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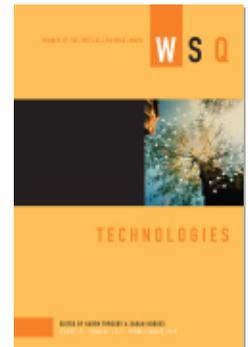
## I Have Always Wanted an Emu

Sharon Mesmer

WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly, Volume 37, Numbers 1 & 2, Spring/Summer 2009, pp. 242-244 (Article)

Published by The Feminist Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/wsqa.0.0136>



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## I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED AN EMU

SHARON MESMER

It takes guts to goose Johnny Carson  
with an emu.  
That's why I've always wanted  
an emu.

My emu will have more plastic surgery  
than Cher, Demi Moore  
and the entire waitstaffs of all the Hooters,  
combined.

I just discovered the whole emu scene  
12 days ago.  
Now I want to purchase  
an elegant Elizabethan mansion  
and live there with my emu.  
Their sound is incredibly deep  
like European dudes.

The main reason I love emus  
is that people suck.  
It is impossible  
for emus to suck.  
They don't have lips.

I also love emus because  
no one in my family can fly  
but we all run really fast.  
We have three toes on each foot.  
I'm very curious too.  
I stick my nose into everything  
and if I don't understand something  
I stomp on it.

I love Triscuits too.  
 I believe them to be  
 the best crackers ever  
 in the whole history  
 of crackers.  
 I also love the new and improved  
 Stardust Ballroom.  
 I have received double  
 in payback blessings  
 for every rotten thing that happened  
 to me and my emu  
 the last time we went  
 ballroom dancing there—  
 someone removed my pants  
 and slathered me with  
 orange marmalade.  
 The police  
 were NOT amused.

Here is the first poem  
 I ever wrote  
 about emus:

I love emus  
 whose color is black  
 My father took my Legos  
 and won't give them back . . .

Don't tell anyone  
 but I also love  
 sexy emu amputees.  
 I heard emus are prudes  
 but I also heard  
 Posh Spice sleeps alone.  
 It's insane how she resembles  
 a raptor.  
 I love my emu  
 with all my heart.

She's my sexy shiny bitch  
and no one can break  
our bond.

If you're coulrophobic  
(fear of clowns)  
don't be afraid.  
You can't love a clown  
or an emu  
if you don't  
love yourself first.

*In 2003 Gary Sullivan invited me to join a poetry Listserv: a handful of poets were entering outrageous or inappropriate word combinations into the Google search engine and making poems out of the results, then e-mailing them around to each other. Lines from the e-mailed poems could then be reworked in equally outrageous or inappropriate ways and sent around again for further recombining. Gary said the poems were called "flarf." . . . The poems seemed to have been written by a meta-mind: in my poems I could see traces of my friends' poems, and in theirs I could see my own. With constant incorporation of bits of the posted poems into new poems, the content of each subsequent poem reflected the collective sensibility, while still containing the indelible stamp of its lowly origin (from the postscript to Annoying Diabetic Bitch).*

SHARON MESMER is a Fulbright Senior Specialist candidate and recipient of two New York Foundation for the Arts poetry fellowships. Two poetry collections, *The Virgin Formica* (Hanging Loose) and *Annoying Diabetic Bitch* (Combo Books), came out this year. *Chiar Asa* (Just this) is forthcoming from Curtea Veche, Bucharest, in Romanian. Fiction collections are *The Empty Quarter* (Hanging Loose, 2000), *In Ordinary Time* (Hanging Loose, 2005), and *Ma vie à Yonago* (in French; Hachette, 2005).