‘We are hunters and gatherers of values’

Dramatic play, early childhood pedagogy, and the formation of ethical identities

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In his speech accepting the Nobel Prize for Literature, Seamus Heaney (1995) recalls a dark hour in the history of sectarian violence in the North of Ireland when, in 1976, a minibus full of workers was stopped by a gang of marked men with guns in their hands and hatred in their hearts. The workers were forced to line up. A gun was waved in front of them as a man snarled, ‘Any Catholics among you step out here’. The lone Catholic man in the group did not move when his hand was gripped by his fellow Protestant worker in a signal that said, ‘we are in hell, but we are here together’. The story does not have a just ending. After hesitating, he stepped forward, only to see all his friends butchered. Yet Heaney finds hope in his belief that ‘the birth of the future we desire is surely in the contraction which that terrified Catholic felt on the roadside when another hand gripped his hand’. Heaney spoke of the need to recognize and sustain,

... the power to persuade that vulnerable part of our consciousness of its rightness, in spite of the wrongness all around it, the power to remind us that we are hunters and gatherers of values, that our very solitudes and distresses are creditable, in so far as they too are an earnest of our veritable human being.

Having grown up, like Heaney, in the divided and often violent society of Northern Ireland, for decades I have been asking myself a moral question like the one he implies: how is it that people develop ‘the power to persuade themselves’ of the ‘rightness’ of their words and deeds despite the ‘wrongness’ that may tempt them to act otherwise? I have explored answers to this question especially as I have reflected on my playful parenting and pedagogy in early childhood classrooms that has dramatic play at its core. In this chapter I explain how and why I have come to believe that adults’ active participation in dramatic play with children, at home and in classrooms, can be highly significant in the formation of powerful morally persuasive identities.

At the core of my scholarship and teaching has been an interest in the ethical dimensions of pedagogy (Edmiston, 2008; 2005; 2000). A pedagogical use of dramatic improvisation in both play and performance has been central to my educational career (Heathcote, 1984): as a secondary English teacher in the U.K., as an elementary teacher in the U.S., and as an academic researching my own classroom teaching with
students of all ages. However, it was not until I had the opportunity over more than a decade to gather data and reflect on the moral significance of playing with my son Michael (aged 19 at the time of writing), that I began to theorize and come to understand more clearly the relationship between dramatic play and ethics.

**Ethical action as answerability**

Six-year-old children are laughing as they pretend to be sharks using their arms like jaws to snap at me. We are in the meeting area of a suburban classroom in central Ohio having just analyzed photographs of sharks and dolphins to compare how these creatures swim, as well as what and how they eat. The children are noisy as they circle me while I pretend to be a series of swimmers. Children take turns pretending to be Great White sharks, telling me how to react, and narrating snippets of stories: some say I escape though most want to imagine that I'm frightened and then caught; some see blood and severed limbs in the water.

The children had previously invented, and in extended dramatic play they had run with their teacher, Trish Russell, the Extreme Adventures Travel Agency; they had enacting events from a 'Swimming with Dolphins' vacation that was 'fun but safe' (Beach, et al. 2010). Now we imagine 'Scuba Adventures', another travel company, taking people on trips where 'others are afraid to go'. At first, the children like the idea of going 'Swimming with Sharks'. After our pretend attacks we brainstorm protective gear and invent the story of Bruce Foster who, having left the steel cage and body armour we had imagined, was lucky to survive a shark attack. We pretend to fly him by helicopter to hospital where Trish meets us as his distraught mother. Days later, meeting me as the owner of closed-down Scuba Adventures, children are adamant that the agency cannot reopen until they are clear that no more clients will be in danger.

Rather than rely solely on the dominant moral developmental framework of Piaget (1975) and Kohlberg (1984) that views young children each at a pre-adult stage on their way to becoming less egocentric, more empathetic, and able to use more abstract, objective, rational, moral rules, I turn to the Russian theorist Bakhtin. In place of a universal approach to ethics, Bakhtin (1990, 1993) conceptualizes an ethical human being as embracing an ongoing discursive, or 'dialogic', struggle among 'voices' that are competing ideological guides to what is 'right' action in particular situations. I argue that such a view can apply to people of all ages, including young children. What Bakhtin calls 'answerability' and 'addressivity' are central to his dialogic theory of ethical deeds. For Bakhtin, dialogue is more than an exchange of words. People are dialogic when they 'answer' voices that they experience as 'addressing' them; their answers are ethical when they evaluate, or assume, that one deed rather than another is the 'right' (or 'wrong') thing to do.

Like most of the children I relished pretending to be an attacking, potentially deadly, shark. Being 'addressed' by a vulnerable swimmer I 'answered' with an attack. The 'rightness' of that act, for a shark, became clear to all the children in a subsequent discussion as we considered why predators kill. Similarly, the children were in agreement about how they ought to respond to Bruce Foster's plight: all rescued him and
many participated in running a hospital where he, and others in need of medical help, were cared despite many emergencies.

For Bakhtin (1990), being ethical means that any person's answer, and thus any understanding of what is right action, is never static, or 'finalized', but rather is always open to change in further dialogue in new situations. For example, whereas initially there had been little concern about vacation trips involving sharks, a developing understanding of safety was made clear as the children created drawings, stories, and models as many created the hospital and authored the story of Bruce Foster. Later, confronting me as the owner of Seuba Adventures many answered his complaint that he was losing money because he had been closed down, with a clear demand for a plan to keep clients' safe.

All of this collaborative dramatic play occurred in a classroom where children repeatedly addressed other children. They wanted to share materials or space and desired to work together or sometimes be alone. Trish, as a teacher who wanted to build a collaborative community, was consistently 'gathering' children's answers together into what they valued about their lives together in the classroom; these values were then addressed, discussed, and collaboratively agreed upon in class meetings. Dramatic play created spaces where specific questions and discourse about values like cooperation and safety could be 'hunted' for, considered, extended, and answered as they took action in very demanding particular contexts beyond the more predictable everyday contexts of schooling. For example, the need for people to collaborate in flying a helicopter or running a hospital and using medical equipment, like a blood transfusion drip represented by a drawing, or actual supplies, like bandages, were more pressing and obvious ways of addressing ongoing issues of sharing and answering in action than any classroom discussion about a need to share resources. And new understanding of the need to create and abide by rules in order to keep people safe was very apparent and obvious in the context of an imagined but very real person who had nearly died.

For Bakhtin, imagination is essential for ethical action. When a person uses what Bakhtin (1981) characterizes as the 'dialogic imagination', like the writers and readers of novels and other narratives, people imaginatively 'project' into the words and deeds of the consciousnesses of anyone whom they experience as addressing them. When we imagine ourselves as if we were other people we empathize because we view the world as they do. Additionally, imagination opens up the possibility of being addressed by those who are not actually present, adding more compelling voices and new viewpoints on actions to 'mingle' with, and affect, prior views.

Dramatic play can be an ethical portal into direct encounters with voices and viewpoints that would be sidelined or mostly silent in everyday life. As adults we develop the capacity to imagine conversations with other people and ideas without moving around as children often desire to do. For most adults, as Vygotsky (1967) put it, 'imagination is play without action' but for children 'play is imagination in action' (539).

Bakhtin's conceptualization of an ethical dialogic struggle to answer competing imagined voices that address us about right action, was apparent one day when our son Michael was thirteen. One Saturday, the day after a Friday evening school skiing trip, Michael showed me a $20 bill that he had found on the ground near his bus. He
said he didn't know whether to keep it or not having told me the story of where he had found it. I didn't tell Michael what to do but rather I raised some questions for him including what he would want someone to do if they found money he had dropped. I spoke from the perspective of a person who had lost money as I pretended to put a hand in my pocket and realize the money was gone. He didn't tell me what he would do, but on the Monday Michael gave the bill to the teacher who had been in-charge of the trip. As no one had told her that they had lost money she returned it to Michael at the end of the day.

In a subsequent conversation a week later Michael told me about his experience of what had been for him both an internal and an external ethical struggle. He was responding to the multiple voices by which he felt addressed that included mine even before he spoke with me.

I thought maybe I shouldn't have told you because at first I was thinking I could have kept it without my conscience being tested. But I was glad because if I hadn't told you I would probably have had an inner battle with my conscience over the weekend. Over the weekend I'd have been thinking should I turn it in or keep it. Personally, I think I would have decided to turn it in.

I asked Michael if what I had said had made him turn in the money. He responded, 'No. But it sort of speeded up the process and made me realize I should turn it in sooner'. Michael had experienced an inner struggle between competing inner and outer voices. He told me that when I had initially asked him what he thought he should do, and why, he was pulled in different directions.

• Other students had found money and kept it without turning it in
• Someone had lost the money
• It was impossible to know for certain who had dropped it
• He had money in his hand that he could spend.

As I had talked with him he said it was as if I had 'amplified' all of these voices. In particular, I had created a personal voice for the person who had lost the money. That voice had become more demanding than the decontextualized voice of 'finders keepers' and the dominant voices of his peers who had previously kept lost money. Finally, I had focused him on the Golden Rule question of what he would want someone else to do if he had lost the money.

Michael's actions were ethical, not because he had developed the ability to understand and follow an abstract principle like the golden rule, but because he had chosen an action in response to a struggle over how best to act when projecting into and answering all of the voices that he felt addressed him in both actual and imagined social interactions.

**Authoring ethical identities**

Bakhtin's (1990) relational view of consciousness provides a dynamic view of an evolving 'authoring' self that acts in everyday and imagined dialogue with other people.
An ethical self, for Bakhtin, is the acting consciousness that embraces a struggle to answer, not only those voices present in face-to-face dialogue but also those that may be sought out in encounters with others or that address us in imagination. If the self acts and answers in a conscious moment, then how a person’s consciousness extends to include social, cultural, and historical relationships with other people creates ‘identities’.

In their everyday and imaginative interactions over time and through their participation in social and cultural practices people continually author identities; people identify with the ongoing and past social actions and cultural practices of different groups of people. As Hall puts it, people form ‘points of identification and attachment’ with different cultural groups (1996, p. 5). Identities are formed in classrooms and families as much as they are, for example, within sporting, ethnic, or national groups. And, I argue, the ‘pretend identities’ (Dyson, 1997) take on by children participating with others in dramatic play, at home or in school, can affect their everyday identities (Edmiston, 2008; Beach et al. 2010).

Especially because of my experience growing up in a sectarian society, I argue that though they overlap, people should not conflate ethical identities with socio-cultural identities; people’s views of right social action should not be predetermined by the moral discourse or viewpoints of any groups with which they identify. Further, what has become clear to me over the years is that at the heart of my ethical identity is an authoring desire both to understand and to question the viewpoints of others rather than to silence them as well as being open to change my own position in any response.

For Bakhtin, discourse is more than verbal exchange between people but rather includes the ideology of the inner voices in a person’s changing consciousness that underlie and guide their deeds. As Morson and Emerson put it, ‘Consciousness takes shape, and never stops taking shape, as a process of interaction among authoritative and innerly persuasive discourses’ (1990, p. 221). Every interaction is not only a face-to-face discourse but is also an exchange that both affects, and is affected by, a person’s prior discourses. In contrast with Michael’s dialogic exchange in which he showed his openness to listen and reconsider his position, the gunman in Heaney’s story had an uncompromising monologic encounter in which their rigid consciousness was unaffected by the lives of those they treated as intensely other than themselves; dialogue was something that they were unable to do with deadly consequences for those they annihilated.

If Michael had returned the $20 bill because I had told him to do so, or because he was following a rule or a family practice, he would have only been responding to, and acting from, an externally authoritative, or largely monologic, discourse. However, Michael’s analysis of his struggle illuminated how his discourse about how to respond to found money was ‘innerly persuasive’: he dialogically convinced himself about how he ought to act and in doing so was authoring and extending his consciousness. This was so despite the fact that his interaction with me was clearly influential. As he noted, I had ‘amplified’ some voices. As his father, my discourse tended to have more authority than the discourse of, for example, a schoolmate on the bus. And in imagination by giving voice to the viewpoint of the person who had dropped the bill, that I felt he
had not fully considered, I was also alluding to a powerfully authoritative discourse: the Golden Rule. His action on that day was one incident in his ongoing gathering of values that have been tested, extended, and developed over time as discourses of his ethical identity. To what extent a person’s discourses are innerly persuasive or externally authoritative is apparent in their dispositions: how much, on the one hand, are they open to dialogue or, on the other hand, how much they are closed to new ideas. Put another way, people are coauthoring selves and identities when they remain open to being affected by other people’s new ideas.

Though Bakhtin never wrote about education or learning, his conceptualisation of discourse and inner voices parallels Vygotsky’s (1978) social constructivist educational theory: inner speech and abstract ideas develop from the interactions of external social speech. According to Vygotsky, mental concepts, that would include evaluations of what constitutes right and wrong action, must first be constructed in social interactions for them to become internalised. Bakhtin’s idea that authoring requires more than acting in response to externally authoritative discourse resembles Behaviorist assumptions about the need for adult control of moral action. In contrast, both Vygotsky and Bakhtin stress that people only really understand when they socially construct, or coauthor, meaning. Meaning-making can include any shared ethical understanding or discourse that is shaped by, and in subsequent interactions shapes, an ethical identity.

**Coauthoring ethical identities in dramatic play**

My experience of play in schools has unavoidably been largely sporadic, even when I have been able to participate for extended periods of time, as was the case with bi-weekly visits over a year to Trish Russell’s classroom. In contrast, for over five years between the time when Michael was two and seven-years-old, I played with him regularly, and for extended periods of time. Our time playing together diminished as Michael became more interested in being alone with friends and more immersed in reading literature. However, especially when he was younger, dramatic playing was a dimension of our daily life at mealtimes, in the car, and at home, as we pretended to enter the narrative of a book or video.

**Playing with selves and identities**

Dramatic playing with narratives allows people to try out different ‘possible selves’ (Marcus and Nurtius, 1986) and over time author different possible identities. Michael took charge of our play. He could pretend to be any person or creature in the world of any story he liked and, moving seamlessly from one encounter to the next, he would invariably ask me to encounter him. Each imagined world became, as the Bakhtian scholar Carl Emerson (1997) puts it in reference to adults’ reading of novels, ‘a test site for moral behavior’ (242).

Though Michael engaged in some domestic or everyday play e.g. pretending to cook or use the telephone, he was more captivated by what I call mythic play. As Warner
Myths are stories that inquir into everyday realities, projected onto an eternal and supernatural horizon. Donald O'Tuatha (1995: 1) adds that myths are "ancient human experiences we all share - birth, love, hate, death."

In Trish Russell's classroom the everyday medical and travel agency play was closer to the sort of prosocial 'rehearsals for life' that Erikson (1963) championed. At the same time, shark attacks and the fantastic medical symptoms children invented provided a mythic dimension that many children, especially boys relished experiencing.

Some of the mythic landscapes where Michael eagerly and repeatedly encountered the power of love and hate and questions of life and death included the following: Peter Rabbit; Jack and the Beanstalk; Perseus and Medusa; St George and the Dragon; Beauty and the Beast; Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde; Star Wars; Frankenstein and the Wolfman; and Dracula. Michael, pretending to be different possible selves (e.g., a knight, a Jedi warrior, or a human) would evaluate deeds as wrong when he commanded giants, dragons, vampires, werewolves, or people (all represented by me) to cease their monstrous deeds: attacking, killing, hurting, and not stopping when confronted. At other times he pretended to be monsters on his own or as he encountered me. As we revisited and broadly repeated the same narratives sometimes Michael most often wanted me to be one character e.g., when he had to sit still in the car he was often the Beast about to die with me, as Beauty, telling him how I loved him and what we would do if he did not die. When we could move around, Michael most often wanted us to switch back-and-forth between positions, in what I came to call positioning-play; sometimes within seconds or across days he could experience the same encounters from different perspectives. For example, he loved to be a terrifying dragon, the heroic knight, St George, and the lady, Una, who nurtures George back to health. I was repeatedly put by Michael in a position of evaluating whatever actions he pretended to do e.g., as the knight I would try to stop the dragon using my words or my deeds if he attacked me. Using Wenger's (1998) distinction, I argue that over time Michael authored a positive identification with all the deeds, that in our discourse we evaluated as 'good' or 'right' (e.g., saving people, stopping killing, tricking attackers, talking monsters into not killing, reaching win-win solutions, being kind, nurturing victims), and a negative identification with those hateful or hurtful deeds, that we evaluated as 'bad' or 'wrong'.

**Self-control**

Bodrova and Leong (this volume) have empirically shown what Vygotsky (1967) theorized: extended play develops children's self-control. Shifting between the positions of the perpetrators, victims, and bystanders of violent or other hateful acts not only develops children's capacity for moral action but also for restraint. Michael's developing self-control was very apparent once when I would not allow Michael, aged four, to do something. He was so annoyed that he was shaking as he said, 'I feel like hitting you.' When he added, 'Shall I cut your head off?' I responded by saying, 'You could, but you won't will you?' He was transfixed. I helped him diffuse his anger by redirecting it into a narrative where he could use a sword for good ends. Quick, if we
don't stop the dragon it will attack the people'. Michael soon was pretending to wield a sword, moving as if he was a knight in pursuit of me as the dragon.

Michael revealed his ability to control his self by answering inner voices of restraint when he was six-and-a-half. After school he regularly went to the family of his school friend, Ben. One day I discovered that Ben had punched Michael in the stomach in an argument over which television program to watch. I asked if he'd punched back. He replied with a tone that implied he would never considering doing that: 'Dad, I know what it feels like'. When I asked if he had wanted to hurt Ben he responded, 'Part of me does but I just say firmly, No, I don't like this'.

**Dialogizing discourses in position-play**

Though he reenacted some episodes from stories with little variation, Michael mostly transformed narratives to create new encounters that, using Bakhtin's (1981) term, repeatedly 'dialogized' a prior discourse. In other words, an ethical evaluation from one episode that I had stated or had implied was placed in dialogue with another evaluation so that a more nuanced answer could be tested out. This occurred both across and within narratives. For example, whereas for Michael (aged just four) Medusa always turned people to stone but would not attack if left alone, a few months later he wanted to explore how the terrifying dragon who confronted St George could sometimes be convinced to use his power for good e.g. to burn trash. At other times as the dragon he would not stop and with a discourse of warning and then regret I would use my sword to kill the dragon. Michael would repeat the encounter with him as the knight.

Aged four-and-a-half he loved to pretend to take a potion to transform from Dr Jekyll into his shadow side, Mr Hyde. Michael positioned me to answer the deeds of Hyde whom he did not want to transform into a person who would stop.

**Michael:** You're Mr Hyde and I'm Dr Jekyll. We're the same person. [In quick succession he imagines he is a werewolf who tries to attack Mr Hyde/me, a little boy asking me/ Hyde for money, and an adult sitting in front of Hyde/me. Michael tells me/Hyde to push him out of the way. As the werewolf he tries to wrestle me. As the boy and the adult he falls over.]

**Brian/Hyde:** Get out of my way.

**Michael:** Now I'm Mr Hyde and you're a person.

**Michael/Hyde:** Get out of my way [pretending to push me and repeating the words I've just said as Hyde]

**Brian/person 1:** Please help me.

**Michael/Hyde:** Get out of my way. I'm a monster.

**Michael – You're another person who helps him, i.e. the victim.**

**Brian/person 2:** Can you help me? [He changes to imagine he is my wife and we talk about what to do. He tells me to phone the police. He imagines we are police
officers and wants to write in a book what has happened. He wants us to look for Hyde and imagines that we go into a house. He looks up and points.]  

*Brian:* Wait a minute. You have to be very careful it's the right person.  

*Brian:* Wait a minute. You have to be very careful it's the right person.  

*Brian:* Shall we have it that he's up on the roof tops and you...  

*Michael:* and I (inaudible) yes  
[He changes to pretend to be Dr Jekyll.]  

I resisted shooting Hyde, in contrast to killing a dragon, because I regarded him as a human. In the ten minutes between the first and second extracts, Michael turns from Jekyll back into Hyde and positioning me as a series of victims he attacks and leaves one for dead. Then we return to a similar encounter as the previous one as Michael dialogizes my earlier answer by placing me in the position of a man who had killed who refuses to surrender.  

*Michael:* Now I'm the little boy. OK, daddy?  
*Brian:* OK.  

*Michael* (boy): Police. There's a monster who's killed some people.  
*Brian* (policeman): We've seen him. Have you seen him? Do you know where he is? We've been looking for him.  

*Michael* (boy): Yea. He tried to kill me.  
*Brian* (policeman): Are you all right?  

[He tells the policeman/me that Hyde is on the roof of a building]  

*Michael:* Daddy, you be Mr Hyde up on the rooftop.  
[He climbs half way up the stairs.]  

*Michael* (policeman): Get down from that rooftop.  
*Brian:* No. Who are you?  

*Michael* (policeman): I'm a police.  
*Brian* (Hyde): What do you want?  

*Michael* (policeman): Stop doing all those mean things.  
*Brian* (Hyde): Why should I?  

*Michael* (policeman): Because they're all mean.  
*Brian* (Hyde): Huh. What will you do to me if I do come down?  

*Michael* (policeman): Well if you don't come down I'll shoot you.  
*Brian* (Hyde): And if I do? What will you do to me?  

*Michael* (policeman): I'll send you away to jail.
Brian/Hyde: Jail? Why should I go to jail?
Michael/police officer: Because you know, because you’re mean that’s why. Hub.
[We talk back-and-forth about rules until Michael refocuses us.]
Michael/police officer: Just no talk about it. Now get down or I’ll shoot you.
Brian: How do you want it to end? Do you want to shoot him or do you want him to come down?
Michael: I want to shoot you.
Brian/Hyde: No [laughing], I can get away, I’m too clever for you.
[Michael shoots and I pretend to die]
Michael: Now change back into the Shadow.
[I lie down and transform my body into Hyde’s. Michael stands over me pretending to hold the gun. His mother, Pat, enters the room]
Pat: Are you going to use that gun to shoot other people?
Michael/police officer: I only use my gun to shoot monsters [said with a tone of this being obvious].

In a subsequent conversation with Michael, his ethical disposition was clear, one that through our play I too had come to accept:

Brian: ‘Would you kill all monsters?’
Michael: ‘Oh no, only those that have done many, many, many mean things…. killing people mostly’
Brian: ‘And what would you do before deciding you had to kill it?’
Michael: ‘I’d teach it to stop doing those mean things’.

Conclusion

As I have argued in this chapter, when adults regularly play with children in worlds of imagination their moral explorations of difficult, dangerous, and often deadly encounters can significantly affect the development of ethical identities that are apparent in children’s dispositions toward others. Playing with children makes us partners in the moral task of developing a power to persuade oneself of the rightness of acting well despite the choice to act otherwise. Vygotsky (1978: 10) stresses the connection between play and future action: ‘a child’s greatest achievements are possible in play, achievements that tomorrow will become her basic level of real action and morality’.

When Michael was fourteen, I asked if he remembered times in daily life when he had acted, or thought about acting, to help others. This question came after a decade of him imagining, via dramatic play and reading, countless people in problematic situations more demanding than anything Michael likely encountered in everyday life. Two of the examples he gave illustrated his ethical disposition to identify with, and help, others in need: ‘I do “random acts of kindness” helping people with their homework; whenever I see someone obviously struggling with something that I can help
them with I always go and try to help them'. A further example illustrated the prosaic struggle of answerability he was aware of even when he wanted to do the right thing:

When kids are making fun of another kid, you have to imagine from the point of view of the person who's being horrible and you feel sorry for the person who's being ridiculed. If you intervene and you stick up for them sometimes you don't because you're afraid others will laugh at you.

In Trish Russell's classroom she recognized how playing with children throughout the year had affected students' social and ethical identities. When I asked her why she valued playing with her students she was emphatic: 'Not only do you teach them how to be creative, but also how to be real people and to feel like they're going to be somebody in the world'. Extended collaborative play promoted more kindness in daily collaborative relationships among children; laughing at others, for example, was not tolerated. In particular, one boy, Ansel, who had begun the year isolated and angry with a highly oppositional identity, had ended the year more settled, happier, and more open to reaching out to work with others. Through dramatic play he had been able to explore different possible selves and identify differently with his classmates as he participated over extended periods of time in playful classroom social practices: as a bus driver, as a gatherer of other people's opinions, as a creator of images for whole class use, as a sharer of information with others from books, and as a person fielding class questions. Some of the other children, who had ignored or rejected Ansel at the beginning of the year, by the close of the year chose to play and work with him.

Bakhtin believes that 'ethics is a matter not of knowledge, but of wisdom' (Morison and Emerson, 1990, p. 27). Like Bakhtin, the novelist Ursula Le Guin (1979) understands that entering worlds of literature can promote the growth of wisdom in children. Adults who play with children can do more. By entering into imagined worlds alongside children, adults can extend and deepen their own as well as the children's ethical identifications when they too encounter people faced with ethical challenges and choices.

I believe that maturity is not an outgrowing but a growing up: that an adult is not a dead child but a child who survived. I believe that all the best faculties of a mature human being exist in the child, and that if these faculties are encouraged in youth they will act well and wisely in the adult, but that if they are repressed and denied in the child they will stunt and cripple the adult personality. And finally, I believe that one of the most deeply human, and humane, of these faculties is the power of imagination (Le Guin, 1979, p. 44).

References


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