The fears of early Childhood: 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
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of the requirements for the degree of
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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 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.’"
THE FEARS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD -

WRITING IN RESPONSE TO A STUDY OF MAURICE SENDAK

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION ........................................ p 6
Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW ................................. p 13
Chapter 3 WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE ..................... p 29
Chapter 4 IN THE NIGHT KITCHEN .............................. p 48
Chapter 5 OUTSIDE OVER THERE .............................. p 58
Chapter 6 DEAR MILI ........................................... p 77
Chapter 7 MY STORIES: ANALYSIS OF MY STORIES...pp 94 - 138
    THE MONSTER UNDER THE COVERS  p 96
    I WON'T ........................................ p 106
    THE LITTLE ORANGE CANARY .... p 115
    JUST BEN AND ME ......................... p 121
    WHEN YOU’RE A ONE ...................... p 125
    ALONE ........................................ p 129
    WHO MAKES THE RAIN .................... p 135

Chapter 8 ANALYSIS OF MY WORK -
    HOW IT RELATES TO SENDAK ......................... p 139

Chapter 9 CONCLUSION .......................................... p 171

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................... p 175