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The fears of early Childhhod: Writing in response to a study of Maurice Sendak

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***THE FEARS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD:
WRITING IN RESPONSE TO A STUDY OF
MAURICE SENDAK***

by

REESA SHERYL MALCA SORIN

A thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Honours Masters of Arts

Faculty of Creative Arts

University of Wollongong

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ABSTRACT

This thesis looks at a series of stories written for children by Maurice Sendak. They are: *Where The Wild Things Are* (Chapter 3), *In the Night Kitchen* (Chapter 4), *Outside Over There* (Chapter 5) and *Dear Mili* (Chapter 6). Through analysis of these works I hoped to find a way of helping young children recognise and work through their fears. As the study progressed, it became apparent that the stories were written less and less to deal with the concerns of young children and more and more to deal with Maurice Sendak's own concerns.

As I still felt that it was possible through literature to recognise and deal with children's fears, I wrote a series of seven children's stories. They are based on concerns which, as a preschool teacher and parent, young children have expressed to me. They appear in Chapter 7. I have tried to resolve the situations in realistic and easily understood ways.

In Chapter 8, I have related my stories to the Sendak stories I have analysed, as well as relating my personal experiences to those of Sendak. The result is this thesis: **THE FEARS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD - Writing in Response to a Study of Maurice Sendak.**

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To Gertie and Shelley for being there, even from so far away.

To Ben, just for being Ben.

And to Max, King of all the Wild Things, and his creator.

*"Thus does my heart go out to you, and though
my eyes have not seen you yet, it loves you and
thinks it is sitting beside you. And you say:
'Tell me a story.' And it replies: 'Yes, dear
Mili, just listen.'"*

*(from *Dear Mili*, by Maurice Sendak.)*

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