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Complete Circles

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Cover Page Footnote

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LESLIE POGUE

COMPLETE CIRCLES

When we were younger
we rode our bikes—
In complete circles—
Around the corner,
past the chip shops, the pubs, and
past our house—
Going in complete circles,
because that's as far as
we were allowed to go.
Collected rocks,
gathered bundles of sticks,
for a neighbor's fire—
Long stem purple snowball flowers
Dirt all over our faces—
And we never cared.
My sister shamelessly,
rode her bike down the road—
without her shirt on—
and a pair of florescent orange shorts
Just like the boys—
At school we wore gray—
pleated skirts,
while playing hopscotch—
Did handstands, splits,
and cartwheels
But had to wear shorts underneath,
so the boys couldn't peek—
Now my innocent daughter,
Collects sticks,
rocks, and flowers—
Her long legs leap—
across the yard—
She runs— in complete circles—
A dandelion in her hand—
Rides her three-wheeler like the best—
With no shirt on—
Just in training pants—
And I wonder— if
I might join her—
With just my bathing suit bottom—
Like she should—
Like I should
Like we— All should—
Like all— girls used to—
And I wonder—
Can't we all be innocent,
once again?
Riding in complete circles—
Like the shameless little girl, in Belfast!



JENNY STOCKDALE