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From “Budding Girl” to “Flapper Americana Novissima”

G. Stanley Hall’s Psychology of Female Adolescence

In a 1909 article for *Appleton’s Magazine* entitled “The Budding Girl,” pioneering developmental psychologist G. Stanley Hall rendered his own interpretation of this familiar metaphor. In doing so, he claimed the adolescent girl as a subject worthy of modern science’s attention:

Girls with hair demurely braided down their backs and skirts just beginning to lengthen toward their ankles *are* buds that should not blossom for some time, but should be kept as long as possible in that green stage; or, to change from a floral to a faunal trope, they are only squabs and not yet doves, maturing pupae and not yet butterflies, and this calf or filly stage should be prolonged by every artifice. She is no longer a little girl, but by no means yet a young woman, nor is she a cross between or a mixture of the two, but a something quite unique and apart, because this is a stage not at all explained by anything in the pedigree of the race, which the history of the individual otherwise tends to repeat. Even among those primitive races where girls are not wed at pubescence, there never was a backfish stage. That is one reason why she is now the most intricate and baffling problem perhaps that science has ever yet attacked.¹

Hall began an “attack” on the problem of explaining the girl’s development five years earlier with the publication of his book *Adolescence*. As several scholars have noted, it was this work that discursively marked the inception of the “era of adolescence.” During the first decades of the twentieth century, the combined effects of public institution building and private market forces, along with the influence of the young themselves, more clearly than ever before demarcated

adolescence as a unique and important period of life, perceived and experienced as critically related to the fostering of individual potential and happiness, as well as the preservation of social stability and the advancement of modern civilization.² A synthesis of the entire range of the components of human development—physical, mental, emotional, moral, sexual, and social—*Adolescence* represented the first systematic effort in the nascent discipline of psychology to depict adolescence as a distinct life stage, characterized by a particular set of biological imperatives, a corresponding psychological organization, and a consequent constellation of predictable social behaviors. While many of the particulars of Hall's developmental scheme, namely, his reliance on recapitulation theory as its driving mechanism, were challenged by some of his contemporaries and by subsequent practitioners in the field, his work nonetheless played a major role in establishing a twentieth-century science of child development, as well as in inciting wider scientific and cultural concern for adolescence as an individual life stage and a collective social category.³

What Hall termed his "genetic" psychology categorized the young according to age-related attributes emerging out of a process of organic maturation. As with previous organic explanations of development, such a biological orientation professed the universality of developmental categories, while it upheld current notions of inherent difference and hierarchy between various groups of social subjects. Thus, as historian Gail Bederman shows, Hall's developmental theory relied on an evolutionary explanation of the biology of racial difference to prescribe a phase of savage masculinity for all boys during childhood, which only civilized ones outgrew during adolescence. "Adolescence was singled out [in Hall's developmental theory] as a crucial point at which an individual (and a race) leaped to a developed, superior, Western selfhood or remained arrested in a savage state," cultural and educational theorist Nancy Lesko further asserts. "Adolescence marked the race and gender divide to be crossed by each boy-man if he were to [be]come civilized and if he were to help the advancement of civilization." Historians Joseph F. Kett and John R. Gillis likewise contend that Hall's work functioned simultaneously to elide and reinforce differences of class and culture by looking to a white middle-class male experience as the model for growth and from there normalizing a set of shared biological, psychological, and behavioral characteristics and dictating common mandates for the treatment of all boys ages 14 to 24.⁴ As these scholars argue, the primary focus of Hall's developmental theory was on boys, boyhood, and masculinity. While these scholars notice that girls were left out of many of Hall's descriptions of and prescriptions for adolescent development, however, they do not pursue the reasons

or the ways in which Hall also attempted to reconcile ideas about girls, femininity, and adolescence.⁵ This chapter explores the interplay among these ideas to map the role of their relationship in shaping conceptions of female development, as well as the modern category of adolescence, within the context of Hall's pioneering contributions to the emerging field of developmental psychology.

The chapter begins with a look at Hall's treatment of boyhood in his developmental theory and at the social context in which a heightened anxiety about imperiled masculinity prompted a conception of adolescence as structured by a set of attributes and needs instrumental to the preservation of the status of the white middle-class male. It then turns to Hall's psychology of female adolescence and his efforts to understand and explain the adolescent girl as a figure in her own right. The late-nineteenth-century discourse about the developing girl figured prominently in Hall's conception of adolescent girlhood, as well as in his more general construct of modern adolescence. Hall characterized adolescence as a "generalized or even feminized stage of psychic development."⁶ In doing so, he was able to hold up the girl as the exemplar of certain fundamental qualities of adolescence, without ever threatening, and in fact even reinforcing, the role of the civilized boy as the driving force behind the continued progressive processes of biological and cultural evolution. In addition, even as it was firmly embedded in nineteenth-century paradigms of gender and race, Hall's psychology of female adolescence also presaged several "modern" expectations for the adolescent girl's body, mind, and behavior. Hall helped to break new intellectual ground by positing that the establishment of gender identity at adolescence gave rise to a psychological conflict that was central to the girl's development, by raising the specter of a normal female adolescent sexuality, and by sanctioning a number of other behaviors formerly deemed "precocious" and beyond the pale of Victorian girlhood. To be sure, Hall's treatment of these themes was informed by the new science of sexology, particularly by the ideas of British sexologist Havelock Ellis, and by the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud, whom Hall famously hosted at Clark University for his only visit to the United States in 1909.⁷ The changes modern girls were experiencing and facilitating in their own lives at the turn of the century also influenced Hall's thinking. Of greatest interest and concern to Hall in this latter regard were white middle-class girls' pursuit of equal opportunities in secondary and higher education, as well as their involvement with leisure activities and experimentation with modes of self-expression as part of a distinctive peer culture. In engaging with and responding to such intellectual and social changes, Hall posed several "intricate and baffling problem[s]" about the girl's development for his fellow scientists and the wider

culture to consider. He also offered his own solutions to such problems that accommodated and contributed to the reshaping of gender arrangements in modern times, while holding fast to the relations of power that structured the old sex/gender order.

HALL'S "BOYOLOGY": MALE DEVELOPMENT,
MASCULINITY, AND MODERN ADOLESCENCE

When he offered his first description of adolescence as a distinct life stage in an article for the *Princeton Review* in 1882, G. Stanley Hall was on his way to becoming a leading figure in turn-of-the-century scientific and intellectual American life.⁸ Having earned the first doctorate in psychology to be awarded in the United States from Harvard University in 1878, Hall went on to become a lecturer at Harvard; a professor at Johns Hopkins University; founder and president of Clark University; founder of the American Psychological Association, the *Pedagogical Seminary* (now the *Journal of Genetic Psychology*), and the *American Journal of Psychology*; and publisher of some 340 books, papers, and articles. Indeed, his influence in establishing the field of scientific psychology as an academic discipline at American universities was second only to William James's.⁹ In addition to his academic accomplishments, Hall's renown also derived from his widespread popular appeal. Most notably, he earned the enthusiasm of numerous parents, educators, and reform groups as the preeminent spokesperson for the child-study movement during the 1890s. Despite the subsequent decline of child study, which reached its demise by 1911, Hall's influence as an academic pioneer and effective popularizer reverberated in a number of theoretical and practical efforts in the areas of parent education; child welfare; educational reform; and developmental, clinical, and educational psychology throughout the first decades of the twentieth century.¹⁰

Hall's training as a psychologist, which included studies in philosophy, theology, physiology, evolutionary biology, and the experimental psychology of German physiologist and philosopher Wilhelm Wundt, reflected his own diverse interests and inclinations, as well as the multidisciplinary origins of the field.¹¹ During his tenure at Johns Hopkins in the mid- to late 1880s, he succeeded as an experimental psychologist, where the attention of many of his colleagues in the new scientific psychology was finding its focus. However, by the early 1890s, his longstanding interest in the problem of development and his persistent efforts to reconcile natural science with deeply held philosophical and religious concerns, coupled with a series of professional disappointments and a personal crisis result-

ing from the tragic loss of his wife and daughter, led him to conclude that his energies as a psychologist would be best spent bringing the methods and theories of a scientific psychology to bear on the practical art of child rearing and on educational reform. Unable to formulate adequately a theory of child development and scientific pedagogy from laboratory psychology, Hall turned instead to the work of such thinkers as Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, and German zoologist Ernst Haeckel to fashion a genetic psychology from the postulates of evolutionary biology.¹² His ardent commitment to understanding and explaining individual development and his accompanying prophetic call that the child be embraced as the key to humankind's past and the hope for its future put him out of step with mainstream psychology's adherence to rigorous scientific standards, which he had helped to pioneer. However, Hall was highly optimistic about his course. The study of childhood, he anticipated in 1896, "is likely to give us at last what we have longed for for a great while—something like a perspective, that will enable us to distinguish the deeper and older things of the soul from those that are of recent acquisition. I think the old adult psychology, that all of us teach even now, is to be, radically but gradually, transformed into a new genetic psychology."¹³

With his devotion to evolutionary science, Hall combined a romantic sensibility, derived from his own imaginative nature as a child, his education in romantic literature as an undergraduate at Williams College, his exposure to the German youth movement during three trips abroad in his twenties and thirties, and his affinity for the doctrines of European and American educational reformers of the mid- to late nineteenth century.¹⁴ His ideas about child development were also influenced by his own boyhood upbringing in the 1840s and 1850s in the rural village of Ashfield, Massachusetts. Raised by pious Congregationalist parents, Hall was diligently schooled in the virtues of self-control and sexual restraint that defined manly character in mid-nineteenth-century America. As he recorded in his autobiography, *Life and Confessions of a Psychologist*, maintaining the self-discipline required to uphold the high standards for chastity, duty, and emotional containment set by his family and community was often excruciatingly difficult for him, but he imbibed these values nonetheless, and both they and his struggles against them figured prominently in his conceptions of developmental processes and outcomes.¹⁵ The sometimes auspicious, but frequently uneasy, blending of evolutionary science, romanticism, and Victorian moralism produced both conservative and progressive strains in Hall's thought and helps to account for his broad cultural appeal. Described by Joseph F. Kett as "conceptually as well as chronologically poised between two centuries," Hall

communicated mixed, ambivalent, and contradictory messages on a variety of themes related to children, education, gender, and sexuality. Such a posture resonated with a society in transition, in which many Americans of the white middle class, in particular, found themselves challenged to adjust to the social and cultural changes wrought by modernity, without entirely forsaking the "traditional" ways of life they expected to lend order, security, purpose, and definition to themselves as a group, and, through their leadership, to the nation as a whole.¹⁶

It was in the two-volume work, *Adolescence: Its Psychology and its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*, that Hall provided his most thorough, if at times grandiloquent, explication of his genetic psychology and the adolescent stage of development. The book sold more than twenty-five thousand copies in the United States and in a revised and shorter version published in 1906 achieved marked popularity as a normal-school text.¹⁷ For *Adolescence*, Hall reviewed vast bodies of literature and data from the fields enumerated in its subtitle, and he incorporated many of the findings garnered from responses to questionnaires investigating children's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors administered under the auspices of the child-study movement. In its most general tenets, Hall's developmental psychology asserted the determining influence of childhood and, especially, adolescence in the life of the individual; described the growing child as moving through a sequence of invariant stages, from the simple to the complex, with saltatory transitions between them; and emphasized the role of the instincts and emotions over the role of the intellect in the development of the mind. Hall's theory was descriptive and prescriptive, attempting to reconcile a warning that the natural progression of development must not be artificially manipulated, on the one hand, with a radically optimistic vision for the improvability of the human race, on the other.¹⁸

What most distinguished Hall's theory of human development was its enthusiastic embrace of the variant of evolutionary theory known as the *doctrine of recapitulation*. Uniting the biological disciplines of embryology, comparative anatomy, and paleontology, the idea that the development of the individual somehow repeated the evolution of the human race was introduced to Hall from the works of Haeckel, who formulated the biogenetic law asserting that ontogeny recapitulated phylogeny, Spencer, and Darwin. Hall quite literally interpreted the doctrine to mean that the progressive appearance of physical, psychological, and behavioral attributes in the individual child's development constituted a compressed process of reliving all the earlier stages of ancestral evolution. In this scheme, the embryo and young child first repeated all the

stages of species development and then the child and the adolescent went on to relive the stages of human cultural evolution, from savagery to barbarism to civilization. According to the Lamarckian theory of acquired characteristics, to which Hall also subscribed, the most recent traits developed by the child's parents or grandparents were obtained by the child at the cusp of adulthood. With each generation, then, children had the potential to inherit more advanced traits and to foster and pass on higher traits of their own, thereby furthering evolutionary progress. Recapitulation and Lamarckianism began to fall out of favor among natural scientists around 1900, with the rediscovery of Gregor Mendel's genetic laws and the acceptance of August Weissman's theory that chromosomes, as opposed to ancestral behaviors, determined inheritance.¹⁹ Nonetheless, in *Adolescence*, Hall continued to avow his conviction that the child and the race were "each keys to the other." Championing himself as a "Darwin of the mind," he argued that the study of one would illuminate important truths about the other and that both had to be comprehensively discerned by scientific inquiry if the developmental needs of the child and the promises of evolutionary progress were to be fathomed and fulfilled.²⁰

At the heart of his genetic psychology, Hall positioned the adolescent years, the decade of life from ages 14 to 24. Ideally a time of "marvelous new birth" of body and mind, when the individual crossed over from a barbarous state to a civilized one, adolescence marked the nascency period, or emergence phase, of the "later and more precious" developmental acquisitions, including complex muscular organization, reasoning capability, social sensibility, consciousness of sexual feeling, high-level moral capacity, and religious sentiment.²¹ In marrying recapitulation theory with Lamarckianism, Hall enthusiastically conceptualized adolescence as above all else a plastic stage of human development, during which the force of the instinctual endowment of the race expended its most advanced energies and then gave way to the potential for propitious environmental influence. If plasticity was the blessing of adolescence, however, it also portended its greatest danger. As incidences of juvenile crime and psychopathology revealed, the environment could just as easily lead adolescents astray as it could promote their growth toward higher ways of being. The task for those concerned with nurturing the development of the adolescent, then, lay in "providing the most favorable environment and eliminating every possible cause of arrest or reversion" when the higher capacities appeared. Hence, Hall was determined that adolescence be studied and monitored, with just the right mix of influence and noninterference by those who understood the peculiar contours of its physiology and psychology. Such supervision was essential, he repeatedly insisted, not

only for the potential of individual development, but for the future of evolutionary progress, as well. As both the moment when heredity bestowed on the individual the most superior of the human traits and the moment when the individual was most susceptible to external conditioning, adolescence was the point of departure for the higher evolution of humanity, the very "bud of promise for the race." Alternatively, if such potential was unfulfilled, thwarted, or misdirected in some way, adolescence could also mark the beginning of racial retrogression, degeneration, and devolution.²²

Hall's faith in the promise of hereditary endowments, his recommendations for appropriate environmental interventions, and his hopes for evolutionary progress, as well as his fears about how ontogenetic and phylogenetic development might go wrong, were all primarily focused on the development of the white middle-class American boy. His was at the forefront of a number of voices attempting to explain and to manage the civilized boy's social position and the definition of masculinity at a historical moment marked by significant social, economic, and cultural change.²³ During the decades surrounding the turn of the century in the United States, white middle-class male hegemony was challenged by claims, however forcibly repressed, of white middle-class women, African Americans, ethnic minorities, and the working-class to various forms of political, social, and economic power, as well as by the broader shift from a small-scale, entrepreneurial style of capitalism to a corporate, consumer-oriented economy. Arising out of and contributing to the major transformations of this period was a growing nationalism and an increasing commitment by political, business, military, and religious leaders to an ideology of expansionism and to policies and practices that would secure the position of the United States as a dominant power on the world stage.²⁴ The coeducation struggle was one of many cultural sites in which the meaning and direction of such changes were debated. Beginning in the 1880s, attention turned increasingly to the challenges faced by the civilized boy in negotiating these changes and to finding ways to enable him to meet them and to protect and perpetuate his claim to a position of superiority within the unfolding course of biological and cultural evolution.

Transformations in the lives of male youth that had begun in the late eighteenth century increased during the second half of the nineteenth century. Most notable was an ongoing differentiation in the opportunities available to middle-class and working-class boys. Under the conditions of advancing industrial capitalism, many jobs were opening up in the white-collar sector of the economy, including a demand for clerks, bookkeepers, accountants, engineers, lawyers, and business managers. Yet only those parents of sufficient means could afford to

forgo the wages of their teenage sons and make the commitment to prolonged formal education these desirable new jobs required. Having once worked side by side on farms or in small machine shops throughout their youth, even while their adult destinations were unquestionably to be conditioned by their class status, middle-class and working-class boys now found themselves located in markedly different institutional settings during their teenage years. Middle-class boys attended public high schools, colleges, and professional schools in steadily increasing numbers, with these experiences typified by boys' economic dependency on their parents and increased supervision by those adults responsible for monitoring their route to success in their chosen profession. Negotiating economic opportunities around manufacturers' demands for unskilled cheap labor and craft and trade unions' fears of juvenile competition, working-class boys whose parents could not afford to support a lengthy education spent their teenage years in low-end blue-collar jobs. These boys found themselves in a semidependent relationship with the adult world. Their work life was carefully circumscribed by adult supervision, and their wages were expected to contribute to the family economy, even as some earnings were often used to support peer-oriented leisure activity, largely free from adult surveillance.²⁵

As prolonged education increasingly became if not a clear determinant, then at least a necessary prerequisite of the boy's economic prospects in a bureaucratic, corporate economy, middle-class parents sought to inculcate in their sons a constellation of values that would guide them through their extended transition to manhood. Buttressed by a veritable industry in conduct-of-life literature and manifested in numerous organizations and institutions engaged in boy-work, middle-class family values of the late nineteenth century emphasized the manly virtues of rationality, self-control, persistence, and diligence that had abided in the antebellum period. Whereas earlier in the century some sanction had been given to the individual initiative and autonomy these values implied, they were now combined with a greater emphasis than ever before on the importance of youthful obedience, compliance, and conformity, essential virtues if the boy was to stay in school and the young man was to bide his requisite time on the bottom rungs of the corporate ladder. From this perspective, male youth was conceptualized as a lengthy moratorium phase during which the boy primarily learned the importance of suppressing rebellious impulses and deferring to benevolent authorities if he hoped to realize an adult status marked by career success.²⁶

Paradoxically, however, ideal male identity now also incorporated a resistance to the weak body and passive character that were the feared result of undue

manly self-restraint and compliance civilized life seemed to require. In his 1881 work *American Nervousness*, neurologist George M. Beard defined the problems associated with the excesses of manly virtues as a disease. The bodies of white middle-class men, he argued, were being dangerously depleted of their vital nerve force because of the overdeveloped intellect and the suppressed emotion that were necessary for achieving professional success in modern society.²⁷ Such problems, moreover, were perceived to have roots in current configurations of male childhood and youth. Boys receiving too much attention at home, especially from doting mothers, and boys spending too much time in school, primarily under the direction of genteel female teachers, were failing to acquire the physical and mental vigor that would equip them to compete in the struggle for survival and supremacy in the biological, economic, and social arenas later in their lives. As a response to what was derogatorily referred to as both the "overcivilization" and the "effeminization" of the middle-class white male's personality and body, male identity came to be characterized by a number of traits frequently associated with working-class and primitive masculinity, including physical prowess, aggressiveness, boldness, and spontaneity.²⁸

The widespread popular enthusiasm in the late nineteenth century for male physical culture promoted and reflected the ambivalent prospects for Gilded Age masculinity by combining a keen antimodern sentiment with an enthusiastic receptivity toward the forms of economic success promised by an urban industrial society. For physical culture proponents, civilized life, with the changes in the nature of family, education, work, and leisure it proffered, threatened to weaken and corrupt the growing young male, especially, by fostering in him a desire for wealth, a love of luxury, a tendency toward bookishness, and an inclination toward dependency, passivity, and self-indulgence. Deliberate cultivation of the youthful male body, in the form of regular exercise, suppression of the sexual function, attention to diet, and plenty of exposure to rural settings, benefited the boy both by encouraging in him the discipline and control to resist the temptations and enervations of modern life and by befitting him with the strength and the drive to compete and to revel in his achievement of success in the same environment that was deemed to be so dangerous to his health and character.²⁹

By the time Hall published his text in 1904, these multiple and contradictory expectations for male selfhood were manifest in a variety of middle-class cultural forms and social institutions, including advice manuals, literary texts, medical tracts, family relations, school curricula and organization, and formal leisure activities such as those sponsored by YMCA.³⁰ Hall's contribution was to locate

the mandates for masculinity within the purview of the biological and psychological sciences and, especially, to frame the paradoxical expectations for male identity in developmental terms.³¹ Relying on the logic of recapitulation, he declared it natural and normative for all boys to experience and to express the physical, emotional, and moral attributes of primitive masculinity during childhood and early adolescence. Comparisons between boys and savages had also been made in the antebellum period, mostly reluctantly, and the assertion of such parallels that set white middle-class boys apart from both their sisters and their fathers also competed with notions of an androgynous childhood and with expectations that all middle-class children acquire the habits and values of polite Victorian society from an early age.³² With the predominating influence of evolutionary theory and the doctrine of recapitulation during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, such comparisons became more prevalent, drawn frequently by scientists endeavoring to measure and rank the peoples of the world by racial type, as well as by political and cultural authorities seeking to justify various forms of colonial intervention and domination.³³

Hall was among the most outspoken in sanctioning savage sensibility and behavior in the individual boy's development. He also provided the most systematic explanation for how primitive boyhood was to be reconciled with ontogenetic and phylogenetic progress. Following from Spencer and his disciple, the American philosopher John Fiske, Hall held that the "length of the growing period is one of the most important factors in development" and asserted that "the higher the species the larger the proportion of its average life . . . spent in attaining maturity." According to this reasoning, primitive males finished recapitulating the more limited traits of their ancestors when they reached puberty. Civilized boys, in contrast, had a longer racial history to repeat and were able to use the abundant new energies that arrived with the onset of the sex instinct to continue to develop mentally and morally throughout their prolonged adolescence.³⁴ Boys in their late teens and early twenties were to devote this time of life to experiencing and integrating their protracted and increasingly complex racial heritages, to controlling the primitive passions and mastering the self, and to pursuing the higher learning that would promote the innovation of new racial traits. The final developmental outcome for Hall was a male self that was strong, self-directed, self-controlled, and socially adjusted, capable of preserving the evolutionary gains achieved by the white race and carrying those forth into even higher states of civilization. With a racial history marked by a violent struggle for survival in which males were the primary aggressors, the biology and psychology of the individual male body and mind, and the future of the white middle-

class boy as its primary points of focus, Hall's developmental theory hereby conflated adolescence with the development of the civilized boy, leading one of his followers to refer to all of adolescent psychology as "boyology" and "boy analysis."³⁵

Hall's discussion of play in *Adolescence* and other writings marked one such move to equate adolescent development with the maturation of the civilized boy, with both his race and gender accounting for his exclusive enjoyment of what Hall deemed to be the extraordinary possibilities of this life stage. Countering a contemporary notion among educators of play as "practice for future adult activities," Hall asserted that "true play never practices what is phyletically new." Rather, "it exercises many atavistic and rudimentary functions, a number of which will abort before maturity, but which live themselves out in play like the tadpoles [sic] tail, that must be both developed and used as a stimulus to the growth of legs which will otherwise never mature." Hall recognized that all human beings—primitive peoples young and old, past and present, and civilized girls as well as boys—engaged in some fashion the various "motor capacities" and "psycho-motive impulses" called "play."³⁶ Along these lines, he was particularly interested in challenging the perception of doll play as entirely a demonstration of "nascent parenthood" in girls with an understanding of it, at least in part, as an expression of "the wide spread animism, if not fetishism, of children and savages." He went on to contend that the "doll instinct," which reached its apex between the ages of 8 and 9, not only allowed children to express such fundamental religious impulses but also to experience a sense of superiority through relationship to an object smaller than themselves, to vent feelings of anger and fear, and to communicate their individual desires, uncertainties, interests, and talents to the adults around them. "Perhaps nothing so fully opens up the juvenile soul to the student of childhood as well developed doll play," Hall concluded.³⁷ For this reason, he wanted doll play to be encouraged by parents and educators, to be used as a tool both to gain insight into the child's development and to train the child's intellect, will, and heart in "wholesome direction[s]."³⁸ Declaring it "unfortunate" that doll play was seen as the exclusive province of girls, Hall sought to claim its benefits for boys as well. The passion for dolls was "naturally far less developed [in boys] than with girls," he readily admitted. Nonetheless, boys also showed a penchant for playing with dolls, particularly with "exceptional" ones such as "colored" dolls, animals, clowns, and fantasy figures, and ought to be given more opportunities in school and at home to do so.³⁹

Hall also made it clear, however, that the growing boy's energies and capaci-

ties were not satisfied by mere doll play because his life “is naturally rougher and demands a wider range of activities” than the more staid and circumscribed domestic world of his sisters.⁴⁰ It was, he contended, only civilized boys who *fully* repeated the long, diverse, and difficult history of the human race in their necessarily more varied and vigorous play activities; only they, therefore, were able to reap the maximum developmental benefits to both “body and soul” that such play conferred. “[Play] gives a sense of superiority, dignity, endurance, courage, confidence, enterprise, power, personal validity, virility, and virtue,” he declared. “To be active, agile, strong, is especially the glory of young men.”⁴¹ The playful activities in which Hall wished to see adolescent boys engaged—outdoor sports such as hunting, fishing, and swimming; combative practices such as fighting, boxing, and wrestling; team sports such as football and baseball; and all manner of military exercises—were important because they shored up boys’ physical strength, enabled the release of the base instincts of anger and aggression, and cultivated the higher virtues of bravery, loyalty, cooperation, service, enthusiasm, decisiveness, and self-control. If these activities, instincts, and virtues were not given their due in the boy’s development, then his achievement of an authentic, mature, male self was at risk. As Hall maintained in his explanation of the importance of play in enabling both the expression and the management of anger in the adolescent boy: “To be angry aright is a good part of moral education, and non resistance under all provocations is unmanly, craven, and cowardly. An able-bodied man, who can not fight physically, can hardly have a high and true sense of honor, and is generally a milk-sop, a lady-boy, or a sneak. He lacks virility, his masculinity does not ring true, his honesty can not be sound to the core. Hence, instead of eradicating this instinct, one of the great problems of physical and moral pedagogy is to rightly temper and direct it.”⁴²

Play served as a primary means of “perfecting” the body, mind, and character of the civilized adolescent boy not only by giving him the opportunity to repeat the history of the race but also by satisfying the distinct needs of the pubertal male body as well.⁴³ Hall argued that physical activity of all kinds at this age was driven by the boy’s newly acquired sexual interest. His view of this interest, like so much else in his developmental thinking, was marked by ambivalence and by an effort to reconcile the moral absolutes of an older sexual order with the seemingly more flexible possibilities for responding to sexual desire in the modern age. On the one hand, his own Victorian upbringing held fast in his thinking about sex, and he continued to associate normal sexuality with heterosexual desire, marriage, and reproduction. On the other hand, the intense sexual anxiety he experienced during his youth (particularly his struggles with masturba-

tion), his romanticism, and his interest in Freudian psychoanalysis and the new science of sexology led him to condemn "the old prudery and false reticence," to question the effectiveness of outright repression, and to conclude that sexuality was central to the development of the personality and essential for physical and psychological well being.⁴⁴ Thus did he determine adolescent male play to be, in many "subtle but potent" ways, a form of courtship that performed an important role in the process of sexual selection, with the boy engaging in play in large part to display his prowess to the "other sex." While Hall conceded that coeducation gave girls and boys some opportunity to participate in athletic games as partners, he much preferred that the girl, just as females in the animal kingdom and in savage societies, assume her "true role of sympathetic spectator" in adolescent sport. By passively observing male play and then exerting her domesticating influence upon it, the girl was to value the expression of physical power in the boy, while encouraging him, through her own promise of sexual and emotional response, to refine the virility, fierceness, and brutality of his savage nature into the more civilized qualities of tenderness, bravery, honor, magnanimity, and forbearance.⁴⁵ Play also met the needs of the pubertal male body by functioning as a more general form of sublimation. "Activity may exalt the spirit almost to the point of ecstasy," Hall declared, "and the physical pleasure of it diffuse, irradiate, and mitigate the sexual stress just at the age when its premature localization is most deleterious. Just enough at the proper time and rate contributes to permanent elasticity of mood and disposition, gives moral self-control, rouses a love of freedom with all that that great word means, and favors all higher human aspirations."⁴⁶ In acquainting civilized boys with the pleasures of the body and channeling those pleasures into nonsexual activities, play enabled them to experience the physical, emotional, and spiritual invigoration normally aroused by adolescent sexual awakening, while also training them in the equally important practice of self-mastery and enhancing their capacities for self- and social creation.

As Hall's conceptualizations of and prescriptions for play reveal, notions of catharsis and transformation were central to his thinking about the development of the civilized boy. Joining a longstanding fear of precocity among developmental thinkers with an equal measure of caution about undue repression, Hall warned that both the early (and hence excessive) development and also the underdevelopment of functions, capacities, emotions, and instincts in childhood and adolescence could result in the undesirable appearance, and even the criminal manifestation, of such behaviors and traits later in life. With this claim, he sought to legitimize the expression of a collection of behaviors for civilized boys

that had been deemed unruly, annoying, or immoral by the nineteenth-century white middle class. There was, Hall declared, “something the matter with the boy in early teens who can be called ‘a perfect gentleman.’ That should come later, when the brute and animal element have had opportunity to work themselves off in a healthful way.” More specifically, by this time in the boy’s life, “he should have fought, whipped and been whipped, used language offensive to the prude and to the prim precisian, been in some scrapes, had something to do with bad . . . associates, and been exposed to . . . many forms of ethical mumps and measles.”⁴⁷

If, however, the biological dictates of childhood and early adolescence mandated that the white middle-class boy be “exposed to” a set of savage instincts and behaviors, the remainder of adolescence was to be devoted to the process of “recovering from” such exposure, with the earlier expression of the lower instincts now spurring the higher powers into existence, as was the case in the aforementioned transfiguring evolution of the tadpole’s tail into the frog’s legs. Now was the time when reason, judgment, and inhibition came to dominate the psychic life of the boy and when his mind became capable of “knitting together . . . all the new and old factors of personality” so as to maintain the proper tension between savage impulse and civilized self-control.⁴⁸ In discussions of mental illness and juvenile delinquency, Hall attested to the dangers wrought on normal psychological and social development if the regulative functions failed to emerge during this stage of life. Moving beyond a strictly hereditary view of deviance and its associations of “bad boy” behavior with ethnic and racial minorities and the working class, Hall claimed that all boys were at risk of going astray in this regard and all boys deserved assistance, ranging from sympathetic guidance to overt forms of surveillance and constraint, to prevent them from doing so. Even so, in his analysis, it was the civilized boy who was singled out as being most capable of “keeping alive and duly domesticating by culture the exuberant psychic faculties” of childhood and adolescence. In this way, the civilized boy would attain a “higher plateau” of individual existence and lead the way in humanity’s ongoing evolution toward a race of the “super-man.”⁴⁹

HALL’S “BUDDING GIRL” AS THE QUINTESSENTIAL AND PERPETUAL ADOLESCENT

Hall’s concept of adolescence described and dictated the civilized boy’s procurement of a male identity firmly established on the twin pillars of masculine virility and manly self-control. Per the requirements of the doctrine of recapitula-

tion, however, the route from savage boyhood to civilized manhood also necessarily entailed a movement through a life stage marked by a set of attributes of which the civilized female, who occupied the evolutionary rung just below that of the civilized male, was the chief exemplar. Thus, even as he volubly condemned the effeminization of modern life, reinvigorated earlier protests against identical coeducation, and resolutely dismissed women's claims for full social and political equality, Hall also positively ascribed to all adolescents such self-described "feminine" traits as physical and mental volatility, emotionality, altruism, and religiosity.⁵⁰ Woman, he worshipfully professed, represented youth "in the full meridian of its glory in all her dimensions and nature so that she is at the top of the human curve from which the higher super-man is to evolve."⁵¹ Biographer Dorothy Ross attributes Hall's efforts to reconcile femininity and adolescence to the influence of his individual psychological development and to his longing to challenge strict expectations for masculine sensibility and behavior in his own life. "Hall's development of a concept of adolescence," she writes, "was part of his solution—an extremely creative solution—to a set of personal conflicts which had been reinforced by the specialization of occupational roles and the rigidly differentiated sex roles of Victorian culture." Historian T. J. Jackson Lears places Hall's construct of an "androgynous" adolescence within the broad turn-of-the-century current of antimodernism, in which many artists and intellectuals sought release from the demands of a competitive, material, and inconstant world driven by "male ego ideals" by evoking an alternative vision of a nurturing, spiritual, and eternal "feminine principle."⁵² To these explanations, I would add the significance of the history of ideas about the teenage girl and, especially, the figurations of her development in late-nineteenth-century medical and educational discourse. While Hall's concept of adolescence had roots both in classical medicine and in romantic depictions of puberty and youth stretching back to Rousseau, the contemporary debates about the teenage girl's body, mind, and temperament also offered him a readily available and broadly recognizable language and set of conceptual frameworks through which to think and talk about adolescence in biological and psychological terms. Hall made ample use of these frameworks, frequently holding the girl up as the model for a particular adolescent attribute or behavior he was describing. He did so, however, while emphatically proclaiming the necessity of dichotomous sexual difference for evolutionary progress, as well as the primacy of the civilized male in facilitating racial advancement. The result was a concept of adolescence that broadened and then foreclosed certain possibilities in the boy's development, while deeming that development normative and superior, and that valorized and

then marginalized both the girl and her feminine attributes, within the context of developmental thought and the society in which she came of age.

One way that the girl's "dimensions and nature" exemplified adolescent development generally was in the dynamics of her physical growth. Drawing on a range of growth studies conducted from the 1870s to the 1890s, Hall declared adolescence to be the "awkward age" in development during which physical growth normatively proceeded in irregular, disproportionate, and discordant fashion.⁵³ Contrary to Clarke's claim that boys' bodies grew steadily and equally from childhood to maturity, with girls deviating from this supposedly more auspicious pattern, Hall discerned disharmony and even difficulty in the growth of both boys and girls. After a rapid period of growth during infancy, he explained, boys' and girls' height and weight increased slowly and evenly up to age 8 or 9, at which point several years of "slightly diminished growth" was inaugurated. This was then followed, at age 12 in girls and at age 14 in boys, by a "veritable outburst of physical growth" and by the asymmetrical growth of the various body parts during the years of adolescence.⁵⁴ The data on growth patterns gathered by physicians and physical anthropologists was given meaning by Hall by way of the recapitulation theory. From ages 8 to 12, growth was retarded because, at this age, the child was reliving "some long stationary period during which life had been pretty fully unfolded and could be led indefinitely and with stability and security." Growth then speeded up and became imbalanced just before adolescence as the child began to repeat an epoch of racial history described by Hall as "some ancient period of storm and stress when old moorings were broken and a higher level attained." Changes in the individual body of the adolescent, then, were effect, sign, and cause of the larger evolutionary imperative toward racial progress. Rhetorically wondering whether this "period of rapid growth [was] advantageous" or whether it would "be better if the curve of height and weight were a straight line, as . . . it had been generally supposed to be," Hall characterized physical growth in such a way as to claim adolescence as *the* key period of both peril and possibility in human development. Growing "part by part" or by "nascent periods" was, indeed, fraught with danger and rendered the adolescent helpless and vulnerable, "far more in the need of protection, physical care, moral and intellectual guidance" than was currently recognized. However, uneven growth also prevented stagnation and served as the stimulus for more advanced development as "structure and function, body and mind" continually strove to restore their lost equilibrium with one another.⁵⁵

Awkwardness in physical development explained a great deal about teenage boys, including their ungainliness, clumsiness, roughness, and even their poor

manners.⁵⁶ Even so, the growth spurt was deemed by Hall to be more pronounced and more consequential in the girl's development. It was also both more intriguing and more vexing. Thus, while recapitulation theory explained why rapid growth generally occurred just before puberty, further explanation was needed about its earlier manifestation in the female. Whereas Spencer and Jacobi had offered competing explanations about the relationship between individuation and genesis in the individual girl's growing body, Hall delved deeper into the history of the race to speculate about likely causes. Very early in the development of the species, he conjectured, females were most likely prematurely impregnated because of the "hypertrophied sex passion" in the male. This was followed, in savage life, by the creation of institutions that tended to delay fertilization, with the cell development and vitality that had once supported reproduction now turning back to somatic growth. Alternatively, given that the instinct for modesty was "strongly developed" in the individual female before the onset of sexual desire, more vigorous girls would have been most able to resist impregnation, "even in an age of animal violence," thereby passing their size and strength on to their female offspring and "helping man onto a higher plane of greater maturity."⁵⁷

Whatever the origin of the "interesting and challenging fact" of the earlier female growth spurt, though, girls experienced a greater measure of developmental disharmony because of it. "Hips, chest, and the reproductive system, and the instincts that go with them, constitute a far larger proportion of the girl's whole system in weight and function than is the case with boys," Hall declared. As it had for late-nineteenth-century opponents of coeducation, this meant that the girl's ability to develop capacities beyond her reproductive ones was comparatively "far more reduced" throughout the period of her adolescence, with the demands of the body reigning supreme during adult womanhood as well. Departing from Clarke, Hall warned that boys, too, had to be protected from overly taxing some "parts and functions" at the expense of others during the crucial teenage years. However, there was decidedly something wrong with the boy, in particular, in whom all developmental components were not ultimately brought into harmony and a higher "at-one-ment" was not finally achieved. As the better representatives of disharmony in physical development during adolescence, girls were thus also understood to be normatively pathological in their inability to overcome it. "The pubertal changes which take place in the male organs . . . have received far less attention than has been bestowed by morphologists, physiologists, and gynecologists upon those of the female," Hall readily admitted, "and the sympathetic reverberations of these changes upon the whole

organism are far less known." Hall suggested he was going to offer a much-needed corrective to past ignorance about the dynamics and influences of puberty in male development, and indeed, drew on analogies with the girl in doing so. He nonetheless also reaffirmed the crucial distinction that while puberty explained much of what happened to the boy during his teenage years, for the girl, it was the exclusive and all-encompassing determinant of the rest of her life story.⁵⁸

Storm and stress in the pubertal body mirrored and produced volatility in the adolescent mind and spirit, as well. "So, too, if the soul grows with every part of the body," Hall explained, "its development is not continuous, uniform, or proportionate, but with successive nodes, the earlier stages ever a little more strange and alien to the newer, like dimly remembered past lives to a transmigratationist."⁵⁹ With the flood of ancestral inheritance received at adolescence, there occurred a "loosening of the bonds between the manifold factors of our ego," as well as "a sudden and independent growth of single elements" in the personality that for a time were uncoordinated with and even engaged in a competitive struggle for survival against one another. Hall documented the recent research in psychiatry that revealed that for many young people the "all-sided mobilization" of old and new "psychic elements" at adolescence resulted in a wide range of psychoses and neuroses, including melancholia, mania, hysteria, anxiety, and moral perversities of various kinds. His larger goal, though, was to show that such morbid manifestations were "only exaggerated forms" of the psychological changes occurring during this period of life that was normally marked by "emotional strain" and even "repressed insanity."⁶⁰ According to Hall, all adolescents were engaged in an inner "strife of opposite moods" that rendered them alternatively hyperactive and lazy, euphoric and depressed, self-aggrandizing and full of self-doubt, selfish and altruistic, oriented toward solitude and sociability, sensitive and imperturbable, conservative and radical, wise and foolish. Adolescents were unstable, unpredictable, unreliable and largely incomprehensible, both to themselves and to the (nonexpert) adults around them.⁶¹ Moreover, the universal difficulties of this life stage were compounded by a mixture of hereditary predispositions (individual and racial) and by the pressures and demands of modern life. The more civilized the child, then, the more stressful the adolescence, since civilized adolescents had more hereditary influences to integrate and also were faced with the myriad of temptations, corruptions, and distractions abiding in an urban, industrial society. More than previous developmental thinkers, Hall deemed the storms and stresses of adolescence to be both inevitable and desirable and called for an educational regime that tolerated and even encouraged the

wide-ranging and often contradictory expression of adolescents' "multiplex personalities." For it was, he decreed, in the perturbations of the soul prevailing during this time that lay, also, the best possibility for a "new, larger, better consciousness" to emerge in the individual and to predominate in the race.⁶²

While Hall described girls' and boys' experiences with such traits as enthusiasm, self-affirmation, and bashfulness in sex-specific ways, he associated the broader emotional intensity and moodiness of adolescence with a feminine sensibility. Thus, in both the more diseased psychological states and the general temperament of adolescence, the girl again served as a most apt representative, with her awkwardness of soul described by Hall as "more tumultuous and also more subterranean" than that of the boy. "In the transition from the grub to the butterfly state," he further declared, "the female is most liable to become psychologically upset, because her reproductive organs and functions are not only larger, but the changes are more rapid."⁶³

The volatile changes in the girl's body and mind were also regularly recurring, with the menstrual cycle described by Hall as "one of nature's greatest rhythms," giving "an ebb and flow to all the tides of woman's inner life." Yet, in their vacillating moods and irregularity of activity (including the activity of the reproductive organs), boys, too, he noticed, recalled the ancient and female quality of being governed by the larger, rhythmic forces of nature, namely, those of the moon, the tides, and the seasons. "The spells of discomfort, distraction, irascibility, and depression in males thought to be of this [periodic] character are probably much more common than is generally supposed," Hall mused.⁶⁴

As in the case of the girl's physical development, though, the key difference arose with the girl's inability to move beyond the adolescent tendency toward emotional fluctuation, with one abiding characteristic of woman being her reliable inconsistency. "Each day of the twenty-eight [day cycle] she is a different being," Hall affirmed, "and the wide range of circumnutation which explores the pleasures and pains of life, its darkness and light, its depressive and exalted states, its hopes and fears, its sense of absolute dependence and independence, . . . reveals her as a more generic creature than man, less consistent than he is if we compare days or hours, more so if we compare months as the units of her life." The boy, in contrast, while also "navigat[ing] a choppy sea" during this stage of life when his mind was in its "generalized form" and, not incidentally, benefiting from doing so by psychologically exploring "the maximum area possible of human experience," at some point near the close of the adolescent period also took "the helm of his own being" into his own hands. Now leaving the girl behind in his capacity to exert the very highest human powers of rationality, self-

control, and self-determination, the boy alone succeeded in “striv[ing], fight[ing], and storm[ing]” all the way up the developmental trajectory to achieve the “mental unity” and “settled character” that were necessary if he were ultimately to break his way “into the kingdom of man.”⁶⁵

In addition to their more pronounced and lasting emotional volatility, girls also possessed a greater capacity for the deep feeling that constituted “the chief psychic ingredient” of the adolescent stage of life. According to Hall, civilization, with its overvaluation of the intellect and its insistence on emotional and social refinement, was deadening the individual’s capacity for any strong feeling, whether it was fear, anger, courage, joy, or love, leaving a “parched and bankrupt” heart in its wake.⁶⁶ Along with this indictment, though, he expressed optimism that the new psychology would serve as a key tool in rectifying the problem, as psychologists were now “coming to understand that what constitutes life is the intensity and the variety and scope of what we feel.” It was such feeling, Hall insisted, that made men, a process that necessarily entailed the young boy’s cathartic expression of the primitive, masculine passions of anger and aggression. But it was men of heart, men such as Calvin, Luther, and, most exemplarily, Jesus Christ, more so than men of physical strength or even men of intellect, whom Hall deemed to be true geniuses and to be most capable of making the sort of history that would advance human evolution to a higher plane. Although such men were admittedly exceptional, however, he repeatedly noted that ordinary woman, nearer to the race and more governed by its instincts, most fully embodied the feeling heart on which the very soundness of civilization so greatly depended. Indeed, she, “who was once thought soulless, now comes nearer to having two souls than does man.”⁶⁷

In her greater capacity to feel, the girl also more fully exemplified what for Hall were the highest moral capacities to emerge during the adolescent stage—sympathy, altruism, religiosity, and an inclination to serve others. At adolescence, he decreed, “life is no longer ego-centric, but altro-centric.”⁶⁸ In prescribing this mandate for adolescent development, Hall joined with a number of other intellectuals and reformers of his day in condemning the materialism and self-interest that he saw as the driving forces in modern society and expressing a yearning for a social community in which selfish individuals realized their organic connection to all beings and subordinated their disparate desires to the needs of the common good. “It is just this [sympathy],” he decried at some length in his autobiography, “that the criminal, the egoist, the profiteer, the irreconcilable who cannot compromise or do teamwork, the undesirable citizen, the man always insisting on his rights and forgetting that every right must be

created by a corresponding duty, the soulless corporation, the public-be-damned capitalist who regards labor as a commodity, the striker who feels no responsibility for the interests or comfort of the community—in a word the man who is dominated by selfish personal interests—lack.”⁶⁹ While both Locke and Rousseau dictated that the boy’s acquisition of virtue during his youth was essential for the stability and progress of civil society, political and scientific thought from the mid-eighteenth century onward had associated the capacity for feeling and selflessness almost exclusively with woman and her feminine nature. Hall both perpetuated and departed from this trend, singling out girls as models for emotionality, connectedness, compassion, and faith, while also emphasizing the imperative for such traits to be recognized and expressed in the boy’s development as well. That boys affected “stoical and callous ways” and expressed an “instinctive shame” of feeling pity and compassion during their youth testified not to the “bad quality” of such feeling, as conventional wisdom had it, Hall argued, but rather to its very strength as a force in their psychic lives. Data from child-study questionnaires investigating what children hoped to be and do and whom they most admired confirmed that in both sexes “moral qualities rise highest and also fastest just before and near puberty and continue to increase later yet.” Significantly, though, such studies also revealed that girls “far most” displayed an “increasing admiration of ethical and social qualities” throughout the teenage years.⁷⁰

As Hall explained it, it was the onset of the sex instinct at puberty that prompted the individual’s movement from the selfishness of childhood to the benevolence of adolescence. Here, he joined with such contemporary sexual romantics as Havelock Ellis and Swedish feminist and reformer Ellen Key in conceptualizing the sex instinct less in Freudian terms, as driven by the selfish desire for personal pleasure, than as motivated by love of (in order of ascending virtue) partner, offspring, community, the human race, nature, and the transcendent “absolute.”⁷¹ Thus, although expressing ample concern that pubertal sexuality might be sullied or led astray by pernicious environmental influences, Hall contended that in its natural state it was directed toward the higher moral purposes of reproduction, racial regeneration, and the organic connection of all being. In some of the most turgid passages in a tomb already laden with weighty prose, he so described the awakening of adolescent sexuality: “Life is now polarized, oriented, and potentialized. The soul is filled with a Titanism that would achieve a *vita nuova* upon a higher plateau, where the music of humanity is no longer sad but triumphant . . . Now the soul realizes the possibility of a new heaven and a new earth; that the highest dreams of human beatitude may be

real; that there is a *summum bonum* awaiting man on heights not yet scaled, and that erethism and its calentures are prophecies of a higher human estate . . . The flesh and the spirit are mated . . . Nature . . . is transcended in the soul's *natura naturata*, and the extra and supernatural organ of faith comes into possession of its kingdom."⁷² Deeming the middle teens to be the age of conversion "the world over, and at all periods of history and stages of civilization," Hall hereby linked the appearance of the sex instinct and the religious impulse together at adolescence. "Religion," he averred, "has no other function than to make this change [from "self-love" to "love of man"] complete, and the whole of morality may be well defined as life in the interest of the race, for love of God and love of man are one and inseparable." Because the maternal instinct preceded, and indeed helped to give rise to, the paternal instinct in the evolution of the race and because reproduction played a greater role in the life of the individual female, it was the girl who most perfectly manifested both the "humanistic altruism" and the religiosity that Hall prescribed as a normative developmental achievement of adolescence. Just as with the expression of feeling, he dictated that the boy follow *her* lead and come to heed that voice in his soul that called him to "find the joy of sacrifice, get only to give, live for others, [and] subordinate the will to live to love, or to offspring."⁷³

Hall's Christian millennialist vision of an organic community in which "the race, not the self" would reign supreme was, nonetheless, a decidedly racist, elitist, and antidemocratic view, with his cues here taken from the social thought of both Herbert Spencer and German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Indeed, in his writings on the "education of the heart," he deemed those most worthy of pity, and of the educational incentives and social opportunities that ought to follow from it, not the poor, sick, or criminal, but that small group of civilized boys who were uniquely poised to "be of most aid in ushering in the kingdom of the superman."⁷⁴ It was also ultimately a sexist vision, for however much Hall waxed poetic about the ways in which the girl supremely modeled the adolescent sensibility, he also established clear limits on her growth. Modifying Rousseau's characterization of the female as perennial child, Hall's final assessment of the girl's development was that she was both quintessential *and* perpetual adolescent. "Woman at her best never outgrows adolescence as man does," he asserted, "but lingers in, magnifies and glorifies this culminating stage of life with its all-sided interests, its convertibility of emotions, its enthusiasm, and zest for all that is good, beautiful, true, and heroic. This constitutes her freshness and charm, even in age, and makes her by nature more humanistic than man, more sympathetic and appreciative."⁷⁵ For this reason, Hall was comparatively less

ambivalent about the problem of maturity in relation to the development of the girl than he was in the case of the boy. Simply put, he did not have to regret her loss of his beloved adolescent sensibility because she never left it totally behind. As important, though, Hall also mourned the passage of the adolescent stage less in the girl because he was far less equivocal about dictating the singular and static outcome that her achievement of maturity, such as it was, was to entail—the manifestation of her sexual difference in the all-encompassing roles of wife and mother in the private domestic sphere.

Meanwhile, to assume his rightful place as a dynamic leader of evolutionary progress, the civilized boy had to be guided in growing through and then out of not only the savage proclivities of his childhood but also the feminine sensibilities of his adolescence. In this way, Hall endowed the white, western boy, specifically, with the best of all psychic worlds. In childhood, he was to relive the earliest stages of racial evolution, the virile attributes of savage masculinity, serving to inoculate him against the potentially enervating effects of civilization later in life. Then, with adolescence he assumed the more highly evolved traits of civilized femininity, which allowed him an even fuller range of expression of human emotion and morally equipped him to allay some of the worst excesses of modernity. While lamenting that growing up for the boy entailed a loss and a “forgetting” of his connection to the depth and breadth of both the primitive and feminine “collective soul,” Hall recognized that for better and for worse such a process could never be complete. “The conscious adult person is not a monad reflecting the universe,” he insisted, “but a fragment broken off and detached from the great world of soul, always maimed, defined by special limitations, like, yet different, from all others, with some incommensurability parting it off as something unique, well fitted to illustrate some aspects and hopelessly unable to exemplify or even know other regions in the cosmos of soul.”⁷⁶

Even so, whatever capacity Hall allowed for developing the fully mature, individuated, and self-actualizing ego, he required of and reserved for the civilized boy alone. For him, adolescence was not only the nascency period of the great bodily, emotional, and spiritual passions but also the time to assert an active, autonomous self into the world—the time to wander, to discover, and to experiment with new ways of knowing and being; to resist authority and to test his powers against others; to prove his individual strength and courage; to cultivate and exercise the intellect and the will in making wise, purposeful choices; to imagine a future particular to his unique talents and abilities; and to strive for greatness and recognition in his community.⁷⁷ The civilized adolescent boy emulated the girl in her awkwardness and vulnerability of body and soul, her intu-

itiveness and emotionality, and her compassion for others and her love of God. He also finally surpassed her because he alone faced the challenges and reaped the rewards of achieving what ultimately Hall and most twentieth-century psychologists deemed the supreme tasks of adolescent development—leaving home, choosing a vocation, fostering a unique individual identity, and, forging an autonomous self capable of preserving social order and facilitating progressive social change.

In a short story published in his 1920 collection of imaginative writings, *Recreations of a Psychologist*, Hall returned to the theme of a feminized adolescence, exploring its possibilities and limits in relation to the boy's development and, indirectly but no less significantly, its meaning for female development.⁷⁸ "How Johnnie's Vision Came True" is the tale of the 14-year-old Johnnie Smith, a "sturdy," "old-fashioned," and "already very useful" farm boy who is bored and resentful of the "monotony and drudgery" of his rural life and in whom the seeds of both ambition and love are beginning to germinate in his soul. Understood by his mother, with whom he has "heart to heart" talks, Johnnie is also contemptuous of his father, whose predictable path in life he is determined not to follow. One hot summer afternoon, he takes his new shotgun and makes his way, in typical adolescent fashion, by "alternate sauntering, resting and steep climbing" up the nearby Mount Hatch, from which he surveys "all the world he knew and far more" with "a vague unique sense of exaltation."⁷⁹ On the mountaintop, he first calls on the sun, Hall's symbol for the adolescent boy's masculine intellect and energy, to help him to understand life and to live it actively, deliberately, and gloriously. "Shine into and through me," he begs. "I want to know all the world as you do. You never saw a shadow. You could not. And all I know is shadow darkening down into black ignorance. Don't set, but rise in my soul." In a fit of ecstasy, Johnnie then "dedicate[s] himself to the sun as the loftiest, biggest, most dynamic thing he knew." The sun, however, does set, and during the period of sleep that ensues, Johnnie next finds himself kneeling before the moon, from which radiates first a vision of his own mother and then of a more generic female figure resembling the Virgin Mary. He calls out to the "queen of the night," telling her that he is homesick for her and feeling powerfully that she has a secret to impart, not only to him, but through him, to the entire world. Gazing on her with rapture and reverence, Johnnie "felt that she was wise in life and had known its chief joys and sorrows, its high lights and shadows; that without the lore of pedants or books she understood the world and, best of all, understood him." Together, these female visions convey to him a deep feeling of peace and calm that henceforth never leaves him, promise that all of the ideals now born into his

heart will one day be realized, and vow "sometime, somewhere, when the hour is ripe," to return to him once again.⁸⁰

After having passed through this experience of "great crisis" and "conversion," Johnnie returns to his home, as a "man" with a "mission in the world." He does not know his precise purpose in life, although, with his gun left behind on the mountain, he is sure it is not to become the "great hunter and frontiersman" of his boyhood revelries. Following instead the humanistic inclinations aroused in him by his lunar visions, he pursues interests in music, novel writing, and poetry. He finally goes to college and, "by dint of hard, absorbing effort," becomes a respected professor of literature and a member of Congress, as well as a husband in a loveless marriage and a father of children who "grew up well, married and left him." Abruptly advancing the story through the details of Johnnie's adulthood to his status as a widower at age 65, Hall tells us that his life "had after all not been satisfactory, successful though it seemed to others." It is at this point in his old age that Johnnie encounters a young woman who is "in living flesh and blood the identical lady of his pubescent hilltop vision." Struggling between his "judgment" and his "desires," Johnnie decides to pursue her and comes to find out that she, too, "evolved a double and counterpart" in her youth that represented her "idea of manhood," of which Johnnie is the embodied version. Determining that their "doubles [had] been kept apart long enough," Johnnie and the woman marry and in so unifying "senescence and adolescence" commence to pioneer a new kind of marriage in which "love chronicles will not end but begin at the church door."⁸¹

Johnnie's passage through a stage of feminized adolescence clearly offers him possibilities for feeling and being in the world that a strictly masculine sensibility cannot afford. In opening his heart to the "unutterable love and yearning" imparted to him by the female visions of his youth and in later marrying the woman who embodies them, Johnnie achieves both a wholeness and a happiness that his father's example, worldly success, and the fulfillment of his manly duties to family and state cannot provide him.⁸² And yet, however much Hall finds wanting in the achievements and responsibilities of Johnnie's adulthood, it is nonetheless significant that it is he, alone, who exercises a deliberate, individual effort in carrying them forth. Indeed, we learn even less of the adult activities of the woman whom he marries, who, despite her own admission of longings to express the masculine qualities of her self, stands as a generic representative of the feminine sensibility of adolescence, differentiated not even by a name as common as Johnnie's. The resolution of the story in marriage, too, conveys Hall's mixed messages about the meaning of a feminized adolescence for girls

and boys. Metaphorically, the marriage of Johnnie and the woman boldly represents the union of the masculine and feminine parts of the self and suggests that the bisexual/bigendered nature of the soul must be honored for healthy psychological development in the individual and also for the ongoing progressive evolution of civilization. Literally, though, it is still a marriage, however modern, in which the masculine and the feminine complement, rather than fuse with and radically transform, one another through the side-by-side placement of self-contained opposites.

A "NEW AND BETTER WOMANHOOD":
HALL'S MAKING OF THE MODERN ADOLESCENT GIRL

Hall's depiction of the civilized girl as the archetypal feminized adolescent and his extension of that sensibility as a temporary developmental phase to be passed through by her brother relied on traditional Victorian conceptions of the feminine to offer up an expansive version of American manhood that seemed to Hall to be better suited to the modern age. His efforts to reconcile femininity and adolescence in other ways, however, also pointed the way toward a more modern set of concerns related to the girl's development, as well, even if his own resolution of these ultimately reiterated conventional imperatives for dichotomous sexual difference and separate social spheres. One way that Hall contributed to the construction of a more modern adolescent girl was in casting the crisis of female adolescence in at least partially new terms. Nineteenth-century physicians had deemed the teenage years to be dangerous and stressful ones for the girl because of the essentially hazardous nature of female puberty and warned of the dire consequences that would befall both girl and society if the onset of the reproductive function was not managed properly. Hall repeated similar claims and concerns about the physical difficulties inherent in becoming a woman, but he also dwelled more pointedly on the psychological struggles the civilized girl faced in assuming a feminine gender identity and conforming to the biological mandates of growing up female in a changing world.

Thus, from child-study questionnaires that polled girls and boys about their aspirations for their adult lives, Hall discovered that girls had more ideals than boys and, most significantly, that the majority of girls chose male figures as their adult role models, which he interpreted as signs of their greater "discontent at their lot." Adolescent girls were also, he noticed, susceptible to a kind of inward anger that was the result of the "thwarting of purpose and expectation, limitations of freedom, a sense of injustice, [and] invasions or repression of the self."

Such feelings of anger, he added, were often the cause of "vasomotor disturbances" that were especially likely to occur during and have deleterious effects on menstruation.⁸³ In addition, older adolescent girls were particularly inclined toward a "pathos of unrealized hopes and ideals," which attending college could postpone, but never allay altogether.⁸⁴ "In our environment," Hall averred, "there is a little danger that this age [of 18 or 20] once well past there will slowly arise a slight sense of aimlessness or lassitude, unrest, uneasiness, as if one were almost unconsciously feeling along the wall for a door to which the key was not at hand. Thus some lose their bloom and, yielding to the great danger of young womanhood, slowly lapse to an anxious state of expectancy, or they desire something not within their reach, and so the diathesis of restlessness slowly supervenes." Hall further ruminated about the causes and effects of female dissatisfaction in the account of his mother he provided in his autobiography. In reviewing a series of entries from his mother's religious diaries written as a young wife and as a mother, Hall was surprised to find almost no direct mention of her husband or children. Instead, she wrote of her struggles to develop her self and follow her own inclinations, which for her meant nourishing her relationship with God, in the face of her all encompassing domestic duties on the family's mid-nineteenth-century Massachusetts farm. "I sometimes feel burdened with care," Abigail Hall admitted, "and think that with less, and consequently more time for self-communing, for the cultivation of the heart and intellect, I could serve God better and enjoy his service more." Hereby did Hall recognize that his mother was motivated by "an impulse to keep on growing" and a "longing for a larger, fuller life" that might indeed have been thwarted by the "excessive domestic duties" she was required to perform.⁸⁵

For Hall, as for previous developmental thinkers, puberty marked the onset of the sexual difference. One of the most important tasks of the teenage years was securing biologically determined, dichotomous gender identities, roles, responsibilities, and relationships that would govern the man and woman throughout adult life. More than others, however, he also conceived of adolescence as a plastic moment of personality formation during which gender identity was not fully organized or integrated, when the boy or girl might inadvertently fail to achieve or might deliberately resist and reject the destiny set for him or her by nature.⁸⁶ "Not only in the body, but in the psyche of childhood," he explained, "there are well-marked stages in which male and female traits, sensations, and instincts struggle for prepotency. Here, too, the instincts peculiar to the opposite sex may not vanish as they normally should so that we have bisexual souls." Hall's positing of a feminized adolescence for the boy heightened the danger that

“instincts in the male predominantly feminine” might fail to be “relegated to the background” of the psyche as they properly should, therefore threatening the boy’s degeneration into inversion and homosexuality.⁸⁷ However, it also worked to mitigate this threat by allowing the boy a designated period of life during which he might cathartically explore, express, and duly outgrow the feminine aspects of his nature. As was the case with so many other attributes of adolescence, gender identity confusion was more prevalent and more prominent in the case of the girl, who, Hall acknowledged, was far more likely to assimilate boys’ ways during her youth than vice versa. Although recognizing the psychological strain caused by living in a society in which, “after ages of seclusion, woman has suddenly emerged into a larger life than her heredity prepared her for,” however, Hall nonetheless expressed very little tolerance for the girl’s experimentation with and integration of masculine sensibility and behavior in the development of her self.⁸⁸ Thus, in completing his analysis of his mother’s discontent, he concluded that to her credit, she eventually settled into “more complacency with herself” and accepted that the best way to satisfy her desire for self-fulfillment through service to God was to embrace the role of the true woman and do her duty to others in her immediate family. In contrast, for too many modern girls, he noticed disapprovingly, “the divorce between the life preferred and that demanded by the interests of the race is often absolute.” This widespread dissatisfaction was giving rise to such aimlessness, restlessness, and emptiness among young women, he lamented, that “it seems that the female character [is being] threatened with disintegration.”⁸⁹

Hall declared that the adolescent girl’s discontent with the requirements of womanhood was sad and even unnatural, although admittedly very common in the modern age.⁹⁰ Freud would go further than this to deem the struggle to secure gender identity—and heterosexual object choice—to be universal, normative, and motivated by the young child’s discovery of anatomical sexual difference in his theory of the Oedipus complex, which he fully elaborated in his major psychoanalytic writings of the 1920s.⁹¹ For both, though, the solution to this psychological crisis was entirely the same. During adolescence, the girl was to overcome her envy of male prerogatives and complete her development according to nature’s intention, by coming into full knowledge and acceptance of her distinct domestic destiny. More than Freud, who consigned the achievement of mature femininity to the girl’s recognition of her lack of a penis and her realization of her essential inferiority, Hall celebrated this acceptance as the key to her own personal happiness and to the unique contribution she was to make to the advancement of civilization. Identical coeducation was such a problem for

him, then, not only because it depleted the physical reserves the girl needed to fulfill her destiny but also because it obscured the source of her true power and worth to her self. Indeed, one of the effects of modern life was that it allowed what were for Hall self-evident truths about the girl's nature to remain deep in the recesses of her unconscious, which required effort by the psychologist to get her to uncover, admit to, and embrace. "The more we know of the contents of the young woman's mind the more clearly we see that every thing conscious and unconscious in it points to [maternity] as the true goal of the way of life," he asserted. "Even if she does not realize it, her whole nature demands first of all children to love . . . and perhaps a little less, a man whom she heartily respects and trusts to strengthen and perhaps protect her in discharging this function . . . All ripe, healthful, and womanly woman desire this, and if they attain true self-knowledge confess it to themselves, however loath they may be to do so to others . . . Nothing can ever quite take its place, without it they are never completely happy, and every other satisfaction is a little vicarious. To see this is simple common sense and to admit it only common honesty."⁹² Early-twentieth-century feminist psychologists would disagree. Some rejected the premise that girls were inherently dissatisfied with their femininity, while others insisted that the problem arose not from within the female body or psyche but from an out-moded set of social expectations for women that could and should be changed. Such debates over whether, why, and with what consequences the achievement of femininity was fraught with difficulty for the girl constituted an initial, not the final, word on the matter and would become a mainstay in the psychological literature on female development of the twentieth century.⁹³

Hall also helped to formulate a more modern vision of the adolescent girl by raising the possibility that along with the maturation of the reproductive organs and the corresponding salience of sexual difference at puberty there arose in her normal feelings of sexual desire.⁹⁴ As in the case of the boy, Hall's conceptualization of female sexuality also stood suspended between two centuries. Such straddling of the old and the new was not unique to Hall but rather was emblematic of the earliest intellectual current that rode the wave away from what Freud would term the "civilized morality" of the nineteenth century toward the sexual "liberalism" that would characterize the twentieth century. The Victorian sexual ethos encompassed by Freud's phrase functioned as an integrated system of economic, social, and religious norms that were to be instilled opportunely during childhood by clergymen, parents, teachers, and physicians. It described models of masculinity and femininity rooted in the ideology of separate spheres and prescribed a regimen of sexual hygiene that required reticence, purity of

thought, conservation of energy, and self-control. More specifically, men and pubescent boys were understood in this scheme to be driven by aggressive sexual urges that could and must be regulated by the internal mechanisms of the will and the conscience. Women and pubescent girls were conceived of as passionless, as naturally pure in mind and body and thoroughly passive during the consummation of the sexual act. Prepubescent children of both sexes were thought to be paragons of sexual ignorance, moral innocence, and spiritual goodness. As one facet of the nineteenth-century white middle-class struggle to define itself conceptually and to secure and maintain material prosperity, civilized morality pointed the way for men toward individual achievement and economic success in a competitive marketplace; for women toward moral superiority and a measure of control over sexual relations within the domestic sphere; and for both sexes, adult and child, toward physical health and spiritual salvation.⁹⁵

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, the social context that had given rise to civilized morality was being rapidly transformed. The same economic, cultural, and social changes that were reshaping the meanings and experiences of gender roles and identities were, concomitantly, reworking Victorian sexual norms, as well. Changes such as the growth of a consumer economy that depended on the buyer's desire for immediate gratification and personal pleasure, the massive influx of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, and the migration of African Americans from the rural South to northern cities threatened the Victorian sexual order by moving commercialized sex from its previous underground location into the worlds of mainstream advertising and entertainment and by making alternative forms of family patterns and sexual mores far more visible than in the past.⁹⁶ The challenge to female sexual purity, in particular, initially came from working-class girls experimenting with new forms of heterosocial relations on the job and in their leisure time and from middle-class Bohemian women seeking to emancipate women in all areas of life. During World War I and into the 1920s, middle-class teenage girls began to self-consciously fashion their own version of a sexualized female self, attending to and displaying their bodies in new ways, talking more openly about sex, and engaging in such formerly taboo practices as petting and necking.⁹⁷

At this transitional moment, Hall presented a concept of adolescence that legitimized some new sexual manners and mores for white middle-class girls as well as boys, while also managing to preserve many of the key tenets of the older sexual order. He drew on and helped to garner acceptance for Freud's emphasis on the fundamental role of sexuality in human life, as well as his attention to the maintenance of the proper balance between the expression of the sexual impulse

and its sublimation and control. Even more than Freud, Havelock Ellis paralleled the tone and content of Hall's depictions of the sexuality of the "budding girl."⁹⁸ Recognized by historians as a "central figure" in the emergence of a modern sexual ethos, Ellis has been credited with leading the way in articulating both the transformative and the conservative aspects of that ethos's attitudes about female sexuality.⁹⁹ As part of that ethos, Ellis helped to pioneer a modern standard for female adolescent sexuality, specifically. He acknowledged the teenage girl's sexual appeal and even recognized the possibility for her experience of sexual pleasure, while also posing a new set of dilemmas about what this implied for the manifestation of sexual autonomy, responsibility, and danger during the period of her development into adult womanhood.

Ellis's most important work, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, consisted of seven volumes, six of which were published between 1890 and 1910.¹⁰⁰ Making the case for the scientific study of "normal" sexuality, this work also reset the bounds of normal sexual experience to encompass enjoyment, variety, expressiveness, and reasonable restraint, as well as the gradual development of the sex instinct during childhood. Ellis both drew on the hierarchical assumptions of nineteenth-century evolutionary thought and anticipated the more egalitarian inclinations of early-twentieth-century cultural anthropology. Thus, the multitudinous comparisons of sexual attitudes and behaviors across cultures referred to throughout the *Studies* reasserted the primacy of western civilization, although now with a marked reversal from earlier sexual ideology. In this series of works intended to valorize the influence of the sexual impulse in individual human development and collective social life, the sexuality of savages was now explained to be *less* developed, in both quantity and quality, than among civilized peoples. However, Ellis also used cross-cultural comparison, along with the case from animal behavior, to further the notion of an essential, "universal" sexuality, hereby promulgating the idea of a singular and common "human" nature. This reasoning about race made possible the bolder assertions about gender in the *Studies*. The notion that the sex impulse had actually increased with civilization allowed him to extend its prerogatives to white middle-class girls and women by countering prevailing anxieties that female sexual expression of any kind was a threat to evolutionary progress. At the same time, Ellis's acknowledgement of a shared human nature across racial types also enabled him to champion unequivocally the biological, intellectual, and social equivalence of the two sexes, even as he continued to explore as a central focus in his analysis the meanings and implications of sexual difference.¹⁰¹

As did the Victorian physicians and moralists who came before them, turn-of-

the-century sexologists conceived of sexuality as a central component of gender identity. That is, what it meant to be a man or a woman was reflected in and constituted by male and female sexual nature, respectively.¹⁰² Ellis helped to break new ground in this regard by discerning the sexual impulse in man and woman to be both quantitatively similar and qualitatively different. According to Ellis, a vibrant, abundant female sexuality found its source in woman's unique capacity for maternal love and creation, which he exalted as essential for the emergence and ongoing progressive evolution of civilization. Also modern in his analysis was his entertainment of the possibility that sexuality was a gradually developmental phenomenon and his concomitant attention to the relational unfolding of sexual desire and gender identity over the course of the life cycle. Quoting the gynecologist Braxton Hicks on the appearance of the sex instinct during infancy and childhood, Ellis gestured toward what would come to constitute one of the more contentious claims of twentieth-century sexology. Nonetheless, he still maintained puberty as the more meaningful originating moment, if not the absolute cause, of both sexual desire and gender difference: "I venture to think . . . that those who have much attended to children will agree with me in saying that, almost from the cradle, a difference can be seen in manner, habits of mind, and in illness [of boys and girls], requiring variations in their treatment. The change is certainly hastened and intensified at the time of puberty; but there is, even to an average observer, a clear difference between the sexes from early infancy, gradually becoming more marked up to puberty. That sexual feelings exist [it would be better to say "may exist"] from earliest infancy is well known, and therefore this function does not depend upon puberty, though intensified by it . . . The changes of puberty are all of them dependent on the primordial force which, gradually gathering in power, culminates in the perfection both of form and of the sexual system, primary and secondary."¹⁰³ Such an analysis marked an important difference from Freud, who, in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, shockingly contended that the girl and the boy were more alike than different in early childhood, not because of their shared sexual innocence, as nineteenth-century developmental thinkers had it, but because they both possessed an aggressive, selfish, pleasure-seeking, "masculine" sexual impulse, which found expression through the male and female child's manipulation of the "homologous" organs of the penis and the clitoris, respectively. Suggested by Freud here, and fully developed in his subsequent writings on penis envy and the Oedipus complex, was the contention that the link between the sexual impulse and the reproductive imperative in the girl was only established during adolescence, the result of a complex psychological struggle that ultimately entailed the

renunciation of her original sexual/gendered nature.¹⁰⁴ For Ellis, rather, the presence of a "primordial force" of gender-specific sexual sensation in girls and boys unfolding from infancy onward proclaimed the equivalence of capacity for sexual feeling in both sexes, while also positing the permanence of a distinctive feminine essence that was timelessly rooted in female nature.

Ellis's consideration of the potential existence of the sexual instinct in young children notwithstanding, it was the manifestation of sexual desire in the pubertal girl that he offered up as primary evidence for his claims for the existence of the normal sexual impulse in adult women. "How natural the sexual impulse is in women, whatever difficulties may arise in regard to its complete gratification," he asserted, "is clearly seen when we come to consider the frequency with which in young women we witness its more or less instinctive manifestations." Moreover, these manifestations "not only occur with most frequency in young girls, but, contrary to the common belief, they seem to occur chiefly in innocent and unperverted girls." Ellis did recognize that the "common belief" previously held about girls' natural purity had not gone entirely unchallenged before his own investigations into the matter, and he pointed to earlier medical sources that mentioned the appearance of sexual desire in girls as one of the normal signs of puberty.¹⁰⁵ Whatever his judiciousness in this regard, though, he largely fashioned his own rendering of the normal adolescent girl as a sexual being as marking a break from the older sexual order, which, in many important ways, it did. In fact, what was most novel about Ellis's depiction of the adolescent girl was not simply his acknowledgment of her sexual desire but rather his attempt to join together this recognition with the more widely held assumption about her essential purity, so as to constitute a set of uneasily corresponding, as opposed to mutually exclusive, attributes of female adolescent psychosexual development.

In his discussion of "the evolution of modesty," Ellis made the case for the concomitance of innocence and sexual abandonment during female adolescence. Modesty, he explained, was "the chief secondary sexual character of women on the psychical side," which originated from an ancient organic tension in the female psyche between a fear of male sexual violence and a need to rouse male sexual attraction. A double-edged trait, it encompassed both sexual awareness and repulsion. Understanding modesty as an ontogenetic, as well as a phylogenetic, phenomenon, Ellis maintained that during childhood girls naturally lacked this trait because they also were largely lacking in consciousness of sexual desire. Civilized adult women were responsible for putting modesty in the service of refining the rituals and emotions of romantic love, but, unlike primitive women, they also ideally abandoned the more rigid elements of the trait that undermined

rationality, artistic expression, and personal pleasure. It was, then, during giggling, blushing, virginal adolescent girlhood when modesty reached its fullest flowering, with its greatest psychic implications. Thus did Ellis's modern adolescent girl fluctuate between a "shrinking reticence" that underscored her sexual innocence and vulnerability and a sexual precocity that at moments even surpassed the boldness and intensity of the supremely aggressive teenage boy.¹⁰⁶ The girl's psychic vacillation matched Ellis's own, and that of a culture beginning to witness profound changes in the sexual behaviors of girls from across the social spectrum. In the same breath, then, Ellis acknowledged that "[t]he girl at puberty is usually less keenly and definitely conscious of her sexual nature than the boy . . . [Yet,] [e]ven in the matter of conscious sexual impulse the girl is often not so widely different from her brother."¹⁰⁷ Legitimizing and promulgating the mixed messages the mass media and consumer culture were beginning to send to teenage girls, which impelled them to foster their sexual desirability (if not their desire), on the one hand, while continuing to function as the arbiters of sexual morality, on the other, Ellis decreed the period of female adolescence to be fundamentally shaped by the emotional instability produced by the concurrent influence of these two potent forces in the body and the psyche.

Ironically, what Ellis presented as one of the more "liberating" of his contributions—that the girl's essential sexual passivity and naiveté were complemented by normal feelings of desire—turned out to be an approach that tended to reduce the girl almost entirely to her sexually charged innocence. Throughout the *Studies*, Ellis waxed romantic about the psychic, spiritual, and even somatic potential of sexual energy to foster development in the individual and promote progress in the culture. His optimistic interpretation that sexuality was a powerful force that could be transformed into other forms of positive energy was, however, distinctly gendered. Thus, he understood the generative process of sublimation to be a uniquely male phenomenon. The containment of female sexual energy, it seemed, was limited to girls' natural inclination toward an internal reserve and because of an array of negative external inducements, toward repression as well. Although coeducation opponents worried about the possibility that the adolescent girl's application of her newly acquired sexual energy to purposes other than the development of her reproductive organs could undermine future maternal function, Ellis was more interested in establishing that such energy was diffused throughout both her body and mind. "A number of converging facts," he pointed out, "tend to indicate that the sexual sphere is larger, and more potent in its influence on the organism, in women than in men."¹⁰⁸ Less likely than the boy to express her sexual energy in spontaneous

sexual behavior and also less likely to transform it into autonomous, nonsexual, creative action, the girl was nonetheless more likely to be thoroughly influenced by her sexual nature, though this was often largely unbeknown to herself and to those adults who ended up utterly bewildered by the unpredictable moods and behaviors marking her adolescence.

Perhaps the most illuminating illustration of the contradictory implications this view of sexuality held for the girl can be found in Ellis's discussion of adolescent dreams. The phenomenon of nocturnal emissions had long been viewed as one of the few visible signs of the onset of male puberty. Ellis examined the recent scientific studies on the topic to conclude that from a medical and psychological point of view, this form of autoeroticism was both common and normal in boys and men and was reflective of the spontaneous and focused nature of the male sexual impulse. The erotic dreams that usually accompanied nocturnal emissions were, Ellis noted, comparatively rare among adolescent girls, and when they did occur, they were much more "irregular, varied, and diffused." Moreover, unlike boys, whose waking life was largely unaffected by erotic dreams, girls rather profoundly felt the influences of such dreams on their conscious actions and emotions, and the effects sometimes confused their perception of reality.¹⁰⁹ Much more widespread than these erotic night dreams among girls, though, was their greater tendency to engage in reverie or daydreaming during their waking life. Ellis admitted that this "very common and important form of auto-eroticism" had thus far attracted little attention among scientists, and he himself did much to legitimize girls' conscious erotic fantasies as a topic worthy of study. In addition, his interpretation of this phenomenon suggested that in daydreaming, girls became the agents in their own erotic development and the authors and subjects of their own sexual life stories. Nonetheless, Ellis presented his daydreaming adolescent girl as a predominantly passive figure, who whiled away otherwise productive hours consumed by the imaginative pleasures of love and romance.¹¹⁰ With his sexual energies more efficiently focused, compartmentalized, and channeled, the boy awakened from his erotic night dreams refreshed and ready to engage in autonomous creative activity. The girl, in contrast, more constantly coped with a diffuse sexual energy that impinged on her thought and conduct in a vague, but all-encompassing, fashion. Now sexual as well as innocent, the adolescent girl Ellis described was thus freer to claim a passionate nature, indeed, in such a manner and to such a degree that it was this facet of her self that trumped all other aspects of her personality.

Ellis was not unaware of the ambiguous consequences his interpretation of

female adolescent sexuality held, if less for modern girls themselves than for the society in which they came of age. One possibility, he acknowledged, was that a general acceptance of youthful female sexuality could lead some abnormal minds to overeroticize barely pubertal girls, to the detriment of the distinct sort of "sexual charm" girls at this age were meant to contribute to the culture.¹¹¹ Other implications of his analysis posed additional dilemmas for the treatment of the adolescent girl in modern times. Ellis made the case that once it was recognized that the sexual impulse held such profound sway over boys and girls alike, adolescents of both sexes had the right not only to an information-based sex education but also an erotic education as well. "Even in the great revival of sexual enlightenment now taking place around us," Ellis lamented, "there is rarely even the faintest recognition that in sexual enlightenment the one thing essentially necessary is a knowledge of the art of love." If informed and skilled, he further argued, girls as well as boys had the right and the responsibility to make autonomous decisions about their sexuality. Age-of-consent legislation, especially those laws that set the age at which a girl could legally agree to a sexual relationship in the upper teenage years, therefore visited an injustice on the adolescent girl. "To foster in a young woman who has long passed the epoch of puberty the notion that she has no responsibility in the guardianship of her own body and soul," Ellis decried, "is out of harmony with modern feeling, as well as unfavorable to the training of women for the world."¹¹² Also "out of harmony with modern feeling" (though how "unfavorable" for women and girls would remain open for debate) was the habit of sympathizing with girls who reported cases of violent sexual assault. Once girls were recognized as sexual beings, Ellis suggested, their role in fabricating such accounts or initiating sexual encounters also always had to be considered.¹¹³ Was the adolescent girl to be perceived primarily as a sexual actor or a sexual victim? As responsible for her own sexual self-management and self-control or as needing the external protection of others? As entitled to express feelings of sexual desire or merely her sexual desirability to others? Ellis's conceptualizations of the modern girl's psychosexual development raised a set of new and vexing questions with which the culture would be wrestling for some time to come.

Hall's appraisal of the sexuality of the budding girl kindled similar complications. Ellis and Hall were avid devotees of one another. Ellis peppered his writings with references to and quotations from Hall's works, and he recognized Hall as an important authority on the science of child development.¹¹⁴ Hall, in turn, was an enthusiast of Ellis's, with *Adolescence* conveying a similar spirit of sexual idealism as that radiating from the *Studies*. Like Ellis, Hall emphasized the con-

nection between the maturation of the reproductive organs at puberty, the establishment of sexual difference, and the awakening of heterosexual desire. "There is," he contended, "great reason to look to sex for the key to far more of phenomena of body and soul at this [stage of adolescence] as at other periods of life, than we had hitherto dreamed of in our philosophy." Also like Ellis, he contended that because the reproductive organs were "both more inward and relatively larger in size and function," girls were, perhaps, even more susceptible to the "sentiments of strange, nameless yearning, aimless unrest, moments of rapture and fullness of life and joy abounding" that characterized the emergence of the sex instinct at adolescence. Thus, in his discussion of periodicity, he suggested that it was normal for "the desire and the flow [to] coincide in time," but that such a possibility had been perverted early in the evolutionary process by primitive aversions to and superstitions about menstruation, which had led to undue repressions of the female sexual instinct.¹¹⁵ He also noted that adolescent girls were, for a time, more sexually forward than boys, deeming this behavior "a rudiment of the age when woman was the active agent in domesticating man," responsible for holding him "by her own attractions" to his paternal responsibilities "in the long ages that preceded marriage which clenched these obligations." "On this view," he concluded, "woman must once have had courtship proclivities for a prolonged period after as well as before motherhood."¹¹⁶

In making such claims, Hall joined Ellis in both formulating the modern expectation that adolescent girls were sexual beings and in begging new questions about the limits of youthful female sexual energy and expression. For his part, Hall assured that the girl's sexual feelings were kept in check by a "deep-seated" female tendency toward "anatomical, physiological, and psychological modesty," which enabled her to fulfill her role as domesticator of male sexuality in the evolutionary process of sexual selection. "All the backfish does may be directly calculated to provoke proposals," he allowed, "but it is at the same time so unconscious that if anything approaching a tender declaration came, she would draw back frightened lest she had betrayed her heart; and rather than do this she would prefer to die on the spot." Even when she seemed to be taking an active role as sexual pursuer of man, it was always to the end of family formation and to the fulfillment of her self-defining maternal function.¹¹⁷ An advocate of sex education in the public high school, Hall nonetheless fell far short of Ellis's calls for training the young in the "art of love." He did, however, obliquely encourage another kind of female sexual agency by contending that girls needed to be taught how to protect themselves by being made aware "of the commonest wiles and arguments used for their betrayal." He also hoped they might learn to

weigh the “risks, dangers and degrees of permissible liberty” they assumed as both they and society came into a recognition of their sexual nature. Even so, Hall also directly insisted that what girls most needed to gain from sex education was “hygienic instruction concerning their monthly regimen” and, supremely, insight into the meaning of that function and the feelings of “yearning” and “rapture” that accompanied its onset so that they would be sure to recognize and to realize the ultimate purpose toward which their future life was aimed.¹¹⁸

With an even greater measure of comfort and confidence than in his treatment of female adolescent sexuality (although related to his endorsement of the adolescent girl’s desirability), Hall also sanctioned other psychological traits and social behaviors that nineteenth-century architects of girlhood of all persuasions had deemed to be incompatible with the achievement of their idealized versions of Victorian womanhood. Hall expected the civilized girl to assume the guise of the true woman early on in her adolescence by acquiring and modeling such attributes as piety, selflessness, maternal feeling, and compassion. However, whereas such diverse thinkers as Blackwell, Clarke, Duffey, and Jacobi had decried the girl’s inclination toward “precocious” sensibilities and behaviors, including her attraction to fashion, her capricious appetite, her longing for social intercourse and excitement, and her indulgence in sentimental reveries and states of “morbid sensitivity,” as detrimental to her physical, psychological, and moral growth (albeit for very different reasons), Hall now rendered these orientations to be largely benign and thoroughly charming attributes of adolescent girlhood. Indeed, he deemed their manifestation to be essential for the girl’s development into the sort of woman required by the modern age. Initially, in “The Budding Girl,” and even more emphatically in his subsequent “Flapper Americana Novissima,” published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1922, Hall self-consciously lent scientific legitimacy to manners and mores that middle-class teenage girls had been experimenting with for some time, largely in the context of their school experiences, and that the mass media and commercial advertisers were concurrently engaged in representing and selling to girls and to the culture at large.¹¹⁹ His “objective and concrete” voice of science also, however, offered ample assurance that the modern adolescent girl’s ways of being did not portend any fundamental change in woman’s domestic identity, role, or status and, indeed, served to contain the possibilities for female adolescent development within a set of parameters that were decidedly new and remarkably familiar.¹²⁰

“What greater joy has life to offer,” Hall marveled in prescribing the daily pursuits of the modern adolescent girl, than “just going to school and coming home again on a fine day, loitering along for an hour or two, strolling by

roundabout ways to take in new sights and with other girls, looking at shop windows, enjoying all the sights of the street and of companionship and of freedom, hearing and telling all the news." Such girls, he further elaborated, normatively possessed a "clothes consciousness" that was rooted in the necessities of sexual selection and was borne out by statistics garnered from child-study questionnaires that revealed that many teenage girls for a time planned to become dressmakers or milliners. While her taste tended to be "rather loud" and completely lacking in "a sense of fitness of place, occasion, time of day, or season, or weather," it was, Hall declared, entirely developmentally appropriate that she should seek to express it. Likewise with her appetite, which was "full of whims, freaks, and niftiness" that were, he advised, better recognized as essential to her nature and at least partially indulged at home, rather than dismissed or opposed outright. A highly imitative creature, the adolescent girl was also "vulnerable to scores of fads" adopted by her peers, who dominated her supremely social existence and exerted the most significant influence on her "little store of habits, tastes, viewlets, on life, character, conduct, [and] morals."¹²¹ As much as the adolescent girl was sensitive to her girlfriends' opinions and devoted to cultivating their affections, however, Hall also cautioned that she was to be expected on occasion to belie the more noble aspects of her feminine nature in her heightened capacity for selfishness, irresponsibility, and even cruelty toward those around her.¹²² Drawing on his own conversations with an admittedly unrepresentative sample of teenage girls, he further asserted that with fashion, friends, and boys fittingly occupying so much of the adolescent girl's attention, she had little interest remaining for academic pursuits. "What does the backfish care in her heart of hearts about the shop-worn school studies for their own sake?" he questioned. "She accepts them, with a more or less equanimity somewhat as a necessary evil, but if she is normal she does not put her whole soul into them. 'When I get mad and want to swear,' said one, 'I say "Decimal Fractions!" for that is the dreadfulest thing I know.'"¹²³ Here shrewdly refashioning the protest against coeducation in more modern terms, Hall posited that the practice was untenable simply because teenage girls had far less intellectual ambition than either its earlier opponents or advocates had been able or willing to recognize.

As anticipated as they were to be, however, Hall also warned that attributes such as the girl's preoccupation with her appearance, her erratic appetite, her gregariousness, her self-centeredness, and (albeit less so) even her anti-intellectualism were not without potential pitfalls and, as with the mandates of male development, needed to be rightly understood and properly managed by girl-workers, parents, and educators, all of whom were to be informed by insight from psycho-

logical science. One consequence of the teenage girl's nature receiving its proper due, which Hall noted without much apprehension, was that she was becoming a distinct market for sellers. They sought to appeal to her unique and pronounced tastes in sweets, jewelry, perfume, and clothing.¹²⁴ Somewhat problematic was that the girl's expression of such traits was inevitably to engender "perpetual strife with her mother" throughout the teenage years. While denying that the girl possessed the sort of sexual jealousy toward her mother identified by Freudians, Hall nonetheless deemed the mother-daughter relationship as unavoidably difficult and "infinitely complex." Hall argued that this relationship must assume a central place in assessing a range of behaviors in the developing girl, from misbehavior and rebellion to undue expressions of filial devotion and responsibility.¹²⁵ Of greatest concern to Hall, though, was that in relating coyly with boys, devoting herself to her friends, and pursuing her many-sided interests, tastes, and enthusiasms, all of which were normative during this stage of her life, the modern girl was nonetheless at risk of becoming lost to her essential self and to the fundamental purpose in life that was necessary for her own happiness and for the ongoing advancement of civilization. "In her physiological and affectional life," Hall contended, the teenage girl had always had "much to conceal," and therefore was, by her very nature, "not what she seem[ed]" to be. Under the conditions of modern life, however, which both gave rise to and indulged the plasticity of adolescence, her innate "passion to deceive" and her "passion for secrets" had threatened to become pathological. "Thus, girls, who have peculiar need of self-knowledge of their sex and themselves, at just the nascent period which nature has provided for the acquisition of that knowledge, now escape it," Hall volubly sighed. "And hence it comes that there was never such disassociation and disintegration of soul before possible as that to which young women are now exposed."¹²⁶

As dire as such a state seemed, however, Hall accepted the "dualization of soul" as particularly emblematic of the youthful female self in modern times. His goal was to make adults aware of the existence of the "upper" and "lower" selves of the adolescent girl and to impress on them the necessity of their accommodation to her "conscious self," all the while assisting her in the uncovering of her "deeper ego" by the time she reached her early twenties. If this seemed too tall an order, though, he also, paradoxically, urged adults not to worry very much about what were, merely, the "surface phenomena" of adolescent girlhood, for if read properly, these indicated that the girl was well on her way up "the steepening, old, well-worn but flowery highway" that was leading her "straight into the paradise of ripe womanhood, never so glorious as now and in this country."¹²⁷

The adolescent girl, Hall promised, had not, after all, changed all that much, or if she had, it was only for the better. Not nearly as independent, self-confident, or defiant as she seemed, the flapper was a mere fledgling whose undeveloped pinfeathers prevented her from straying too far from the nest. In addition, beneath her "bundle of inconsistencies," she still possessed a "fundamental unity," rendering her (to shift metaphors) "simply like a climbing vine in the stage of circumnutation, before it has found the support by which it can raise itself toward the sun." Moreover, in all of the adolescent girl's frenetic flapping and peripatetic sprouting, Hall also discerned the potential for continued racial progress, which was to be rooted in the heightening, if sometimes in surprisingly new ways, of dichotomous sexual difference. "Underneath the mannish ways which [the adolescent girl] sometimes affects," he insisted, "she really vaunts her femininity, and her exuberance gives it a new charm. The new liberties she takes with life are contagious, and make us wonder anew whether we have not all been servile to precedent, and slaves to institutions that need to be refitted to human nature, and whether the flapper may not, after all, be the bud of a new and better womanhood."¹²⁸

Again and again in his writings on girlhood, Hall declared there to be "in all the wide domain of psychology perhaps no such *terra incognita* as the heart of the adolescent girl."¹²⁹ Presaging Freud's famous closing remark in his 1933 essay, "Femininity," in which he resigned that what he had not so far been able to explain about the topic using the tools of psychoanalysis would have to be inquired about from women's own experience or the poets, Hall frequently appealed to "common sense" and "common honesty" in describing and prescribing the development of the adolescent girl's body, mind, and soul. In rendering the adolescent girl such an enigma, he also issued a call to his fellow scientists to take her up as a topic of particular concern. Writing at a time of tumultuous social change, Hall applied his own scientific authority and expertise to the invention of a concept of adolescence that looked to the attributes of Victorian girlhood to proffer some critique of civilized masculinity and also allowed for some new possibilities for female development, all the while shoring up the power relations of an older order. In his efforts to resolve the multiple contradictions inherent in his developmental thinking, he ended up reinforcing an already firm foundation for modern psychology's embracing the boy as the normative adolescent. Against such a model, the girl, when she was to be found at all in the psychological literature of the twentieth century, would most often be determined to be lacking. However, by valorizing the girl's traditional feminine quali-

ties, seeking to account for her seeming discontent, raising the specter of her sexuality, and sanctioning some new ways for her to express and assert the self, Hall's concept of adolescence also portended that the challenge of reconciling the experiences and expectations of adolescence and femininity would be a "problem" to be reckoned with—by his fellow psychologists, the culture at large, and girls (and boys) themselves—for some time to come.