

The Politics of Childhood and Children's Literature: A Critique

Ashok K. Mohapatra

*Sambalpur University, Department of English, Jyoti Vihar Campus, Sambalpur 768 019
Orissa, India
Fax: 91-663-431 901*

KEYWORDS Culture of Silence. Sanitized Identity of Child. Radical Objects and Forms of Knowledge. Myth of Purity and Eternity

ABSTRACT This paper critiques the politics of childhood and children's literature by arguing that childhood is a construct by the adults that disavows the materiality of children in society. In consequence, children's literature assumes the structure and function of a myth to dehistoricize the reality it presents and, in so doing, reinforces the dominant class ideologies. The paper suggests a corrective to the conventional children's literature and also calls for an agenda to break the "culture of silence" enveloping the construction of children and the literature for them.