



Photos this page by Scot Applegate  
Pride '98

## daughters of anomaly

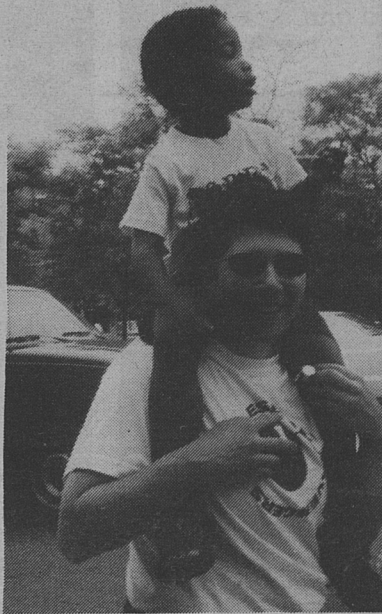
sue schein

## Halloween

I've spent years afraid of it,  
but today my body makes sense.  
We wake from an afternoon  
nap—5 pm—the sun behind  
the post office across the street.  
Still dreamy, I watch her  
rise, stretch. She steps to  
the window, looks down.  
I move toward her,  
stop at her back,  
slip hands around her waist,  
lips on her neck.  
She holds out her palms—  
I fill them with my fingers.

Outside the twilight is  
peopled with grotesques,  
children in masks, in capes,  
candy bags at their sides,  
their bloody faces  
bobbing down the sidewalk.  
The moon hangs itself—  
fat, yellow, zero.

—Cathy Resmer



## Dawn's Song

I am holding your hand.  
I am touching your face.  
I am conscious of their stares.

But I never doubt this.

I never regard their words  
as more than the rain that pelts our faces;  
as more than the mosquitoes that we bat away and squash,  
that draw blood and interrupt our courting.

We dodge the puddles.  
We get wet all the same.  
We hide out with the straight couples under the canopies.

You are smiling.

Raindrops kiss your freckled cheeks  
and I finally realize,  
no look or words or sneer or stare  
could ever be greater than this truth.

—Kerry Slora



we're not the kind  
they'll clone: tongue studs  
tattoos, florid hair — daughters  
of anomaly stepping out  
together  
under flags  
that spell  
our dissidence

we are the Bic people, a nation's  
shame: don't ask  
don't tell. first to be jettisoned  
in a contrary wind:  
juden raus  
niggerspic kikedye

our teens forced to cut  
their eyes  
at selves  
seen in mirrors  
silvered  
by an acid bath  
of hate. a monster  
flinches  
back at them. no wonder  
they'll carve self  
-portraits on skin, gouge  
channels that slice, release  
pain  
impacted as a wisdom tooth  
bursting against bone

grown, some scourge  
with too much vigour. pick  
at their own wounds. many, too many  
suck poisons stuff blood soak lungs  
snort swallow shoot powders potions pills any-  
thing  
that dilutes  
mood. anything  
to feel  
anything to feel  
good

some will succumb  
but the lucky  
or the perverse  
refuse to fold  
b4 the fact  
of the jack  
-boot. the straight jacket  
parents who slam doors  
then change the locks. the lock  
downs. the surgical instruments  
that snip, clip  
mow broad swathes  
of mayhem  
into the matter  
of their minds

a curettage  
on wrongthink

daddy tries to  
fuck her  
out of it

Viv, inviolate now  
in black leather  
will permit no strange  
touch  
touch shocks  
shoots napalm  
down scarlines  
Jess, avatar of gender  
was birthed at a midpoint  
in a bipolar world. persistent  
insistent she's excised  
the extraneous  
given self a body  
that makes a better match  
with mind

here, there, hand-in-hand  
in summertime promenade  
women reconstitute self. hammer  
new codes. sing songs  
to honor  
our war dead, those gravely  
wounded. keepers, sharers, we're mid-wives  
we give each other  
suck touch  
the untouchables 'til one day  
readied, a woman picks up  
a drum  
beat mounts  
a bike & steps out  
to lead  
the whole  
damn  
parade