffering from ageism isn't a rite of passage. In societies most would consider less civilized than ours, their rites take a day and may involve a tattoo or some other ritual. If ageism is a rite of passage, then we are the cruelest society on the face of the Earth considering the young are subjected to years if not decades of torment.

Ageism is disgusting and is hopefully doomed to fail like racism and sexism were. Be on the right side of history and resist its evils.

8.5 - The End of Ageism

There are many stereotypes in society currently about the young that are fueled by ageism. This mirrors the fact that there were many stereotypes about other races and women back in the days of dominant racism and sexism. While today, some of these stereotypes are still around, they are nowhere near as strong as they were in the days of discrimination. Additionally, many are only remembered, such as the woman belonging in the kitchen which almost no one takes seriously in modern times.

Some stereotypes are true while others are not. For example, the stereotype of women being too weak to work in many fields has been proven untrue, while the stereotype of vanity may in fact be somehow innate to women. In the days of sexism, however, it was not

possible to tell which stereotypes were innate and which ones were not. Typically, the ones that turned out to be innate were the less harmful ones.

Because of ageism, it is impossible to tell which stereotypes about the young are true and which are false. Ageism will have to be done away with in order to figure out this mystery. In all probability, youth stereotypes will likely follow the pattern of stereotypes about races and women. This means the the harmful stereotypes, such as the stereotype of youth being incompetent and the stereotype of youth being bad or dangerous, will likely turn out to be false while a stereotype of youth having a high sex drive would likely be true.

Stereotypes about women being stupid and too weak to do basic tasks fell away. Stereotypes about all black people being idiotic, or just downright animalistic, were proven false when legal equality came. It would have been impossible to prove these stereotypes false before gaining legal equality. This is because individuals tend to be the debunkers of stereotypes - Barack Obama could be considered a major contributor to the continually disapproval of the stereotypes that blacks are in some way aggressive and dumb. If this country still had segregation, Obama would have never become the President and that stereotype could live on, with believers fallaciously claiming that it proves itself because "black men never accomplish anything."

There the young must achieve legal equality before seeking to vanquish stereotypes. The various waves of the feminist movement outline this well. The first wave was devoted to suffrage, while the next waves were devoted to changing cultural perception. This means that the young will have to somehow gain enough power to be able to accomplish legal equality, because otherwise people will never stop believing lies. The truth must be forced upon them.

Ageism is an aggressive violation on the rights of the young. No amount of pleading with deluded aggressors will stop them in their tracks - trying to convince them would be like trying to talk a lion out of attacking you, you don't, you just fight back. The only people who need convincing are the unsure bystanders who are neutral in the conflict. In other words, the young must gather an "army" and use it against the ageists, who must be fought successfully to ever have a shot at ending ageism.

Therefore the end of ageism will only come when enough people have woken up to the truth to devote their time to fighting it. People of all ages must be encouraged to take a stand. Those who display deeply ageist leanings may be beyond the truth, but like with racism and sexism, there are enough people out there who are willing to take a stand against ageism if given the right push in order to end it once and for all.

8.6 - Conclusion

Ageism is a horrible plague on society, affecting more than just the young as Chapter V demonstrates. The mere fact that it has continued far past the expiration date of the strikingly similar forms of discrimination, racism and sexism, is disturbing. Society is deeply hypocritical for failing to attack as of yet the existence of age discrimination against the young.

The two main pillars of ageism are in fact the main rationales for racism and sexism: danger and incapability respectively. While both of those contributed to racism *and* sexism, one tended to be dominant over the other. In ageism, both pillars seem to stand equally as tall. This may be a reason that ageism still exists - that it has seemingly a more stable foundation and thus is harder to fight against.

Prison camps are operated in the name of ageism. This means ageism is nothing to scoff at, as human rights abuses closely mirror those committed under the name of racism using the institution of slavery.

The walled garden that the young are trapped in closely resembles the world of the woman before female suffrage. Perhaps only suffrage for younger and younger ages will break the young out of their prison.

Ageism closely resembles two of the most scoffed upon ideologies in the West and it is time for ageism to join the ranks of racism and sexism. Where a person expresses an ageist view, they should be mocked and disregarded. Ageism should not longer be tolerated by a self respecting civilized society. The West has gotten too old to keep avoiding the inevitability of labeling all those who are ageist bigots.

CHAPTER IX. POLICIES

Given the truths espoused throughout the previous chapters, it's clear that the legal status quo is greatly out of line with what should be. Somethings has to change in order for the nation to be righteous and to be the best it can be. Legal discrimination against the young must end.

This must happen before the thought of getting rid of bad thinking in regards to the young can be approached. In fact, most wrong thoughts such as misuse of words stems from the unjust laws of modern times. People feel justified in claiming that the young are immature when they can back themselves up with the "expert" opinion of a legal committee. They also tend to use circular logic, claiming that younger people are immature because they lack rights! We must take away their ability to use these justifications before we can take away the ability for them to even mentally discriminate against the young.

There is a certain order that youth rights supporters should try to achieve gaining rights in. There are also certain positions that should be taken on those rights. Failure to agree on these things will mean a divided and ineffectual movement.

There is one right in particular that is more controversial than any other and it is sexual consent. It is impossible to say it should be lowered to any age without some idiot screaming pedophile at the top of their lungs. Since pedophiles are one of the view forms of universal evil as seen through the lense of pop-culture, the youth rights movement should stay as far away as possible from accusations of pedophilia. Therefore the "party line" on the age of sexual consent should be that it should not be lowered. This won't hurt the movement, especially as long as there are "Romeo & Juliet" laws in place that

allow young people to consent to other young people. While pedophilia is only sexual attraction to prepubescent children, this movement should not be one of lust, even if it's not lust for children.

9.1 - The Voting Age

Should the voting age be lowered to sixteen, fourteen, or more? Questions like this need to be solved. The voting age is actually one of the least clear restrictions when it comes to what age it should be set at. There are two ways to look at it: one is that voting should be restricted to the most responsible people, and another is that voting should be extended to all who can do it reasonably to ensure ideal democracy. Currently the United States buys into the second approach.

To keep this approach from being arbitrary, there should be no voting age. People should be able to go vote as soon as they are interested and informed about the political system. Counterarguments to this are that many young people who have no idea what they're doing will go take advantage of voting. This may be true, but the same holds true for older people as well. Just think about this - in 2016, over 60 million people went out and voted for a candidate that you probably hate. How could they be rational?

Parents of course should not be able to force their children to vote or to vote a certain way, and there could be simple protections in place to prevent this. Voting is anonymous, and so of course parents would not be allowed to watch their offspring vote. This solves the problem of coercion.

And as for people worried that young children would willingly vote, but just in whatever way their parents tell them to, this would happen anyways - "Using data collected from a large sample of fraternal and identical twins, a research team found that genes likely explain as much as half of why people are liberal or conservative, see the world

as a dangerous place, hold egalitarian values or embrace hard-core authoritarian views.” “These researchers based their conclusions on a survey of twins in the Minnesota Twin Registry (MTR). Based at the University of Minnesota, the registry includes approximately 8,000 twin pairs born in Minnesota from 1936 to 1955. The study includes both identical (or monozygotic twins)—those that developed from the same egg and share identical genetic material—and fraternal (or dizygotic twins) who only have, on average, about half of their genes in common. The twins were recruited into the registry from about 1983 to 1990 when most were middle-aged.” “They found that somewhat more than half of the difference in self-identified political ideology (56%) is explained by genetic factors.” (56) When they turn eighteen, they’ll more than likely vote like their parents anyways.

This means that the voting age boils down to basic human rights. Young people need to be given the right to vote so that they can achieve rights that will affect their daily quality of life in a positive way like the right to drive, work, and make legal decisions. With the ability to vote, politicians will listen and listen well.

9.2 - The Age of Majority

The age of majority, also known as “legal adulthood,” entails the right to self-determination itself. Without having reached the age of majority, a person has almost no real rights. Those they have come only through their parents, who are not always loyal to their offspring as much as they are to themselves.

Here’s a great example of what it means to be below the age of majority: today I had an appointment with a dermatologist because of a suspicious-looking mole on the skin. The doctor recommended it should be removed, but required me to call my parents to get consent. What’s wrong here? It’s the person getting the procedure done who

should be consenting, not someone over the phone. It's this horrible logic that fuels the previously mentioned prison camps for young people, which often hide under the guise of mental health treatment.

In order for young people to have any rights at all, they have to have reached the age of majority. Therefore the age of majority should be zero years. What it means to have not reached it is ghastly - it means you are a slave, and slavery is wrong.

Dissenters will say that children have to be below the age of majority so that they cannot be tossed out onto the street by parents who don't want to care for them. The issue is that this can be solved without taking rights from children. There simply needs to be a law upon parents that tells them they must care for their offspring as needed up to a certain age, perhaps thirteen or fourteen. Then the problem is easily solved.

This would anger many parents because it would mean that they can no longer coerce their children to the same extent. That would be the point of the measure, to transfer the burden of childhood from the child and to the parent. It was the parents choice to have the child, not the child's.

One good thing is that in the United States the age of majority and the voting age are often intertwined in the mind. This means that lowering the voting age will easily open the door for lowering the age of majority to the same age quickly. It would be extremely difficult to lower the age of majority before lowering the voting age to at least match it.

The current status quo is unjust, and should be changed. Essentially, the age of majority should be abolished and replaced with a new age that places the burden and the lack of rights per se upon parents. It would mean the child could do what they pleased legally but that the parents would lose the right to mind their own business,

being legally bound to making sure the child is cared for up to a certain age.

9.3 - The Driving Age

In 21st century America, driving is an absolutely vital right that cannot be reasonably denied to people who can use it. Without the right to drive, a person's ability to work is greatly hindered. They are gravely dependent upon a person who can drive if they live outside of the biggest cities. Within those cities, many viable jobs require the legal ability to drive. Thus the driving age must be lowered in order for young people to live how they should.

There is a disgusting myth that young people are somehow innately poor drivers. Perhaps all of these myths stem from people's need to feel as if they have gotten better in some way as they have gotten older instead of only declining, necessitating an emotional need to see the young as below them, even in simple tasks like driving a car. Suffice it to say that the only reason why young people may be considered poor drivers is due to their lack of experience.

Because young people, who can only be new drivers, have less driving experience they do have a somewhat higher crash rate than more seasoned drivers. Some people who have the need to feel superior still falsely believe that if the driving age was raised, the new youngest driving age group would have a lower crash rate than the current youngest driving age group. This has been demonstrated to be false. In Chapter II, a source about driving restrictions in California is mentioned. That source shows that when driving restrictions are placed upon the lowest age group, the crash rates decline for them because less of them are driving, but the next youngest age group actually suffers an increase in crashes because people coming into that age group lack proper driving experience.

Another source is a study that compared ability between new drivers in their teens and in their twenties, even going so far as to control for motor skill by way of excluding high school athletes from data processing. The source explains that “the older the student, the worse his driving skills score. Male teens scored 36 percent higher on driving skills than men in their 20s.” (57) It seems that all of the evidence points towards the gross myth that people in their teen years are naturally poor drivers for reasons outside of experience being not true.

The specific policy that there should be in regards to the driving age is an age of zero. This is because states already enforce a drivers test, which should be hard enough for someone who is too young to drive to fail. If the test is passable by people who are too young, whatever age that may be, then the test serves no purpose to begin with, and getting rid of the driving age will be a good way to test whether or not the driving test is effective.

The fact is that it is completely ridiculous to tell people that they are too young to take a test. If there is a fourteen year old who can take it a pass it, what is the harm in letting them drive? There is no harm! If the fourteen year old is restricted from taking the test until he is sixteen, when he passes it at sixteen he will be just as likely to wreck as he was at fourteen, because at both ages he has zero driving experience.

We need to stop expecting younger teens to sit around and simply continue their childhood long past its expiration date. They are biological adults who want to work and begin to enter the “real world.” It is cruel and silly to deny them the entry of their foot in the doorway by placing poorly thought out age restrictions on essential activities such as driving.

9.4 - The Working Age

The driving age and even the age of majority are of very little practical use outside the pure pursuit of freedom if there are laws that tell a person who has newly gained those rights that they must wait a few more years to work. Money is the foundation of survival in society, and ensuring your own survival is the foundation of independence. Therefore, the right to work is the final essential right that people in their teens must achieve in order to begin to be free of ageism.

An age restriction on working is simply a power play or silly or both in modern times. Only in a historical setting could it be any form of real protection for the young. Limits on the ages of people employers could hire were originally drafted due to horrible working conditions and questionable economic conditions. Children of ten years would be hired to work in coal mines alongside their families, and families were the standard hiring unit for many employers, meaning the wage earning potential of individual men was poor. These workplaces had egregious health conditions and would sometimes deform the workers, including the children. It's a good thing that this is no longer the reality.

Nowadays a child only risks getting a small burn from a fryer at a McDonalds. Working conditions are no longer dangerous, so why prevent young people from beginning to work as soon as they want to? There is no reason.

Economically, men and now women would not have to worry about children hurting their earning potential because most jobs are locked off by licensing and a minimum education of seventeen years, unlike in historical times when the standard job was a basic factory or mining role. Children and younger teens would only threaten the job security of modern day high schoolers.

Obviously the working age should be gotten rid of, but only with a guarantee that parents cannot force their children to work. It would be best if all of the rights mentioned so far could come together in a package, because it may be true that abolishing or simply lowering the working age without doing that same to the age of majority could open the potential for abuse. And of course abolishing the working age without giving the driving age the same treatment would likely amount to nothing changing in the real world.

Anyone resisting the simple lowering of the working age likely has a psychological superiority complex they need enforced by the law and they likely want to have power of young people. People who are power grabbers and keepers tend to want to have and use that power to do all the wrong things for all the wrong reasons. Thus people who oppose this measure and others should be kept a wary eye on, and exposed for what they truly are.

The next few rights discussed are less necessary in regards to freeing the young from the institution of Adolescence. Many of them are hedonistic in nature, being restrictions on purchases of certain items like drugs. These following rights should generally not be at the forefront of the youth rights movement.

9.5 - The Drinking Age & Other Restrictions

In the United States, the alcohol drinking age is peculiar because it is set at the age of twenty one, while the age of voting and majority is set at eighteen. The alcohol drinking age has historically served as a major distractor to youth rights groups, who try to get it reduced to simply eighteen and who fall into the trap of focussing on it far too much simply because the age is high.

Youth rights groups need to stop focussing on the drinking age because it makes them look like hedonists. Did the feminists center

their movement around alcohol? There are far more important rights that need to be fought for.

Another main issue with putting the drinking age front and center is that it skirts around the much larger issue of the religious belief in the magic of the age of eighteen, because groups typically try to lower the drinking age to only eighteen and employ ageist rhetoric like “alcohol for all adults.” Every moment that a group is trying to lower the drinking age to eighteen is another moment wasted on something other than destroying the religion of eighteen. The best case scenario for these actions is that the drinking age does get lowered, but young people are still culturally discriminated against and people below the age of eighteen still have no rights.

When the essential rights are achieved by young people, it will be a breeze to do away with age restrictions such as the drinking age.

As with the drinking age, focussing on any other age restrictions besides the first four mentioned in this chapter seems to me to be a waste of time. While all of them should be abolished, the way in which this is done is not to focus on silly age restrictions.

Curfew is a prime example of this. Of course curfew laws will be abolished when essential rights are won, but what good does focussing for ten years on the abolition of only curfew laws do? If they are abolished, that’s great, but no essential right has been achieved and everything stays pretty much the same as it has been.

Therefore time and money should not be wasted on the abolition of age restrictions other than the voting age, the age of majority, the driving age, and the working age because doing so will only be a massive waste.

9.6 - Education Reform

I view education reform as parallel to the achievement of the essential rights as it should be regarded as a separate issue but is of equal importance. Imagine achieving all of the rights with not change to the educational system - youth would still be trapped in the institution of Adolescence due to soft control, despite hard legal controls being thrown off. While the achievement of the essential rights would likely lead to some form of educational reform, it will change the system in all of the ways it must be changed.

The young must be given options as to how to spend their time besides in the education system. If a young person chooses, they should be given the ability to begin training for a career and soon after they should begin their work in that field. Not everyone is right for academia, and statistics show this. One out of five people never finish high school (58), and one out of three people who do finish high school don't go on to college (59). Why then are these people put through at least three years of middle school, which is now nothing more than high school preparation? Why do one out of three high school graduates even bother completing high school, when high school is now nothing more than college prep? Most of those students likely go onto to get jobs that don't use a thing they'd learned in school their last six years.

The answer as to why is called signaling and is discussed in Chapter VII. The point is that no one going through this system, working for it, or suffering from it is free in any way. This system therefore must be abolished.

Youth rights groups and movements should seek this goal simultaneously with the goal of the essential rights. What will replace

the current education system will be much better for everyone involved.

See Chapter VII. Education for more information.

9.7 - Conclusion

There are three essential rights that must be achieved by young people in order for them to escape their current prison: the right to self determination (the age of majority), the right to work, and the right to movement (driving). The right to vote will be a useful way to achieve these essential rights, and the right to vote is typically packaged with the age of majority in the United States.

Focusing on other age restrictions like the drinking age is a waste of time and effort and it ignores the real issues. Victories in these areas will only be partial and solve nothing. Therefore, the essential rights and the right to vote should be the main focus of youth rights.

Education reform must be focussed on alongside the essential rights. Without such reform to the horrible system of mind control this nation is in the grips of now, the young will never be free. The achievement of essential rights and the destruction of ageism can only do so much and get so far without change to the education system.

These policies are simple and they are what the facts of the book indicate must be done in order to be the best nation the United States or any other nation can be. These policies are the nail that must be hammered into ageism and the institution of Adolescence in order to finally kill them.

CHAPTER X. POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES AND YOUTH RIGHTS

People are unlikely to support the truth if it conflicts with their preconceived notions. This book has so far tried to remain politically neutral in regards to overall political ideologies. It is unnecessary to espouse one of these ideologies, because almost all of them are compatible with youth rights.

Some people are more willing to accept these truths than others based on their ideology, but ultimately there is not a single ideology with a reasonable amount of followers that actually conflicts with youth rights at its core. The only ideology that fits that description is ageism.

If you are short on time, I don't recommend reading the entirety of what follows. If you feel you need more convincing, simply read the section that corresponds with your overall worldview.

10.1 - "Leftist" Progressives

People who would typically think of themselves as progressives or champions of social justice should be some of the most willing to accept the facts of these books. These individuals already strongly despise other -isms, like racism and sexism, but have largely allowed ageism to go unrecognized up to this point.

Fighting ageism is fighting for social justice, which is why progressive ideology should not be opposed to the goals of youth rights movements. The reason why many progressives seem to reject youth rights is that they are fooled by pop-culture lies. These lies include the lies about competence and the brain.

Often when I am talking with one of these people, they are the first to bring up the “brain doesn’t develop until the age of twenty five” myth. They do this because they usually tend to harbor a strong respect for scientists and intellectuals, as well as typically having a strong trust in the mainstream media.

To anyone who is a progressive, I say to you to simply read the first five chapters of this book. If you are skeptical, feel free to assess the sources on your own. Once doing this, there is no reason to reject these truths any longer.

Recognize ageism for what it is and make fighting against it the next crusade for social justice. Progressives have been able to achieve much in the past, and in the fight against ageism they may serve to be a large help.

10.2 - Socialists and Communists

Much of ageism and the institution of Adolescence has come at the hands of what could be considered the bourgeoisie. Much of it originated in the upper class, as they were the ones who could afford to keep their young in childhood far past their biological rejection of childhood. The upper class then forced their way of life unto everyone in the West, and the West spread this way of life imperialistically to many parts of the rest of the world, including Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

The bourgeoisie corporate marketing class feeds and relies on the institution of Adolescence and will likely fight against its destruction. The destruction of the institution of Adolescence will greatly harm their revenues as well. In a way, the young are an underclass being exploited by an undeserving upper class.

Modern day compulsory education teaches materialism, destructive competition and greed. It should interest Marxists to

dismantle this horrible system. In addition, the educational system is extremely wasteful in economic terms, and somebody is profiting off of all of the extracted time and effort. This time and effort should be returned to the young, not taken away by some overlord.

10.3 - Anarcho Communists

The origins of the institution of Adolescence are in fascism (see Chapter I). A group of academics and businessmen wanted to shape society in their image, so they designed the compulsory education system that is still in use today. This education system hopes to break the will of the people and train them to be good little factory workers.

Anarcho-Communists should have an interests in fighting against this fascist plan. Only when this plan is foiled can the people even hope of being free of their modern day tyranny which looks as if it is freedom but really tells you what your life can and cannot be. Children under this system are falsely taught that they can be anything they want to be. But what if they want to train to be a nurse when they're fourteen? Nope! What if they don't want to finish high school? That's not a freedom they have. This is covert fascism.

So if you consider yourself to be against this abuse of authority, join youth rights. Only by smashing this fascist system can this authority ever be brought to justice for their ageist crimes.

10.4 - American Conservatives

To begin on conservative, it should be recognized that at least two subcategories of American conservatives can be identified: religious and non-religious. Religious conservatives tend to be

Christian and base most of their views on their religion, while non-religious conservatives derive their views from other sources.

Some of the most ageist people I have talked to have been religious conservatives. These people tend to be ageist because they think that their religion or God wants them to be ageist, and that discriminating against people based on a number is somehow righteous. Not only is it extremely harmful to everyone involved, ageism is not even supported by the Bible. In fact, it's opposed!

The mother of Jesus, Mary, is thought to have been somewhere in the range of twelve to sixteen when she gave birth to Jesus. Using the pop-culture definition of pedophile, which would be someone who is sexually attracted to a person under the age of eighteen, God would be a pedophile. But God is not a pedophile. Instead the Bible is actually showing that a woman as young as twelve is ready to be mother to the Saviour of humanity. That's a far cry from the modern day middle schools that twelve year olds are trapped in now.

Judaism is the precursor religion to Christianity, and half of the Bible features Jewish texts. The Jews believe that the age of adulthood is about twelve for females and thirteen for males. This is why they have their Bar and Bat Mitzvahs when they do. While these ages are not explicitly applied to Christianity, it's supposed to be the same God, so God has told you that your son is a man when he is thirteen!

It's time for Christians to stop calling people in their teens boys and girls. Science as well as the Bible have now come together to say that you are wrong. Jesus teaches love, and ageism is the exact opposite of love - it's hate.

For non-religious American Conservatives, the main reason why they might disagree is the tradition of ageism in the country. The issue with this is that tradition alone does not make something right. Tradition should only be seen as a method for testing if something

works or not. Ageism does not work and the nation would be better off without it, which means it should be abandoned.

The Revolutionary War was fought at a time when half of the United States population was under the age of sixteen. The use of young teens in the military was common, so common in fact that the war could not have been won without them. This country was actually founded in the absence of ageism, with ageism coming in from authoritarian proto-fascist sources in Europe in the late nineteenth century.

Furthermore, the multitude of age restrictions found in the United States today encourages big government and is big government. The young grow up learning from laws and in school that it is the responsibility of the government to control what they can and cannot do for their “own good.” The current age restriction laws are government overreaches that in turn encourage young people who live under them to support more big government controls later in life, when they are finally allowed to vote.

The education public education system is a major drain on taxpayer dollars, with the United States spending far more per student than other, more socialist, Western countries such as Sweden do per student. Compulsory education is perhaps the largest government overreach of all, infringing on not only the young, but also on their parents to a large degree. The United States was fine without mass schooling up until the 1920’s, meaning the tradition of this nation is to not have such government overreaches.

Ageism and the institution of Adolescence are both so opposed to the conservative viewpoint that it should be a no-brainer for conservatives to support youth rights. Particularly in the United States, conservatives have a strong track record of believing that the USA is the “land of the free and the home of the brave.” Conservatives should therefore be brave and extend freedoms to their young.

10.5 - Libertarians and Anarcho-Capitalists

Anyone who is truly a Libertarian or even an Anarcho-Capitalist should immediately be for youth rights due to its opposition against Big Government. There are also principles that Libertarians and Ancaps should be familiar with that support youth rights policies.

The first of these principles is the principle of “no victim, no crime.” Many youth rights policies seek to right the wrong of there being crimes that young people can commit that really boil down to their action being a crime because they are young, not because they are a victim. Take this for an example - “A young person walks into a bar. He gets tackled by a dozen protectors and servers in blue, then hauled off to prison for the crime of being in a bar while under twenty one years of age.” Who is the victim here? Is it... A. the young person B. Society C. The bar OR D. The brave men who risked their lives bringing the criminal to justice. If you’re reasonable, you know the victim is only A., the young person, and that he did nothing wrong. There a numerous other examples of laws like the drinking age that punish young people for doing nothing. In fact, the enforcement of any age restriction boils down to this. Thus Libertarians and Ancaps should support youth rights.

The action undertaken to enforce age restriction laws is obviously a violation of the Non Aggression Principle. It is ridiculous to think it is right to use force upon a young person walking down the street smoking a cigarette just because they may happen to be under the age of eighteen.

As mentioned in the previous section on Conservatives, age restrictions are an example of Big Government and compulsory

education only serves to make people in acceptors of that Big Daddy Government that tells them they are naughty boys for buying a lottery ticket and that they better put on their seatbelt or they'll have fun dropping the soap in a prison cell if they dare not to pay a fine for being unsafe and disobeying Big Daddy Government, who told them to be safe or be stolen from or be shot and killed.

Fiscally, public compulsory education is a huge waste of taxpayer dollars. On top of it existing in the first place, it is also horrible because it is extremely inefficient with all of the money funneled into it. Youth rights policies should get rid of compulsory education and at least liberalize the education market so that competition between models of schooling exists and the best ones come out on top. This could be seen as a step towards the complete privatization of schooling, as the case for that will be easier for Libertarians to make after the market for it has be deregulated and funding has been cut to public schools who would no longer need as much of it for lack of students.

At any rate there is no reason for a Libertarian or Ancap to not accept youth rights, especially after reading this book. Youth rights will ultimately reduce the size of the government in a vital way and help to eradicate the cancer of compulsory education. Liberty must ultimately start at birth, or it will never come. Very few born a slave can or want to escape it.

10.6 - National Socialists and Fascists

This section will be different from the rest because National Socialists (Nazis) and Fascists have no reason not to accept ageism. Hitler was a pioneer in the stratification of the age groups in Germany,

abusing the young to fulfill his own genocidal agenda. Hitler Youth after all took much inspiration from Boy Scouts.

The institution of Adolescence stems mostly from the school system which was inspired by the same Prussian school system that birthed the disgusting National Socialism after a few generations. The same business tycoons (think Rockefeller and Ford) that put money behind the school system loved eugenics and the newly emerging Fascism in Europe. In fact, the school system itself is a form of eugenics, condemning anyone who isn't deemed fit for it as it was designed by the Fascists to a life of poverty, possibly cutting off their bloodline.

Corporal punishment is still used in many schools of the American South to this day, meaning they transcend mental controls, opting for overt use of physical control upon their students. The Nazis would be proud. The only issue they should have with the school system is their allowance of people who aren't white into them.

Fascists and National Socialists should love the way the ageist status quo prepares young people to accept a brutal dictatorship. It really does "put them in their place," ensuring subservience to some group leader for the rest of their lives. Go ahead, Fascists, take your place as the head of the fight against the fight against ageism!

10.7 - Conclusion

Pretty much every ideology of politics should be for youth rights except for Fascists who would love a brutal dictatorship. Youth rights opposes no other group of except for ageists, who are Fascists themselves whether they no it or not. It is time to come together, cross the line of ideology, and fight for the freedom of the young.

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