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## Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll

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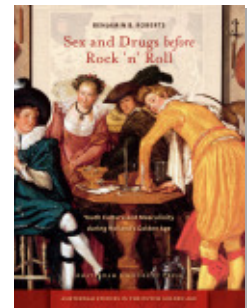
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## PROLOGUE

On a December night in 1629, Otto Copes and two friends were completely drunk. The 18-year-old law student at the University of Groningen was 120 miles away from the watchful eye of his uncle, a magistrate in 's-Hertogenbosch, a city in the generality lands of the Dutch Republic. Earlier in the day, he and two friends had been seen drinking in a tavern. However, by nightfall, their student merrymaking had turned into an orgy of binge drinking and violent aggression. Their noisiness attracted the attention of the city's municipal guard who tried to temper their high-spiritedness. After mustering up enough courage and bravado from drinking, the three young men, armed with pistols, opened fire on the guard.<sup>1</sup>

Today, a drunken armed young man roaming the streets late at night would be a recipe for disaster. Contemporary authorities would impose curfews, prohibit the sale of alcohol to minors, and there would be fingerpointing at parents and schools for raising maladjusted youngsters. Politicians and moralists would use the opportunity to unleash a wave of moral panic and predict the collision course 'the youth of today' are headed for. Moreover, tax money would be spent on expensive programs to reform young people.

In the seventeenth century, the authorities in Groningen were not alarmed by the aggressive behavior of Otto Copes and his friends, nor was there much cause for moral panic in similar cases throughout the Dutch Republic in the early seventeenth century, which raises the question: Were excessive drinking and aggressive behavior typical for young men in the early modern period? Was it common for young men in the seventeenth century, or was this behavior specific to young men of Otto Copes's generation who grew up during the 1620s and 1630s?

That brings us to the first dilemma in the history of youth. Historians in general have a tendency to address history in broad sweeping strokes such as 'childhood and youth in the Middle Ages and early modern period' or 'youths in the seventeenth century'. However, we also often forget that a century in the past consisted of the same hundred years as our present era. It would be disrespectful to our ancestors to presume that change did not occur just as rapidly as it does today. If a young man born in 1980 read a history book about youths of the twentieth century and examined a youngster born in 1920, the two would not recognize each other's experiences. The young man born in 1980 who had grown up in a postmodern, affluent society with pop music, video games, and internet would not compare with the one born in 1920 whose formative years were spent during the scarcity of the economic depression of the 1930s and World War II. Economic conjunctures, demographic fluctuations, wars, famine, disease, and social unrest

during the formative years have a profound impact on how young people define themselves and perceive their future. The Dutch sociologist Henk Becker distinguishes four distinct generations of Dutch society for 60 years of the twentieth century: the Pre-War generation, born between 1910 and 1930; the Quiet Generation, born between 1930 and 1940; the Protest Generation, born between 1940 and 1955; and the Lost Generation, born between 1955 and 1970. For the demographic make-up of the United States, sociologists of the late twentieth century have specified the generation of Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964); Generation X (born 1965 through 1983); and more recently, Generation Y (also known as the New Boomers, who were born 1983 through 2001). These generations are defined according to their outlook on life and chances of succeeding in a society influenced by economic and demographic circumstances, as experienced during their formative years as a youth, usually around the age of 17 when young people are most receptive to value orientations.<sup>2</sup>

Just like the twentieth century, the seventeenth century experienced varying periods of economic prosperity, decline, material affluence and scarcity, and war. It would be impossible to divvy up seventeenth-century society with the same precision as demographers, population specialists, and market researchers have done for modern society. Dutch society in the seventeenth century, like most societies of the *Ancien Régime*, was structured by rank and privilege. There is little or no comparison to the economic and social democracies of Europe in the twentieth century. But we cannot disregard the fact that youths in the early modern period, and the early seventeenth century specifically, did not distinguish and manifest themselves differently from previous generations.

### New approach to youth

In *Vrouw des Huizes* [Woman of the House] (2009), Els Kloek comprehensively portrays the history of the Dutch housewife, spanning the Middle Ages until modern times. By highlighting the upbringing of girls and young women, the history of the female gender suddenly becomes more illuminated. Kloek argues that while the identity of a housewife in the sixteenth century was still vague, by the seventeenth century the notion had become quite evident and had an undeniable presence. Seventeenth-century childrearing and household manuals encouraged mothers to raise daughters with the virtues of what being a good housewife entailed. Foreigners to the Dutch Republic often endorsed this view of the Dutch housewife and noted how bossy they were and how obsessed Dutch women were with cleanliness and properness.<sup>3</sup>

Gender, often from the perspective of women studies, has produced new focal points for historical research. In a fascinating approach to the agents of change, Mary Jo Maynes of the University of Minnesota pleads for more research into 'age as a category of historical analysis'. While historical change is often ascribed to powerful individuals, she demonstrates, based on childhood narratives, how profoundly the upbringing of girls (and children in general) affects them as agents in instigating historical change.<sup>4</sup>

The main object of this book is to go one step further and zoom in not only on *one* specific gender – male – but also on *one* distinctive generation of young men who experienced their formative years during the 1620s and 1630s. Consequently, their unique codes of masculinity and youth culture, idiosyncratic to their era, will become more obvious to us. Similar to the approaches of Kloek and Maynes, I will focus specifically on male adolescents and young men. Moreover, this book will also illustrate how the generation of young men from the 1620s and 1630s were important agents in advocating new ideas about clothing, drinking, violence, sexuality, and recreational habits. In order to illustrate the contrast and illuminate the uniqueness of the generation of young men from the 1620s and 1630s, comparisons will be made with the previous generation of young men whose formative years were at the end of the sixteenth century (until 1600); and the succeeding generation of youngsters who grew up in the 1640s and 1650s.

### Sex and drugs *before* rock 'n' roll

According to pop culture author Eric Segalstad's well-known book, *The 27s: The Greatest Myth of Rock & Roll* (2009), the age of 27 seems to be part of a recurring pattern for contemporary pop stars: Jim Morrison, Jimi Hendrix, Kurt Cobain, and quite recently Amy Winehouse died at that age from a life of excess, including rock 'n' roll. Segalstad argues that the threshold age for moving from youth to adulthood hovered for quite some time around 25 years old, but since the 1960s it has been extended to 27: the age when young men (and women) either become adults and act like adults or if they do not, as Segalstad opines, young men and women become entangled in a state of limbo where sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll became a way of life and untimely downfall. In this realm, rock 'n' roll refers to the teen culture of the 1950s, a society of young people who grew up in affluence, with leisure time and music, exhibiting a distinctive youth culture in film, clothing, hair, motorbikes, and specific language. In contemporary society, 'Rock 'n' Roll' is a metaphor for recreation and leisure activities that can become excessive during the transition of young people from childhood to adulthood. It would be anachronistic – and historically speaking impossible – to observe the youth culture of the 1620s and 1630s in the same light as the popular youth culture of the 1960s in Western society. Nevertheless, there are some prominent parallels that cannot be ignored. The youth of the 1620s and 1630s grew up in an exceptional period of economic and demographic growth, witnessed the cultural golden years of the Dutch Golden Age, and produced a characteristic culture of leisure, as this book will argue. *Before Rock 'n' Roll* in the title of this monograph refers to the pedagogical metaphor of the upbringing of adolescents and young men that could go amuck in the transition of young people to adulthood and *not* the literal definition of rock 'n' roll.<sup>5</sup>

Generations of young people that grew up under the auspices of economic affluence, social mobility, and cultural growth tend to manifest a specific youth culture. In order to get a glimpse of the youth culture in the 1620s and 1630s, this study will examine a variety of sources, including paintings and engravings, conduct books, moralistic and prescriptive treatises, municipal ordi-

nances, criminal records, and entertainment books such as songbooks, to unveil how the generation of young men including Otto Copes, a generation born between 1595 and 1615, manifested a youth culture and expressed masculinity in the Dutch Republic during the 1620s and 1630s. Like all sources, they have their shortcomings and are not always representative. Nevertheless, given a diversity of sources from various disciplines including art history, history, theology, and educational sciences, the conclusions of this study will provide a more holistic image of youth culture and masculinity in the early seventeenth century. Moreover, this investigation will elaborate on pioneer studies of youths in the early modern period such Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England* (1994), and Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority. Formative Experiences in England, 1560-1640* (1996), which opened up the field of the history of youth and gave depth to the phase of life between childhood and adulthood which until then had been often overlooked by historians. *The Premodern Teenager. Youth in Society 1150-1650* (2002), edited by Konrad Eisenbichler, further addressed the experience of youth by scholars from various scientific disciplines and provided new insights into the experience of growing up during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. In the Netherlands, the Dutch historian of psychology Harry Peeters uncovered in *Kind en Jeugdige in het begin van de moderne tijd (ca. 1500-ca. 1650)* [Child and Youth at the Beginning of the Modern Period (c. 1500-1650)] (1966) the psychological state of children and youths in the late Middle Ages and early modern period. While Peeters's dissertation expanded on the history of childhood, which had been brought to life by Philippe Ariès's *Centuries of Childhood* (1962), he also put the youth phase of life on the map. With the exception of Eddy Grootes, the historian of Dutch literature who was one of the first to delve into the recreational activities of the Republic's youth, it would take a couple of decades before Dutch historians would pick up where Peeters had left off.<sup>6</sup>

According to Peeters, early modern society recognized the phase of youth to be a period of emotional upheaval for young people. The temperament of the youth and adolescent phase of life was characterized by unbalanced, unstable, and ambivalent behavior. In his in-depth research into early modern pedagogical prescriptions, Peeters concluded that early modern pedagogues took into account when giving advice that the proportions of everything adolescents felt, thought, and did was exaggerated. Adolescents were reckless, had high expectations of themselves, were dependent and gullible, and their feelings of love and hate were unbalanced, yet they were overly self-confident.<sup>7</sup> Few historians of youth would dispute that mischief and tomfoolery of adolescent males and young men is reported in all eras. Yet for each period there are differences in how contemporaries perceived wayward and unruly behavior. For early modern Germany, the Harvard historian Steven Ozment argues that the three horseman of adolescence were alcohol, sex, and the theater.<sup>8</sup> For the Dutch Republic during its 80-year struggle for independence from the Roman Catholic Spanish monarch, it was a different story. The concerns about excessive drinking and budding sexuality were standard fare, but Dutch parents and authorities were also worried about violence and other activities that young men were prone to commit during their leisure time spent in urban surroundings. In general, during the early modern period, the follies of young men were an ambiguous matter. On the one hand, they posed a threat to public order,

while on the other hand tomfoolery was an integral part of youth culture and an expression of masculinity. In this investigation the notion of youth culture and masculinity are treated as two sides of the same coin that cannot be separated, and form two themes that thread through this study.

### The phase of life recognized as ‘Youth’

In order to understand male youths in the early seventeenth century, we have to recognize the fact that foolish behavior is idiosyncratic to the life phase of youth. Early modern society accepted the mischievous behavior of adolescents and young men, as long as it occurred within the parameters of youth – the phase of life from early teens until the mid-twenties or the period between budding sexuality until marriage. In the Middle Ages and early modern period, the ‘ages of life’ were known in the Northern Netherlands as the ‘Ladder of Life’ and were distinctly divided into stages or steps. In illustration 1 the portrayal of each step represented a decade in a man’s life, starting with the age of 10 and continuing progressively up to the age of 90. For the first step, a boy is depicted banging a drum and a girl playing with a doll. In the next step, a 20-year-old young man is shown giving his sweetheart a flower. The 30-year-old step is represented by a young couple with a small child. For the 40-year-old step, a man is shown wearing a uniform, symbolizing that he has made a good career for himself. The highest point of the ladder is reached with the next step of 50, and then life starts to regress downwards to the age of 60 with a man portrayed with a cane, at 70 with eyeglasses, at 80 with a stool, and at 90 he can barely stand. At the bottom of the ladder he lies in a bed with a paper in his hands with the text: 100 years, my life. Behind the bed an angel points towards heaven.

In the Middle Ages and early modern period there were many versions of the Ladder of Life, with different representations, but all depicted youth as the life phase between the ages of 20 and 30. The phases of life were also symbolized in seasons of the year. Spring represented childhood and youth, summer adulthood, autumn middle age, and winter old age.<sup>9</sup> The Ages of Man were also correlated to the humoral theory of Galenic pathology. All matter consisted of the four elements of which each was connected to an element and quality: air (hot and moist); fire (hot and dry); earth (cold and dry); and water (cold and moist). The four elements in the human body were related to blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm, which were associated with the four humors or temperaments of the body, respectively sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic.

According to the humoral theory, the temperament of young people was dominated by heat and moisture, which were lifegiving. Cold and dryness, on the contrary, consumed energy and were associated with old age. There was also a difference between male and female. Females were considered to have cold and dry bodies, while males were known for their heat and dryness. Based on humoral theory, the Dutch physician Levinus Lemnius (1505-1568) categorized and subcategorized the life of man into seven ages in his medical work which was first published in





Illustration 1 'Life in the early modern period was often divided into phases. The youth phase, between 20 and 30 years old, often depicted as experimental and the age of finding a marriage partner'. Frederik d Bouttats de Oude, 'Ladder of Life, the Human Rise and Fall, Is Sweet for Some and Frightening for Others' (c. 1600–1661).

Latin and later in English, *The Touchstone of Complexions* (1633). The publication laid the groundwork that embodied the traits expected of gentlemen. According to Lemnius, health and morality were the basis for the exemplary body that in turn exemplified morality.<sup>10</sup> Because this study will focus primarily on youths of the upper and middle echelons of Dutch and include youths of the lower ranks where sources permit, Lemnius's subcategorization of the ages of puberty, adolescence, and youth will be maintained as an elastic 'indication' of youth as opposed to a rigid definition of the age group.<sup>11</sup>

According to Lemnius, children and stripling (who were then about 14–15 years old) were characterized as sanguine creatures because

their blood is pure and full of swelling spirit, are still stirring, quicke, nimble, active, wanton, unmodest, malepert, sawcy, proud, without wit, and much given to toying and playing: for wee see them as wanton as calves, that is to say, in mowing with their mouthes, in voice, gestures, beckes, clapping of hands, light songs, vaine joyfulness, where there is no cause, immoderate mirth, disordered fisking up and downe, and uncertaine motion and gate: all which doe signifie a shuttle wavering nature, and a minde subject to great mutability and unconstancy, proceeding and caused of the boyling of their blood within them, which boyleth up, as it were seetheth in their veines, even as new wine, ale, or beere spurgeth and worketh in the tunne.<sup>12</sup>

Levinus Lemnius, 'Ages of Man' in *Touchstone of Complexions* [original 1576]:<sup>13</sup>

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Age</i>
Infancy	0-7
Childhood	7-15
Puberty	15-18
Adolescence	18-25
Youth	25-35
Man's Age	35-50
Old Age	50/65+

The Dutch physician Johan van Beverwijck (1594-1647) applied the same elements and temperaments of youth in his popular household medical manual *Schat der Gesondheyt* [The Treasure of Health] (1636). Van Beverwijck considered the third phase of the seven-year period of a youth's life (age 14 to 21 years old) to be dominated by the development of his talents in science and wisdom. Especially during this age, a youth should master structured eating, drinking, and other habits. Moreover, he should be in the fresh air a lot and take plenty of physical exercise as it is important for blood and his ability to study.<sup>14</sup>

### Rites of passage

The third phase of life on the Ladder of Manhood entailed an entire regiment of rites of passage that adolescents and young men had to endure and prove before becoming men by seventeenth-century standards. In 1960 the anthropologist Arnold van Gennep classified the rites of passage for young people from birth, through childhood, betrothal, marriage, to funerals while examining primarily non-Western societies. According to his theory, the transition to the next phase of life was characterized by physical or social rites or initiation. For the youths of the early seventeenth century, Van Gennep's model will not be strictly applied but will be kept in the background.<sup>15</sup> The rites of passage for youths in the 1620s and 1630s will be addressed in the realm of young people's appearance and clothing, drinking habits, use of violence, sexuality, and recreational habits. Rites of passage in this investigation will wind through each chapter, and a distinction will be made between physical and biological rites of passage and cultural and social ones.

### Prodigal son

One of the most revealing metaphors from the seventeenth century that addresses the rites of passage for young men was the Biblical story of the Prodigal Son. Early modern painters, engravers, and playwrights alluded at length to the Prodigal Son or Lost Son when addressing the fool-



ish behavior of young men who were not yet considered adults. The story, which appeared in the Gospel of Luke in the New Testament of the Bible, is about the younger of two sons who asks his father to give him his share of the estate. He travels to a distant country, squanders his money on expensive garments, wine, women, and other vices. After being reduced to living among pigs, he comes to his senses and returns home where his father welcomes him with open arms. The parable is about forgiveness and redemption. In the early modern period, painters including Rembrandt symbolized the topsy-turvy transition from childhood to adulthood with this Biblical theme. The anxiety that the Prodigal Son must have represented for parents and moralists meanders through many facets of youth culture and masculinity.<sup>16</sup> Van Beverwijck hinted at the same concern that parents and moralists had for youths in the early modern period: the fear of leisure and need for didactic recreation. In this respect, the history of leisure and recreation in the early modern period travels the same path as the history of youth. While parents and authorities were concerned about the activities of the young, their main worry was how young people occupied their time when not engaged in mundane activities such as sleeping, eating, drinking, carrying out chores in the household, going to school, learning a trade, and working. In general, the idleness between the routine of daily life and outside the parameters of work was a cause for angst among moralists.<sup>17</sup>

The British economic historian Peter Mathias opines that ‘the fear of leisure’ was widespread in early modern Europe. Contrary to contemporary regulated working conditions and work forces, laborers in the early modern period were subject to climatic and technological conditions that brought an immediate halt to work and incurred forced idleness and leisure. Work was interrupted by the calendar as laborers had to observe religious holidays, which shortened the workweek. Laborers in the maritime and fisheries industry were more often out of work during the winter months. Ships could linger for days, up to months, while waiting for favorable winds. In the meantime the wharfingers, dockworkers, local carriers, and crews of barges remained inactive.

But there were numerous other sectors of the workforce that were affected by weather conditions. Millers were dependent on wind, construction workers and agrarians on fair weather conditions. Contrary to our era where leisure is a symbol of wealth for most working groups of people, a majority of the labor force in the early modern period experienced intense bouts of work followed by days – or even longer – of inactivity or forced leisure in the course of a year. Mathias postulates that idle laborers waiting for employment merged into a ‘rootless, drifting population of beggars, peddlers, petty criminals, prostitutes, “men without masters” and others on the margins of society’.<sup>18</sup>

The cultural historian Peter Burke argues that the invention of leisure in the early modern period lies somewhere between Norbert Elias’s ‘process of civilization’ and Michael Foucault’s ‘Discipline and Punish’ theories. Burke adds that recommended recreation as a cure or prescription against idleness was instrumental in civilizing and disciplining urbanized populations at the same time.<sup>19</sup> In this framework, we will address how recreational activities for young people in the 1620s and 1630s were shaped by youths on the one side and by parents, moralists, and municipal authorities on the other.

## Youth culture

In the historiography of youth culture, the notion of a new bourgeois urban youth culture oscillates between the research of the French cultural historian Robert Muchembled and the German historian Norbert Schindler. The former dates the onset of the concept of modern adolescence to the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in villages and towns in Northern France and Flanders when the patriarch structure of the family started to wither away and tensions between adult males and unmarried sons grew. The latter pinpoints the existence of modern youth culture emerging in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century with the advent of the nation-state and introduction of bourgeois norms and values with its middle-class culture.<sup>20</sup> The main reason that Holland, and to a lesser extent the Dutch Republic, will be used as a case study is because it was a young country. The country was not only a young political and geographical state, it was also a *young* republic with a large population of young people. In *The Embarrassment of Riches*, Simon Schama stresses that the Dutch Republic in the Golden Age was a Republic of Children. With its numerous immigrants and scores of youngsters, it was a republic of children with doting parents, anxious pedagogues, and a new state keen on molding obedient burghers. The notion of child – and childhood in general – was a theme that dominated the arts and letters and was often polarized between ‘the ludic and the didactic, between liberty and obedience, between independence and safety’. Schama points out that to be Dutch in the early seventeenth century ‘was to be imprisoned in a state of becoming: a sort of perpetual political adolescence’.<sup>21</sup>

### Holland – heart of the Republic

This study will go one step further. Holland and the Dutch Republic did not form a Republic of Children, but rather a *Republic of Young People*. Within the Republic, the province of Holland was buzzing with energy from the young people and immigrants who had fled less prospective areas of Europe, as well as less affluent parts of the Republic. Holland attracted adolescents and young immigrants who sought employment, adventure, religious tolerance, and a new life. The principal focus of attention in this investigation will be the cities of Holland. Within the province were located the great manufacturing and trading cities of Leiden, Haarlem, Hoorn, Enkhuizen, Dordrecht, Rotterdam, Delft, Schiedam, and Amsterdam. With its economic prosperity, cultural growth, and demographic might, Amsterdam was the center.<sup>22</sup> The economic boom during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century attracted numerous religious and economic refugees from the Southern Netherlands where the Revolt against the Spanish lingered on, and young men and women from the German states who fled rural communities where villages and towns were pillaged and burned during the Thirty Years’ War.<sup>23</sup> There were also numerous young people who emigrated from the Nordic countries where there was little employment. In the expanding economy of the Republic, immigrant young men sought work as sailors, factory workers, and craftsmen while women were apt to look for employment as domestic servants or seamstresses in the growing linen industry. With large numbers of young people populating Dutch cities, especially during these two decades when there was also unprecedented wealth, an affluent culture

for young people manifested in the environs of the urbanized Dutch Republic. Although young people had no real political and economic power in the traditional sense, they were a generation of movers and shakers who helped shape the Dutch Republic during its gilded era and helped create a national identity.

The first chapter will address the 1620s and 1630s, two decades marked by incomparable economic, demographic, cultural, and intellectual growth. These decades were the *golden* decades of the Dutch Golden Age, and formative years for a generation of young men, and had a great impact on their outlook on life. According to the German historian Herbert Moller, fundamental changes in society are usually instigated by demographic growth in societies with a large youth population. Moller's essay on youth as a force in the modern world of bringing change to society was published in April 1968, one month prior to the notorious uprising of the post-war Baby Boom generation of students in Paris. Similar collective changes have occurred throughout history in societies with large youth populations. The Protestant Reformation movement in Germany during the early sixteenth century is one example. After a period of waning population growth in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in the aftermath of the Black Death, the population started to grow again, and large cohorts of young adults set up households in Germany during the first decades of the sixteenth century. Many of these young people were responsible for the Reformation, including Martin Luther, who published his notorious Ninety-Five Theses at the age of 34, and his great Reformation tracts at the age of 37. In the 1520s many of the academic staff at the University of Wittenberg were in their 20s and 30s. Aurogallus was appointed professor at the age of 30, Justin Jonas and Augustus Schiff were 27 years old, Johannes Hainpol and Melanchthon were 21 years old – even younger than most of their students. Many of these men and their students were responsible for promoting the ideas of the Reformation and implemented great change throughout Europe. Besides the Reformation, the Puritan movement in England and the French Revolution were also movements that were fueled by young people. Moller's argument is based on early modern and later examples of youth movements where 'social change is not engineered by youth, but it is most manifest in youth'.<sup>24</sup>

Young people are vital catalysts in implementing change in society. They are willing to take risks and more apt to use violence. However, it is usually adult and elderly men who have more seasoned ideas about change. According to the American sociologist Norman B. Ryder, the potential for change is manifested in the cohorts of youths – and not adults – for the simple reason that young adults are old enough to participate directly in the movements impelled by change but not old enough to have committed to an occupation, a residence, a family, or a way of life'.<sup>25</sup> Moller's theory of youth as a force can also be applied to the early modern world and possibly to the Dutch Republic which was a 'state in becoming', according to Simon Schama: it was a country rebelling for independence while at the same time desperately searching to form its own identity. In the early days of the Revolt, the Dutch Republic was still a union confederation of seven provinces that were loosely unified under the flagship of the United Provinces, in order to oust Spanish domination over the Northern Netherlands. Simon Schama has argued that the

country lacked a common history, heritage, educational system, and church, and was only unified by a moral geography. After the Iconic Fury during the 1560s, the north had rid itself of the Roman Catholic Church with its icons and statues, which were important pedagogical symbols and role models for young people. After the onset of the Revolt, the various splintered Protestant churches, such as the Lutherans and Anabaptists, and the Dutch Reformed Church failed to fill the shoes as the official successor of the Roman Catholic Church, and to take on a cohesive role in Dutch society. In this theocratic limbo in combination with an economic-political structure that was ruled by the regents of wealthy cities where free-market liberalism triumphed, a new secular, urbane youth culture based on humanistic thought started to emerge.

More recently, the *tabula rasa* concept, a notion arguing that the Northern Netherlands prior to the Revolt lacked political unity and cultural cohesion, has been disputed by Willem Frijhoff. Since the Middle Ages, the provinces in the north had engaged in political unities and had religious similarities, economic ties, and cultural uniformities. In this realm, the onset of the Dutch Revolt was not the ‘big bang’ that brought forth a new Dutch identity.<sup>26</sup> Wim Blockmans, the Dutch historian of medieval history, opines that the Dutch culture of the seventeenth century was rather a relief of an already existing dynamic Netherlandic culture that was founded on urbanization, an open economy based on mercantile and far-reaching trade relations and firm financial centers, and with strong cultural ties with the cities of northern and central Italy.<sup>27</sup> In the backdrop of these two conflicting theories, the youth culture of the early seventeenth century will be examined.

## Masculinity

For early modern society, mastering the horsemen of adolescence was an integral part of becoming a man and reflected contemporary ideas about masculinity, or at least a notion of the prevailing ideas of manhood. Society recognized various prevailing concepts of masculinity that ranged from what we today would consider effeminate to masculine and macho. According to Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, in the political writings of Machiavelli (1469-1527), for example, the word ‘effeminate’ was used differently in the sixteenth century than today. It often implied a sign of strong heterosexual passion and was not a token of manliness. Being made effeminate meant that one was dominated by a woman. On the other hand, strong same-sex relationships such as friendships were considered a ‘sign of virility’ if they were based on honorable masculinity such as military leadership.

Masculinity in the early modern period was culturally constructed and continuously in motion. This book will address how the generation of young men in the Dutch Republic during their formative years in the 1620s and 1630s defined masculinity and manhood. Each generation and cohort in the seventeenth century did so in a different way. In England during the Civil War (1642-1649), for example, men distinguished themselves either as cavaliers, and displayed their masculinity by wearing long hair and silk knee breeches, or as Puritans, who were known as Roundheads for their short-cropped hairstyles and plain and sober-styled clothes. Both groups

held conflicting notions of masculinity. In the Dutch Republic during the 1620s and 1630s, there were conforming and conflicting ideas about masculinity as well.<sup>28</sup>

Manhood in early modern society was not acquired just by reaching a certain biological age. The road to manhood was filled with biological markers, rites of passage, and testimonies of manliness that were manifested and displayed in the public domain because the public area was the realm of manhood, while the domestic sphere was the territory of women. In the early modern period, being a man did not just entail *not* being a woman. Manhood and masculinity in this period were an assortment of subtle and unsubtle, unwritten behaviors acquired after proving oneself through a series of rites of passage. The rituals that hurtled males from adolescents and young men into manhood were first proven to peers, and then to older men.

We should also take into account that manhood and masculinity are not only culturally determined but are also influenced by biological and psychological factors that have an impact on adolescent behavior. Today, we know the irrational behavior and heightened willingness to display courage and take risks among adolescent males can be ascribed to biological factors such as hormones and brain development. Adolescent males and young men have peak levels of testosterone, which remain high until their mid-20s. Nowadays, biologists argue that the male sex hormone has a strong effect on confidence and the risk-taking behavior of young men, and is a key contributor to violence and other irrational decision-making in male youths.<sup>29</sup>

Another factor responsible for heightened risk-taking behavior among young males is caused by the state of the adolescent brain.<sup>30</sup> According to recent developmental neuroscience research, the adolescent brain is dominated by the interaction between two brain networks: the socio-emotional network which is strongly influenced by stimuli from friends and peers and primary emotions, and the cognitive control network which executes 'functions such as planning, thinking ahead, self-regulation, and that matures gradually over the course of adolescence and young adulthood'. During adolescence the socio-emotional network is more assertive, and especially in the presence of peers or 'conditions of emotional arousal', the socio-emotional network can become activated enough to dominate the cognitive control network. As a young male matures, the cognitive control network of the brain overshadows the socio-emotional network, and ultimately adult males are less likely to take risks that are influenced by peers.<sup>31</sup>

Chapter Two will address how Dutch adolescents and young men distinguished and expressed their masculinity through appearance, and how they risked traditional codes of masculine fashion to manifest youth culture that was idiosyncratic of their generation. This chapter will focus on how the generation of young men in the 1620s and 1630s physically distinguished themselves from older generations. The appearance and dress young men chose to exert the individuality of their generation through hairstyle and general appearance will be investigated at length. Sources such as paintings, engravings, and artifacts from archaeological sites will assist in determining the style of the generation of young men from the 1620s and 1630s. These sources help us confirm whether they chose to look clean-shaven, have mustaches or beards, grow their hair long or keep it short, and which fashion trends they followed. Furthermore, the chapter will also address how moralists responded to this new fashion and how the new style of young men clashed with prevailing ideas about fashion and masculinity.

Chapter three will address the hedonistic lifestyle of the youth in the early modern period, that was often captured through the hendiatriis ‘wine, women, and song’. This figure of speech, originating from the Greek εὐ δὶά τρίῳς, or ‘one, two, three’, summed up the concept of one idea through three words. The German version of the expression ‘*Wein, Weib und Gesang*’ has been attributed to Martin Luther, who gave it a positive twist, *Wer nicht liebt Wein, Weib, Gesang, der bleibt ein Narr sein Leben lang* ([He] who does not love wine, women, and song remains a fool forever). These vices were ubiquitous. In the Dutch Republic moralists tended to be worried about *wijntje, trijntje*: *Wijn* is the Dutch word for wine, and *Trijntje* the nickname for Catherina, which was a common name for a girl in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The phrase *wijntje, trijntje* summed up two vices of young unmarried men: excessive drinking and promiscuous sexuality. (In the Dutch Republic, the recreational activity of singing was not considered a vice, but rather an integral part of the courting ritual, which will be addressed in Chapter Seven.) This concern about male adolescent drinking and becoming sexually active was not a new phenomenon in the early modern period. The evils of excessive drinking and promiscuous behavior were an age-old trope that was modernized and adapted to the generation of young people of the 1620s and 1630s. In the social and cultural construction of manhood, wine, women, and song were important rites of passage that male adolescents had to master in order to become men.<sup>32</sup>

According to Lynn Martin’s *Alcohol, Sex and Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, alcohol consumption in the early modern period was a complex matter when it concerned gender, and consequently the forming of gender identities. There was a double standard about sexuality and a double standard about alcohol: ‘Just as women were expected to maintain their chastity so also were they expected to maintain their sobriety. The two double standards were linked because of the widespread opinion that a sober woman was chaste while a drunken woman would be promiscuous. Not only did men have a greater freedom than woman in sexual matters, but they also had the right to consume vast amounts of alcoholic beverages, not just the right but also the duty if they were to maintain their honor and status.’<sup>33</sup> *Wijntje, trijntje* for young men in the Dutch Republic was a form of risk-taking behavior. The act of getting drunk and being promiscuous epitomized manly behavior and was a manifestation of masculinity.

Chapter Three will also address Lynn Martin’s double standard of drinking for male youths within the culture of alcohol consumption in seventeenth-century Dutch culture, a society in which uncontaminated fresh water was a rarity, and alcohol was the safest beverage for old and young alike. In this framework young men learned to master a balanced golden median between sobriety and excessive drinking.

In Chapter Four we will examine the socialization of young men in two different social and economic groups. The first is the group of young men in the 1620s and 1630s in the Dutch Republic who underwent a new socialization process that contrasted greatly to that of their forefathers, who were migrants and immigrants from small towns and villages in rural Europe. For this group, which formed the lower ranks of Dutch urban society, their initiation rites into manhood in the public domain were no longer accepted by municipal authorities aiming to constrain and maintain civil order. This led civil authorities to regulate the activities of large groups



of young men when they were not attending school or working. During leisure time their play activities could easily erupt into social mayhem. Numerous city ordinances forbade young men from tomfooleries such as throwing snowballs and stones, fighting in alleys, tossing firecrackers and fireworks, parading through city streets, congregating in public squares, and gathering on street corners and bridges. The second group consists of the young men from the upper and middle classes of Dutch society who wielded violence as a rite of passage and mark of manhood. Students enrolled at early modern universities were granted the right to carry weapons and were often armed with pistols and swords. In early modern society, carrying weapons was a badge of manhood and masculinity.

In general, the early modern period has often been portrayed as a violent era marked by a tumultuous transition from feudalism to capitalism. In the course of the period, there was a substantial decline in the crimes committed, which signifies a qualitative shift in the norms and civilization of early modern society.<sup>34</sup> However, violence was an integral part of early modern society. Most urban residents in the early modern period were likely to have witnessed or have been a victim of some sort of violence in their lifetimes, ranging from domestic hostility and rape to manslaughter.<sup>35</sup> Young men were often the cause of the violence. The biological state of young men alone was a potential risk to society. During late adolescence and young adulthood, males have high levels of testosterone and excessive amounts of physical energy. Acts of violence were often a natural outlet for young men who were expected to remain chaste from the onset of their budding sexuality in their late teens until the age of marriage (often in their late twenties). In this period of almost ten years, young men had to vent their pent-up sexual energy, and tomfoolery and violence were often considered or tolerated as an acceptable outlet. In this domain, committing certain acts of violence had specific cultural meanings, and violent deeds transgressed by adolescents and young men entailed expressions of manhood and physical strength, which is one of the main characteristics that distinguish men from women.<sup>36</sup> As we shall see, many of the acts of violence committed by adolescents and young men in the Dutch Republic were rites of passage, and were not the same type of delinquent juvenile behavior associated with economic crime for daily survival.<sup>37</sup> The mimicking of aggressive adult conduct was important for adolescent boys and young men to exhibit their manhood to society.<sup>38</sup>

Chapter Four will examine how violence perpetrated by adolescents and young men was an essential part of manhood in Dutch cities during the early seventeenth century when the country swelled in geographical size and population due to immigration from the countryside during the revolt in the Southern Netherlands and the war raging in German territories. Consequently, Dutch cities, especially the urban centers of Holland that experienced the most demographic changes, became a crossroads between the rural culture of agrarian society with its idiosyncratic norms of socializing young men and an emerging urban culture of civilized society that desired law and order. The generation of young men from the 1620s and 1630s from all echelons of Dutch society helped alter socialization practices towards a more civilized society.

According to the slippery slope concept, after alcohol came other licentious behavior such as sex. After the senses had been become doused with alcohol and after committing acts of violence, young men were sure to lose control and submit to the seduction of women or vices of the flesh. Lea Dasberg, the Dutch historian of childhood whose study *Grootbrengen door kleinhouden als historisch verschijnsel* [Childrearing through Infantilization as a Historical Phenomenon] (1975) elaborated on Ariès's notion that childhood has been extended in the last three centuries, postulates that young children in the seventeenth century became acquainted with the facts of life and were not sheltered from adult sexuality. In an era when children did not have separate bedrooms, slept in the same bed with parents, wet-nurses, or house personnel, and when most people slept either in the nude or with only a pajama cap, young children were fully educated about sex from an early age onwards.<sup>39</sup> In that respect, Chapter Five will examine whether young men mastered a liminal rite of sexuality. For early modern parents and adolescents alike, this was one of the most critical stages in the upbringing of young men, yet early modern moralists and pedagogues were often tight-lipped about providing sex education.<sup>40</sup> The Dutch pedagogue Johannes de Swaef, who published the first child-rearing manual in Dutch, *De Geestelijcke Kwekerij* [The Spiritual Nursery] (1621), advised parents at length about everything they needed to know about how to raise children from breast-feeding to finding a suitable marriage partner. Yet when it came to educating boys and adolescents about *vogelen* ('the birds and the bees'), he was suddenly at a loss for words.<sup>41</sup>

Norms and values about sexuality during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century underwent great changes. In the mid-sixteenth century when the Northern Netherlands was still under the hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church, it was not unusual for many young men and women to join a monastery and live a life of celibacy. The Reformation and abolishment of papal institutions had a dramatic social and spiritual effect on the sexual lives of thousands of young men and women. Primarily, they were no longer obliged to follow a life of celibacy; indeed, under the new Protestant family moral they were expected to marry and have children. Before that, however, young people had to become economically independent, which often entailed delaying the age of marriage. Consequently, this meant that there was a longer period between the age of sexual maturity and marriage, which became a great concern to moralists and parents alike. Moreover, the average age at which adolescents in the early seventeenth century left the parental home was younger than in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. After completing secondary school, the Latin school, usually in their mid to late teens, boys either became apprentices or went to university. Part of the educational scheme entailed learning a trade or attending a university in another city. Boys would take up residence with the family of the artisan to whom he was apprenticed, or with one of the professors he was studying with at the university. When early modern parents sent their sons off, they must have felt sadness but also an anxiety about the many temptations that the world had to offer.

Chapter Five will investigate which sexual outlets and courting rituals young men had before they reached the age of marriage and how moralists and society addressed those outlets and courting practices.

Contrary to contemporary western governments that have imposed smoking bans, restricted the use of tobacco in public spaces, and marginalized its habitués, young men from the 1620s and 1630s were the first generation to witness an unfamiliar prosperity with a growing selection of new consumer products. One of the new luxury products introduced into Europe by extended trade relations was tobacco. In the late sixteenth century, soldiers, seamen, and other social outcasts were the only consumers of tobacco. By 1650 smoking had become a favorite pastime for the Dutch. According to Simon Schama, the smell of the Dutch Republic by mid-seventeenth century was the smell of tobacco. In the short period of half a century, smoking had become integrated from a habit of social deviants to a mainstream recreational habit. Chapter Six will address how the generation of the 1620s and 1630s produced cultural agents who transformed the practice of social degenerates into a common habit of the masses.

### *Before rock 'n' roll*

In Chapter Seven we shall address the recreational activities of young men in the 1620s and 1630s. The most crucial question is what young people did with their free time. In most countries in early modern Europe, song was the most feared vice of young men after wine and women. Parents have always been concerned about the sexuality and recreational activities of their adolescent children. Making music and singing were popular recreational activities of young people in the early seventeenth century. In general, singing was a favorite pastime of the Dutch. During the economic boom and growing affluence of the middle class, consumer products such as songbooks had become a trendy consumer good produced for and purchased by the urbane young people living in the cities of Holland and other towns in the Republic. Besides spending money, the youngsters of the urban elite had more leisure time at their disposal than previous generations of young men did. We shall address how songbooks and the activities portrayed in songbooks played an important role in creating a national identity and were a cohesive force in molding the youth culture of the 1620s and 1630s. Books that contained songs were by no means a new phenomenon. However, during the 1610s and 1620s the size, scale, and production of elaborate editions of songbooks changed as never before. New songbooks were published primarily for young urban audiences. Besides their amusing quality, they were important mediums in conveying ideas about contemporary youth culture, and creating the Dutch identity. Subliminally, the songbooks of the 1610s, 1620s, and 1630s relayed a national youth culture and identity throughout the cities of the Dutch Republic. Young people were informed of what other youths in the rest of the Republic did for leisure activities.

Finally, in the epilogue we shall return to the young Otto Copes and address the role models that helped shape his youth culture and notions of masculinity in the 1620s and 1630s. We will examine how early seventeenth century role models were pivotal in projecting ideals of manhood to adolescents and young men, as well as laying the groundwork of a national identity for the newly founded Dutch Republic, at a time when the country, much like a modern adolescent, was striving for its own independence.