

*“Experimental Literature with a Feminist Thread;  
English and German Languages”*

Jennifer Lamb

My modest collection of experimental literature began with Professor Ellen McCallum's English course on American Women Authors in the summer of 2004. Combined with an ongoing collection of German literature picked up piecemeal during my courses as a German major, a passion was born. In the spring of 2005, I completed an honors thesis on experimental literature, both English and German, both male and female authors. During the process of writing the thesis, I began purchasing used copies of each text so that I would not need to worry that the library books might be recalled in the middle of my writing by other students desperate for knowledge. Furthermore, several of the books I needed were being stored in the special collections portion of the library. I began to purchase my own copies so that I could work during the late night hours when writers often have their greatest inspirations. I'm particularly fond of my copy of Harryette Mullen's *S\*PeRM\*\*K\*T*, which is no longer in print to the best of my knowledge.

My collection of literature has expanded such that the strictly experimental literature and the strictly German literature are now blended into one large monstrosity of shelving units and pages. The section of Amazon.com that recommends titles for customers no longer knows what to suggest, such are the wonderfully obscure and wildly fascinating books I have purchased. In considering where I might live after I complete my teacher certification internship year, I have to ask for additional rooms in order to create a home library!

For me, the two collections are one, united by my critical thought and feminist perspective. I often catch myself writing further installments of my senior honors thesis in my mind as I read through new pieces for the first time or old books for the millionth time. However, my addictive passion for experimental literature is not without consequence. When I was recently discussing my literary background with a perspective employer, I had to admit, I skipped over a few classics in my zest for the modern movements. When I realized what was "missing" in my repertoire, I could sense a new collection beginning already...