



*Home Avenue* (1989)

# Films

by Jennifer Montgomery (1989-90)

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HOME AVENUE (1989); Super-8mm, color, sound, 18 minutes.

*Home Avenue* at its most basic level is a re-telling, from the victim's point of view, of the experience of being raped. Here the victim is Montgomery herself, who ten years later addresses the camera (and viewer) both as subject and filmmaker. Montgomery's use of direct address is both therapeutic and assertive, enabling her to redress the terms by which her life has been defined — a victim, "scared and scarred" — while at the same time making "real" (read external) an experience for which there was "no physical evidence."

It is this notion of "evidence" on which both the rape experience and film turn. Those in positions of authority (the male physician, the mother) are suspicious the act ever happened, because the rapist didn't ejaculate (thereby reinforcing male dominance, backhandedly). As such, Montgomery's experience is doubly ignominious, her "innocence masquerading as guilt, facts masquerading as secrets." In re-presenting (as opposed to confessing) the facts, *Home Avenue* clears the record of misplaced

suspicion and guilt at the same time as it demands a world where openness isn't an open door to victimization.

AGE 12: LOVE WITH A LITTLE L (1990); Super-8mm, color, sound, 24 minutes.



Age 12: Love with a Little L (1990)

Object and subject, and their sometimes attendant corporal corollaries, objectivity and subjectivity (you can't have one without the other, or you have a lack of communication) are the steadfast and slippery standards against/ through which Montgomery's memory works. Like *Home Avenue*, autobiography forms the basic material which Montgomery draws on in *Age 12*.... But here, autobiography could be a dream, or at least its narrative path more closely follows the unreality (logic) of a dream. Or perhaps autobiography is only what Montgomery wants to remember, for there is a confusion in the film as to whether memory is subjected to Montgomery's wants and wishes, or the other way around. Obviously, the two, Montgomery and her memor(y/ies), are not mutually exclusive.