

LYNNE POTTS

Helmets, Goggles, America

America wears a helmet when it's learning to ride a tricycle
because so many things can happen, Bam, just like that;
it also wears pink dog collars and when Sunday comes
the TV wears ball parks.

If you've ever been asleep when a dog barks, you know
it's been hanging out with skate boarders at the mall
and a percent of the population is downtown getting
purple fingernails with stars.

It also wears goggles so its eyes don't get wet
underwater, insists hair do's stay on the same page
holds power point meetings with snacks that have
little orange umbrellas on sticks.

It's a known but little advertised fact that America
pisses behind gas stations because the door is locked
and if you think it's a kind of sheetrock don't, because
that's milk of magnesia without the blue.

For me, America is most endearing when it's a child
wearing a pair of underpants on its head and you
can't see its demise anywhere, even when there holds
prayer meetings and everybody cries.

Lynne Potts has three published poetry collections (National Poetry Press and Glass Lyre). Her work has appeared in the *Paris Review*, *American Literary Review*, *American Letters and Commentary*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, *California Quarterly*, and others. She is Poetry Editor at AGNI and lives in Boston and New York.