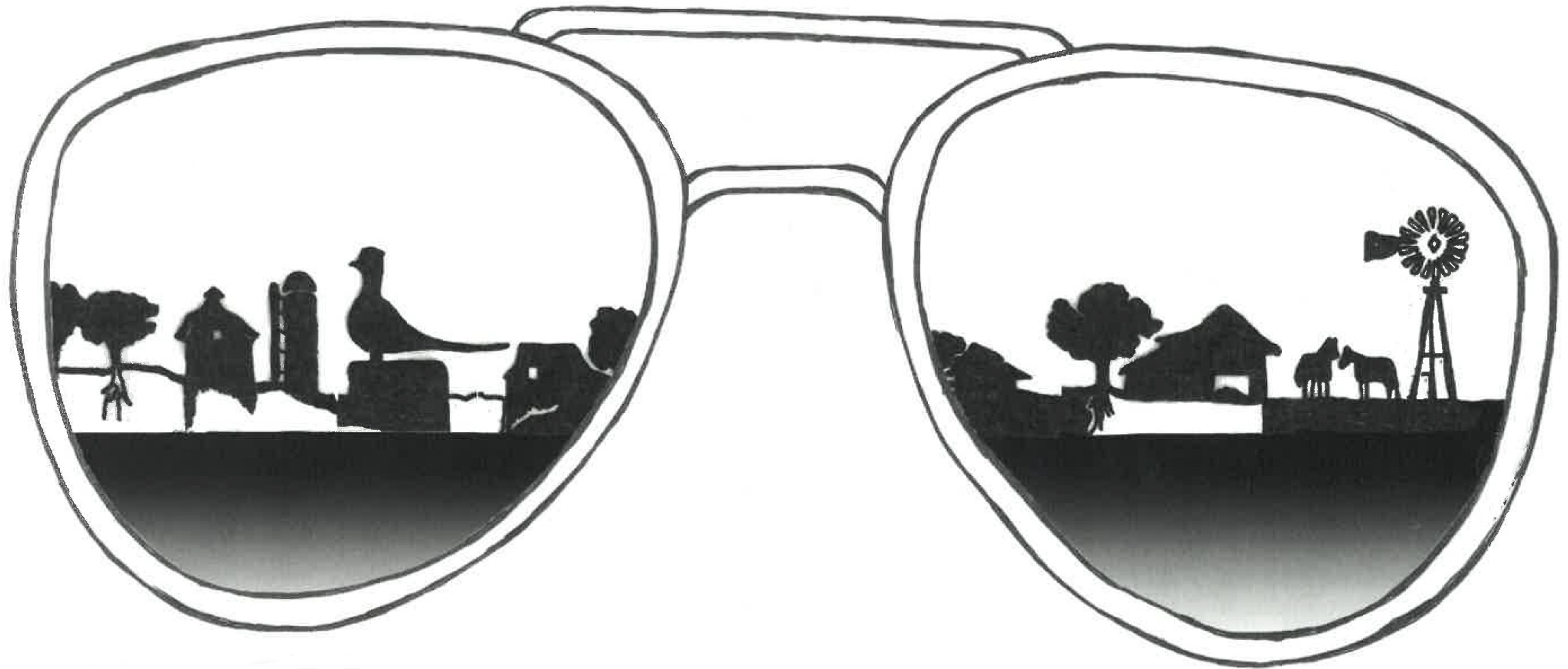


PRESS PACKET



IN PLAIN SIGHT



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THE FILM

In Plain Sight is a feature-length documentary film about LGBTQ women in the rural upper Midwest who *want* to stay. Contrary to those dominant ideas about rural place as backwards, conservative, and homophobic, the women in *In Plain Sight* feel safe, welcome, supported, comfortable, and happy. The film asks how we have come to imagine what life is like for LGBTQ people in rural places—and provides an opportunity to imagine it otherwise. The film includes original interviews with LGBTQ women in rural South Dakota and Minnesota, gay rights activists, and Rural Queer Studies scholars.

“Queer theoretical frameworks
implicitly centered on urban queer
experiences run the risk of
inappropriately imposing their
conclusions on communities for
whom the urban experience may have
little to no cultural purchase ”

– Garrett Nichols

THE PROJECT

In Plain Sight emerged out of the research of Dr. Carly Thomsen, Assistant Professor of Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies at Middlebury College. In 2012, Thomsen interviewed 50 LGBTQ identified women in rural South Dakota and Minnesota, and is currently in the process of writing a book on gay visibility politics and LGBTQ women in the rural upper Midwest. The film was originally inspired by Thomsen's desire to translate some of the queer theoretical arguments she makes in her book manuscript into an alternative medium and for an audience beyond those that might find themselves in a Gender Studies or LGBTQ Studies classroom.

In the summers of 2016 and 2017, Thomsen worked with Ellie Vainker (Rice University) to re-interview on film some of the women she interviewed several years prior, and to interview new people as well, including gay rights activists and Rural Queer Studies scholars. In the summer of 2018, several Middlebury College students joined Thomsen to work on the project. As a result of their efforts and talents, the project has morphed into something far beyond the original visions that inspired it--including the production of this website and the incorporation of animation into the film. We created this website to contextualize that which appears in the documentary, and also in hopes that it can go beyond what the film offers.



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THE PRODUCER

Carly Thomsen is an Assistant Professor of Gender, Sexuality, & Feminist Studies at Middlebury College. She completed her Ph.D. in Feminist Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara and a Postdoctoral Fellowship at Rice University. In addition to collaborating with Middlebury College students and staff on the *In Plain Sight* documentary film, she is also writing a related book. Her dissertation (*Unbecoming: Visibility Politics and Queer Rurality*) received the Kenneth Sherrill Best Dissertation Award for work on sexuality and politics from the American Political Science Association, as well as the Lancaster Dissertation Award for the Social Sciences, an honor given once every two years at UCSB to the dissertation with the greatest

potential for social impact. Thomsen's work on reproductive justice, LGBTQ activism, queer rurality, food justice, and feminist pedagogy is published or forthcoming in: *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society*; *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*; *Feminist Studies*; *Feminist Formations*; *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture, and Social Justice*; *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies*; *Twenty Years of Memorializing: The Cultural Legacy of Matthew Shepard*; *Food Insecurity: Between Justice and Survival*; and *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*.

At Middlebury, she teaches Introduction to Queer Critique; The Politics of Reproduction: Sex, Abortion, and Motherhood; Queering Food; Beyond Intersectionality: Developing Anti-Racist Feminisms; and Feminist

Engaged Research. Across her classes, students work to translate academic ideas into projects that can circulate beyond the classroom.

For examples of some of these projects, see: <https://notatrivialpursuit.wixsite.com/home>.

Learn more about Thomsen's academic work at: <http://www.carlythomsen.com/>



Carly Thomsen, Professor of Gender, Sexuality, & Feminist Studies at Middlebury College



“Rural gay persons fare no worse than their urban counterparts when it comes to their sense of wellbeing”

– Chris Wienke and Gretchen J. Hill

CONTACT

Website: www.inplainsightdocumentary.com

Email: cthomsen@middlebury.edu