



Sutton-Smith Doctoral Award 2013

Marek Tesar

Marek's PhD, a study of the production of childhoods through children's literature, is entitled *Governing Childhoods through Stories: A Havelian Analysis of Childhood Subjectivities*. While the thesis is a study of a children's magazine from his childhood in post-totalitarian Czechoslovakia, it holds a number of implications for New Zealand education research in the field of early childhood. Marek's thesis provides guidance for a discourse analysis approach to school texts for children; he makes original theoretical suggestions for analysis; he gives elegant and critical insights into the ethics of archival work.

The thesis is beautifully written, earning high praise from his examiners. One even stated: "This is a rare thesis that I read much like a good book that enthralls. [I took it to read] for leisure and pleasure over the holidays. No other thesis has ever inspired me to do such a thing."

Marek's work as a scholar has already been widely recognized. He has been a recipient of a prestigious University of Auckland Doctoral Scholarship; his PhD has earned a place on the Dean of Graduate Studies list (the Dean's List) of the top 5% of doctoral theses completed that year at the University of Auckland; he was the 2012 recipient of the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia (PESA) Annual Doctoral Award. Marek has a stellar academic career ahead of him, and his impressive energy and talent are evident in the fact that he has published 15 academic articles since completing the PhD.

It is interesting to note that Professor Brian Sutton-Smith, after whom this award is named, had a research interest in children's drama and narratives. Marek's work on the ways children's subjectivities are complexly engaged with dominant discourses in the texts they encounter must intersect with any study of children's games and play. Professor Sutton-Smith would find Marek's work delightful, challenging and insightful. He is a worthy recipient of the Sutton-Smith Doctoral Award 2013.