

their minds abreast of everything both possible and impossible. As long as they have this facility, they are not being closed off into one little channel of acceptable thought.

Throughout most of history cultures have conspired to take children and force them at this time into one traditional or conventional form of fantasy that would encompass all their own dreams—namely, the myth and ritual life of that culture, which its people felt was necessary to their survival. But in modern society we have a much larger problem for the imagination, and we must begin to look at that in the next chapter.

9

The Dream: *From Five to Seven Years*

A ghost and a monster came and got me and took my clothes and pajamas and got my father and took his clothes and pajamas and put us in a machine. I was so scared I woke up.

•
"Do you believe in matrimony?"
"Yes, as long as it has cheese on it."



GAMES AND OTHER THINGS TO DO*The Morning Dream*

The first source of all our creativity is the dream. We can ignore them or pay attention to them. Your children like to tell you about their dreams at breakfast. The dreams they tell you about are usually scary, which is why they want to tell you about them. We know from scientific studies that if you wake children up during the night, most of their dreams are not scary. This means that they only tell you these scary dreams because they want to get some help.

Many of the dreams of five-year-olds are like monster movies. The monster chases, captures, bites, and hurts them, and they try to escape but wake up feeling scared. They want to know that you love them and that they do not really have to worry about these night terrors. As children get older, they remember these dreams less, but they never finally leave them. Even adults remember these dreams now and again. As we get older, we do not forget these crises in our dreams; we just add new crises. If our lives are reasonably comfortable, however, we also add new assurances within the dreams themselves.

What are you to do? First, we think you should listen sympathetically. Tell children that dreams are stories about their feelings and that we all have such feelings. Dream-telling sessions around the table are reassuring to five-year-olds. It means that they are not alone in their dreams. Others are interested. It is only honest to realize that you yourself as the powerful person in the home are a part of the substance of their dreams. These are dreams of power. The children are dreaming of dangerous powers they cannot manage. For you to welcome and listen is to show that at least you personally are not as dangerous as the dream might suggest. But,

When they are five, if not before, children go to school. At school the teachers show them how to get on with their school work. In the playground the other children teach them how to compete. On television the cartoon figures tell them that the small people eventually win. The years between five and seven are, therefore, an initiation rite into working and winning. By seven most children are beginning to know what this group myth is all about.

During their first five years children develop a private imagination, which we will call their dream. This dream consists of their unique feelings about themselves and their family life, and it will stay with them forever. But if we are not careful during the years of five through seven, this dream will no longer persist as an active force in their life. It will be pushed under by the group dream of winning and working.

As parents we have to try not to let our children lose this individual imagining. We have to find ways for them to tell their own stories, paint their own pictures, construct their own worlds, act out their own scenarios, and keep their own dreams alive. If we encourage their imagining, the new ways of working will become attached to their private way of feeling, creating a sense of self-discipline. Without that development they cannot take their dream forward in a productive way but must simply adopt the stereotyped dreams of the larger society.

This book is an argument against the older form of initiation solely into the three R's and good behavior. That initiation neglected the creative contributions that individuals have to make to the society in which they now live.

as we have said at other times, listen quietly. Do not give lectures or in other ways show more of the same power that the dreamer is worried about.

Listening is only a first step. Listening is being receptive. It is making a safe place, a harbor to which the child can come after the rough night's voyage. After a time, days or weeks, of careful listening, if you feel the child is showing more confidence than fear about these dreams, then you can take a more active approach. There is a tribe of Malaysian people who actively explore their dreams every day. Everybody tells their dreams of the day, and everyone else gives advice on how to deal with them. If the dreamers are wronged in their dreams by anyone in the village, then those villagers give a present to the dreamers to show that the enemy they dreamed of must indeed have been someone else.

We are not suggesting that you begin to serve presents for breakfast. But this practice does suggest that the dreamers may need reassurance from the ones who are pictured as offending them in the dream. If those persons are at the breakfast table, why not give that reassurance. "Wow, I was a monster in your dream. That's me. I'm a monster sometimes. But I also love you," with a hug. We all have conflicts about those with whom we are closest. It is better to admit that there are two sides of the conflict, the love and the hate, than to pretend that only one always prevails.

This Malaysian group does another interesting thing. They tell the dreamers that the next time they meet the monsters in the dream they should tackle them without fear. They should go to them (in their dream) and make them give the dreamers a gift of a poem or a story that they can bring back to their tribe. Obviously we cannot lay that burden on five-year-olds without a lot more practice and village support. Still there is a principle here. After hearing their dreams, we can begin to discuss them. What were the monsters like? What color were they? How big? How did they move? Let us

discuss monsters thoroughly in a vivid way. What are all the images we have of them?

Here we are, in effect, bringing out the images that lie behind creativity. We are focusing on, and extending, the children's attention to the creative aspects of their own dreaming. We are supporting the Malaysian idea of using the dream creatively. There is no reason why we should not tell our children this story of the people who go back into their dreams the next night and chase their monsters. The confidence of this attitude, the healthy view it suggests of one's feelings about oneself, is certainly no worse than the strange uneasy silence that usually accompanies most dream telling. The outdated view that the dream is a form of mental illness is not much use to children.

So let us become involved with these dreams, listen to them, discuss them, and then go on to have fun with them, because the next step after we have laid down this background is to begin to play with them. "OK, so the monster went after you. How could you have gotten away?" or "How could you have captured the monster? Then what would you have done?" Very soon your child makes exaggerated suggestions that turn the tables on escape and anxiety. When we are doing this, we are playing with the morning dream and are back into the mode of this book. Taking the anxiety out of dreams and putting play into them is to our minds a way to enhance their very real contribution to our creative lives.

Telling Stories

We hope that you and your children will gain something from dream telling. You can do the same thing with stories more directly. Here we go right into absurdity. Remember this is the age when cartoons begin to take over, and children are exposed to, and revel in, all the magical devices that are so

frequently used in them. Bodies are expanded, shrunken, or changed into animals. People can fly in the air. As long as we are reasonably sure that the small heroes will always win, we will tolerate anything. Because the cartoon guarantees that the hero will conquer all, then the transformations become entertainable. "Guarantee us what is certain, and you can do anything you wish" seems to be the principle of this age.

The stories your children will tell now are usually very aggressive or violent from an adult's point of view. But if we think of what they have to deal with in their dreams, we realize that their stories only respond to their fears. In stories children see themselves mainly as attacked and afflicted by others. They are more often bailed out by parents and other amiable figures than they are in dreams. It is interesting to ask children, "How else could it happen?" and all kinds of creative suggestions can follow.

IF...

there were no monsters in the world
 there were no people
 people walked on their hands
 dogs made noises like pigs
 stars could land in your backyard
 mothers had five arms
 they held school on a boat
 you were your father
 you were a girl (boy)
 you never had to say thank you

Begin gradually with light, entertaining suggestions for different ways of looking at a story your child has told you. Then begin to make the suggestions more serious and then more radical, always taking your cues from what your child has suggested. We already talked about what you can do with

wacky fairy tales. See what could happen to Snow White if she had to marry one of the dwarfs. Which one? Why? Suppose Rumplestiltskin got his foot stuck in the floor and had to stay there forever, being fed by the miller's daughter. What if Rapunzel had used a protein cream rinse on her hair and the prince could not make his way up through the silky smooth hair? The same kinds of variations you made with nursery rhymes and fairy tales can lead to even more-creative personal storytelling.

Improvisation

In many ways this whole book has been about improvising. We have asked you as parents to make funny faces and funny noises to your babies. We have you walking around the floor on your hands like a horse. We have you croaking as the frog prince in the back of your throat: "Ribit, ribit, ribit." You have been asked to be an actor on the home stage. We feel that there is an important connection between your acting and your children's becoming versatile. All the time you are giving examples of being a very flexible person, and the children are learning that from you.

When they have reached five years of age, there are a series of steps you can make in improvisational games with your children. These steps follow the same steps taken by children in their own make-believe play from the age of one year onward. The first step was simply to create *make-believe* movements. You can begin to do this as early as three years. This is when you and your children or you and a group of children all pretend to walk around heavily like elephants or lightly like pussy cats; or you pretend to jump over the river, walk tall like skyscrapers, or walk small like bugs. This is a movement and music game that you can do with a drum.

The children's next step, when they were two, was to play

with a doll or toy and give it personality. Our parallel step at five is to pretend to play with an object. But we do not have any real object, so we use an *imaginary object*. We pretend to carry a heavy weight across the room; we are carrying the grocery bags from the car to the kitchen; we pretend to hammer a nail into wood; we pretend to cut with scissors.

As a first step children usually make a part of their body into the object they wish to imitate. Thus, when they cut with scissors, they make their fingers into the scissor blades. By about seven or so they will increasingly act just as if they were really holding the handle of a pair of scissors and make us imagine the blades. It is the same with the hammer. Younger children make their hands *be* the hammer. Older children make their hands *hold* the hammer. After a little warm-up a natural game is to take turns at reacting to, or using, some objects, while the others have to guess what you are doing. A large group of rather shy children can do it together in pairs; one watches while the other acts the part. This way you get the more customary informal play setting, and children do not feel so shy about being watched by an audience.

By the time children are three, they pretend to be somebody, usually a mother, a father, or a policeman—somebody who is important to them. Children's first pretense has to do with those actions that they identify with the person. Thus, a parent at first may be one who makes beds, shops, washes dishes, cleans floors, and has parties or one who rides off in the car or takes a load of dirt in his truck. Fathers are usually harder to define by actions because little children tend to see their actions less. There is the classic story of the little boy who acted his father by driving off on his tricycle to the city, coming right back, lying down on the floor, and saying, "Now I'll take a nap." (When children are five, they begin their improvisations of people first with similar obvious role-defining actions. The traffic cop signals on the traffic. How does he

do it? The fireman turns his hose on the fire. What does that look like? Here they are being an *imaginary character carrying out routine actions*. Again, we can take turns at guessing who they are by their actions.)

In addition to imitating people they know, three-year-old children will also create *situations* in their play. The mother works in an office. The father runs a gas station. So in improvisation we move on next to *imaginary situations*. We want to know now not only who the person is and what they are doing but also *where* they are.

In their own play by the age of four children add some emotion to their characters (the mother gets angry at her baby), and after four they begin to create imaginary characters, such as monsters and Snow Whites. Thus, in our improvisation in the five to seven age period we can also add these two requirements. Now show us *how the person feels*. Show us a happy person, a sad person, an angry person. Show us someone feeling something, and we will guess what it is. Now be an imaginary person, and we will try to guess what it is that person can do, because imaginary persons can do imaginary things. But with this last step we have come to the end of this age period.

Certainly between five and seven children can do imaginary actions, react to imaginary objects, be imaginary people doing routine things, provide an imaginary setting, show emotion, and in some cases be completely fantasy people. They do these in the typical home game and take turns guessing what it is they are doing. Where there is time, this sort of improvisation can be extended so that children work together to present "plays" that they have made up. We think it is important to go slowly here. Between five and seven children are easily embarrassed by the idea that they are acting for someone else to see, which is why puppets work so well. At the same time they do want to be able to act for an audience. What gives them, or for that matter any of us, a

feeling of safety is that they know there are clear rules, which is why ring games work so well.

This does not mean they will not be able to put on plays. After weeks or months of fairly anonymous plays, many children will get the feeling that there is security in this form of expression. Eventually they will want to introduce the plays that they create on their own into the new forum that you have created. What we are essentially doing through these games is creating a stage in our living room or classroom where imaginary things can happen. This stage is like their own personal play spaces. It is familiar. It is safe. The people there are trusted and, consequently, the children feel free to be inventive.

Television Talk

A major force in our day for making children into adults is television. There is so much of it and it changes so often that we might despair of ever knowing what is happening. But, in fact, the types of characters that children watch on their own shows and in cartoons pretty much play out the same characters as we have been giving them in folklore throughout the ages.

As parents we have to know a little about this in order to take part in the TV game. We have to know that the major lesson being taught children between the ages of four and seven is to *be shrewd* but stay nice. Do not be misled by appearances. Things are not always what they seem. Do not be gullible. Clowns are stupid people, always tripping over themselves. The moron asks silly questions. The tricksters are the smart puppets, smart in one way but foolish in some other. There are the impulsive honey-eating animals whose gluttony leads them into a fix, like Pooh Bear stuck in the hole.

Children learn that powerful people can be foolish, that small people can be foolish, and that what that means is that there are rules for grown-up behavior. You should not be gluttonous. You should not be one-eyed, trying to take everything away from everyone else. You should be sociable. You should share. These are simple lessons. But judging by the enormous amount of time that children spend watching shows that have these meanings, the lessons seem to take a long time to learn and to believe in. Actually we are usually more out in the open about telling children to be nice (do not fidget, yell, stare, spit, etc.), but we seem to have to use clowns, animals, and cartoon monsters to teach them how to be shrewd.

The TV game is really a game of conversation, of being able to play some of these roles yourself. For example, pretend to be the boastful clown who can walk on any tightrope anywhere, and then trip over the carpet. Just as this piece of buffoonery illustrates that pride goeth before a fall, most of the clowning appreciated at this age also illustrates one proverb or another. You can use proverbs as a cue to what to do. What is great for your children in all this is that you actually are their parent, whom they know 365 days a year, but you can take time out to enact a drama. You are versatile. Play the game of a blowhard, a self-booster. Think of ways in which you can take turns at acting it out and coming to disaster.

Play the game of gullibility. Even as early as four children understand this in game form. You let them trick you over and over. Each time they reassure you that if you show them, say, a coin in your hand, they will not take it, but of course they always do. Then you rough and tumble to get it back. They innocently profess only to want to examine it carefully, but, swipe, they have taken it again. So it goes.

On Being a Play Manager

Whether you like it or not, by the time your children are five you often find yourself not just playing with them but being in charge of a group of neighborhood or schoolchildren. What do you have to know? First, children have quite different styles of play, and they should not always be expected to like the same things. There are those who are mainly concerned with construction (science, cars) and impersonal kinds of play, and others who like dramatic and social play (houses, stores, schools). There are some children who are not really happy unless they are struggling with the physical environment, and yet others who prefer sedentary card and board games. There are highly impulsive children who move quickly from one activity to the next, and there are highly reflective ones who can stay with one activity for hours on end. There are those who like routine imitative play and those who prefer very imaginative improvisations. There are "boys" and "girls," "houses" and "trucks," "mothers" and "cowboys," "gymnasts" and "horses."

At the age of five most of the children's information is still coming from the adult in the group. The parent, teacher, or older child is still the major source of influence. It is wrong to think that in a large public setting freedom is enough for all these varieties of play. It is enough only if it is peaceable. There is no place for the hands-off policy that makes some children constantly the victims of others who have different play patterns.

Adults should understand that there are different types of play patterns and know how to make constructive suggestions and when to participate. Where children are impulsive and active, it often helps to limit the array of play materials that are set out. Play along with them for a while with the material that is put out. This fosters their own play with such materials. Sometimes, for example, a group of children may

completely ignore blocks for months on end. It is only when the adults get block play going, by showing what they can do with blocks and the make-believe things they can make, that some children learn how to get involved.

You should introduce new materials and equipment gradually. Before children are ready to play, they should learn to master the equipment you are putting out for them. We have mentioned mastery through exploration, testing, imitation, and construction. There are steps within each of these types of mastery that children always go through on their way to play. These stages are universal at any age and in any situation. The astronauts learn to cope with their new environment in exactly the same way.

An example of the stages through which one- to two-year-old babies proceed follows. When they first see something new, say a block, they either are frightened and turn away or watch it carefully for some time. When they stop being frightened, they examine it carefully. Then they try to do something with it. This is their first attempt at mastery, and what they do will be one of the *actions* below. They explore how it relates to other objects (they bang the block); they see what they can do with it (they throw it on the floor); they copy what their mother does with it (they put it on another block); they build with it (they stack it along with several others in a tower). If they like the effect of what they have done, they will usually *repeat* this action for a long time until they have mastered it.

There is an enormous amount of repetition and practice in young children's mastery activity, but the same is true of adults, especially when we are learning a new skill, such as typing, skiing, or tennis. It often takes the example of a new physical sport for us to realize what babies have to deal with. When that skill is mastered, it is usually *combined* with other skills into something more complicated. They may begin throwing the block at the tower and toppling it over.

The phases, then, that mastery goes through are examination, action, repetition, and combination; and this is what most preschool free activity is composed of. Knowing all this, the wise organizer puts out only a few things at once and allows a generous amount of time for the children to master new "toys" before expecting the equipment to be used for active play. This is true for all types of equipment, whether it is clothes for drama, puzzles, household toys, store toys, or school-type toys.

Another reason it is important not to put out too many toys at one time is that children will cooperate well if they do not have duplicates of each other's toys. If they do have the same toys, they will not have to work (play) together. Everyone is his own cook if there are cooking toys for all. But if they have to share bowls and egg beaters, then they exchange and develop complementary roles. One is cook, the other sets the table, etc. Another consideration is that a teacher may have to direct overflow children to another play place. Thus she needs attractive alternatives. Crowding can ruin group play, just as it ruins most other things.

We hope that it does not sound as if we are advocating the turning of play into teaching. The art of the play teacher is to provide examples, and such teachers succeed only when children are mastering and creating their own play and games in their own way. The play teachers' skills are to martial resources and children, to know when to suggest taking turns or sharing, and when to become involved themselves in the play (for example, when to take a part in a play or to suggest that someone else try that role).

THE CHILD'S OWN PLAY

For five- and six-year-olds it becomes even harder to separate their individual and social play. This is partly because chil-

dren prefer social play, so that their individual play is not as obvious to us. It tends to be restricted to the home or backyard, to the children's bedrooms, or even to fantasy. It becomes their own private world. Individual play or fantasy is very important, even though it is less accessible. As a general rule children are more advanced in solitary play than in social play. Individual play ideas appear a year or so earlier in individual play than in the children's social play.

In the last chapter we traced the various ways in which children get together and stay together. During this age period they are better at it. The same principles apply, but they pull it off with more success and for longer time periods. This is a great age for playing house, babies, school, cowboys, war, cops, doctors, dentists, funerals, ghosts, and witches. Often more than two children will get together for a long time, although several neighborhood children or nursery school children who have become familiar with each other will get along better or there must be an older child with ideas and power.

The group members have to learn how to play in unison, using a common theme, copying another member or some central person, and agreeing about who gets in and who is excluded. They have to cooperate and decide routines for what to play next and who owns what. All these skills demand playing together rather than simply alongside each other. If one is father, another is mother. If one is cop, the other is robber.

When the children were younger, they wanted to be the boss rather than take their turn and fit in with the roles that society demanded. The one exception, of course, was parent and baby, which were two fitting roles they knew very well and could practice much earlier. Between five and seven we move into the fitting roles that society is made up of: the seller and the buyer; the teacher and the student; the doctor

and the patient; the cop and the robber; the husband and the wife; the soldier and the enemy; the mourners and the dead.

In the last chapter the games of order and disorder that come at an earlier age were unison games. The balance between order and disorder was played out by all the players. They all danced around, and they all fell over in "Ring around the Rosy." That fitted the capacities of children up to five, which is mainly to be able to do things in an orderly way together. Children between the ages of five and seven learn to play two different roles within one game. Playing different roles is characteristic of both their informal play (house) and their formal play ("The Farmer in the Dell"). Some types of games are organized around fitting two roles together like this.

Games of Acceptance and Rejection

For centuries small children of five to seven years of age have played ring games in which one person in the center got to act in a special way. The best-known modern example is "The Farmer in the Dell," where the person in the center gets to choose the next person to come into the middle with her. So the farmer chooses a wife, and the wife chooses a child, and the child chooses a dog, etc. In most, but not all, of these games the choice had a romantic implication. In the traditional game "Pretty Little Girl of Mine" a circle of children marched around the player in the center with their hands linked. As they moved, they sang the following lyrics:

Oh this pretty little girl of mine,
She's cost me many a bottle of wine.
A bottle of wine or anything too,
To see what my little girl can do.

Down on the carpet she shall kneel,
While the grass grows in the field.
Stand upright upon your feet,
And choose the one you love so sweet.

The player in the center imitated the actions of the verse while the others walked around. At the end that player chose another person, who then took his place in the middle, and the game was repeated. Most children still get some fleeting experience with these kinds of games, although ring games are not played as often by children today. They are still played a great deal more than most adults suppose, however.

It is clear that marriage and love are imitated obliquely in these games. What is more important about them, however, is choosing and being chosen to go into the center. Here in game form is the experience of acceptance and rejection that we spoke of in the last chapter as inclusion and exclusion. This is perhaps the most important question of childhood life. Do I get in or do I get left out? Will I be chosen to go into the center or will I be forgotten?

We all recognize the question in adolescence, when dating comes along, and in adulthood, when marriage is involved. Think of the bad breath and body odor industries, which are based on our conflict over whether we will be accepted or rejected. It all begins with the inclusion and exclusion activities of three-year-olds. But between the years of five and seven it takes on more of a romantic coloring. Even when girls alone are playing the game, many of the words have to do with lovers, kings, dukes, and wives.

Traditionally girls have worried more about this particular conflict than have boys, because marriage was more traditionally the only road for them. Therefore, they played more of these games of marriage. But as we found in our own study, even today little girls of three who come from profes-

sional families are more concerned than are boys with being accepted and not being rejected. Between the ages of five and seven girls can give you better information than can boys on who is friends with whom in their school classes. Thus, things have not changed too much, even though there may be fewer ring games.

In older times (and not so old times) the same girls who played marriage games when seven years old would be fostering kissing games at their parties when thirteen years old, and those kissing games had exactly the same concern. Do I get accepted or rejected? Can I get the lover I want? In order to protect the players against the outcome the thirteen-year-old games always relied on chance, as in spin the bottle. It was not your fault or responsibility if you had to kiss the other player. It was the bottle that did it. But by age fifteen the same group might be playing flashlight, in which all the couples sit kissing in a circle in the dark and the leftover player has to shine the flashlight on them. If that player finds anyone not kissing, the person with the flashlight gets to take that place. Here you make a choice, but the game allows you to give it up if you make a mistake.

Although today children do not express their apprehension about acceptance and rejection so often in ring games, they do tend to show it more clearly in informal conversation about boy and girl friends. They also show it in informal games of chasing, in which the girls chase the boys or the boys chase the girls, at the end of which there is grabbing, capturing, and sometimes kissing. These games begin between five and seven years and may be played throughout childhood, getting more boisterous and rough until about twelve years. After that age children show more earnest concern for acceptance on grounds of personal appearance, adequacy, and the like.

Chasing and Escaping

After all the one-sided and imperfect games of chasing during earlier years, we finally arrive at tagging or hide and seek, in which children clearly understand that there are two fitting roles (hider and chaser) and that they must take them one at a time. What is interesting is that although there are two different roles, as in the marriage games, one role is the more important one. The central person in this game, like the central person in "The Farmer in the Dell," gets the game going. Most children's games are like this until about the age of nine years.

Children seem to borrow from adults the-strong-versus-the-weak power relationship. The farmer chooses, the player who is "It" chases, and the weaker character gets chosen or gets chased. Hence, children's first game societies are a bit like their own experiences of being children with adults, except that in the games the children do play an important role. If they get chosen or caught, then they become the central people; and in the games they can at least escape if they hide well enough.

If you play these games with children, you have to soften your role a little by being a bit of a bumbler or a clown. You have to be a monster, but not too dangerous or too effective a one.

Attack and Defense

Children between five and seven years do not play games that use the strategies of attack and defense; these games are not played until about nine years, when games such as dodge ball, in which you actually throw a ball at the other person and that person has to dodge, become very popular. But we

get forerunners of such games in cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians, and witches and ghosts. These games consist of a mixture of chasing and escaping, as well as pretended attack and defense.

What is interesting socially is that these games are the first example of two *groups* of children playing against each other. Although the groups are small, maybe only two on a side or one versus two, they are the beginning of *teams*. Here children are not only fitting roles together (chaser and escapee) but also fitting groups together (friends and enemies). Not surprisingly in these games, the major activity is usually taking prisoners. The territory of the game becomes divided up into the safe place where one can hide and the dangerous place where one can capture others or be captured oneself.

Sex Differences

Traditionally there have been important sex differences in all these types of games. Girls have usually been more concerned with exhibiting order, boys with disorder; girls with acceptance-rejection, boys with attack-defense; both with chase and escape. In western culture we are at a point of reassessment of all of these and other differences. The more "passive" roles usually ascribed to women are being questioned. These sex differences have been learned ones, and what can be learned can be unlearned. It is only thousands of years of tradition that make particularly subtle the ways in which we teach traditional sex differences.

Although there are many complex questions that we do not have answers for, there seems no doubt that we should stop encouraging passivity and a sense of inferiority in girls. We should also stop demanding an impassive toughness from young boys. Neither of these is of much use in our culture today. There is no reason, however, why in your games

around the breakfast table you should not at times exaggerate the worst excesses of both roles—for example, taking turns at portraying the ineffective weeping heroine and the swaggering brute. Such ribaldry and horseplay promote the growth of individuals. The idea of group conformity kills it.