

# Ep. 0: An extension of me (Sophie Warrick)

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

queer, podcast, queerness, rural, bemidji, grew, talk, focuses, project, folks, birds, fade, defining, stories, hear, part, oral storytelling, explicit language, recordings, community

## SPEAKERS

Sophie Warrick, Music/Sound Design



Music/Sound Design 00:23  
[Audio collage fades in and out]



Sophie Warrick 00:41

Hello beautiful people! Welcome to Queer Backroads, a podcast that focuses on queerness in rural Minnesota. I'm your host, Sophie Warrick, and my pronouns are she/her/hers. I'm a fat queer, curious creative currently located in the Twin Cities. But I grew up in Bemidji, a small town in northern Minnesota. My art practice focuses on a lot of different topics and mediums, but most importantly, it focuses on love and asking questions. According to the Movement Advancement Project, an estimated 2.9 to 3.8 million queer people live in rural communities across the United States. And they're a part of the fabric of rural American Life. This podcast aims to tell their stories. There is some explicit language in this podcast, so consider this your warning, you may visit my link tree at [L-I-N-K-T-R DOT E-E SLASH S-O-P-H-I-E-W-A-R-R-I-C-K](https://linktr.ee/SophieWarrick) to learn more about this podcast project, find organizations to uplift and show notes and transcripts of each episode. That's [linktr.ee/SophieWarrick](https://linktr.ee/SophieWarrick).



Music/Sound Design 01:47

[Ambient birds fade out]



Sophie Warrick 02:01

When I was starting this project and reaching out to interviewees, there were a lot of folks that were concerned that they didn't really fit the "requirements", because they weren't sure if they grew up or lived in like a rural enough area. And I'm personally not a fan of like the urban/rural divide, and like really harshly defining it, because like, it kind of reinforces that binary that queerness tries to like, fight every single day. And so that's why like, nowhere on my podcast do I explicitly define what rural is. But most importantly, throughout this podcast, like, the important part isn't defining, like what is rural and what is urban, but it's more about telling the stories that have like really not been told yet, or the very least like haven't been heard. And so while I want to kind of highlight like the good, the bad, and the ugly of rural queerness, the most important part is that we're just talking about it. And we're talking about these missing stories, and providing a place to tell them. And so within this podcast, you'll hear a lot of different things, you'll hear a lot of small talk, and you'll hear a lot of really random questions. And you'll also hear some music that I composed, and all of these different things. My theme music actually, in particular, is something that's very near and dear to my heart, because it'll sound a little wonky, and it'll sound a little all over the place. And that's because it's made up of a bunch of different recordings of me growing up in my small rural town playing violin, or being in orchestras or things like that. And it's just kind of like an audio collage that really represents me. And I got, I just gotta say, like it really, it's, it's an extension of me, and I am very excited to include it in the podcast. And I hope that people listen to this part of the podcast, because otherwise, it doesn't really make sense. But I hope you'll like it. And then also, you'll hear a bunch of ethnographic sounds and field recordings that I researched for this podcast in particular, specifically, in a lot of the transition music as well as in the intro and outro music, you'll hear these kind of similar sounding but different bird sounds. And so each one of those sounds is specific to where each guest is from, whether that be the Iron Range, Bemidji, Luverne or anywhere else that they're from those birds like carnivals, or chickadees, or sparrows, or warblers are all specific to that one central area and so that's just kind of like trying to give space to and like recognition to this, the towns that these folks are originally from and to kind of ground us in the environment there.



Music/Sound Design 05:10

[Ambient birds and mandolin fade in and out]



Sophie Warrick 05:17

There were a few different things that I really wanted to cover in my own episode. First of all, I just really want to share my own story. I was born in Seattle, and I grew up a Bemidji, which is very close to Itasca State Park in Minnesota, which is the head of the Mississippi River. And growing up, one of the strongest and most consistent communities that I was a part of was my theater community with the Bemidji Community Theater. Yeah, there I was just I was able to find my home in a place that was consistently cold and always, always, always smelled like mold. But I don't know, but Bemidji Community Theater they like they offered me internships and opportunities to expand my art practice and take risks and offered a second home to me, and gave us kind of like a willingness to be myself. I never came out in high school for a lot of different reasons. I didn't have a lot of queer folks to talk to, or very many queer role models. But once I went to college, and St. Paul, at Hamline University, I was able to find my communities and found comfort in being queer, there. Um, I never really had a big coming out moment. And I just really want to remind everyone and anyone that's listening that you don't really need to have one if you don't want one. There's also a lot to say about the entire idea of being "out" and I'm using air quotes, but you can't see them. But we'll reserve that for another podcast. But this podcast project is a project that I've been talking about making for a little over a year now. And I'm an artistic activist and part of my arts practice focuses on photography. And originally, I really wanted to do a portrait project highlighting real queer folks in Greater Minnesota. But and then like, through talking about it with friends and family and a few of my advisors in college, it kind of transformed into this podcast that focused on oral storytelling of rural queer folks in order to preserve our history, and tried to get out of like the metronormative stereotype that queer folks only live in urban areas, right? Like, there's queer folks everywhere. Um, but yeah, I just know that if I had heard a project like this growing up, I would have really been overjoyed to have found any sort of online community. So if you're rural queer, and you're enjoying this podcast, or maybe you're just listening to it and you hate it, please just let me know! You can not talk to me through my link tree, like I mentioned earlier, or you can you know, just find me on Instagram, DMs, my handle is at @SophWarrick, so @-S-O-P-H-W-A-R-R-I-C-K. And I'd really love to connect with you.



Music/Sound Design 08:12

[Ambient birds and mandolin fade in and out]



Sophie Warrick 08:27

All that being said, I really, really hope that y'all enjoy this podcast. It's, again, an

extension of me, all of it is and the conversations are authentic, and the conversations are more than I could have ever dreamed of. I cannot believe the amazing folks that volunteered to be a part of this podcast for no other reason than to tell their story, and to talk with me and to talk with all of you of either virtually or just through podcast format. And I hope that together, we can create some sort of new online community. And yeah, I hope y'all enjoy this podcast. I've said it before. And I'll say it again. My goals and dreams of this podcast is that at least one rural queer person listens to it. So if that is you, you have made my dream come true. And I appreciate you immensely and yeah. I hope you guys enjoy all the episodes.



Music/Sound Design 09:38

[Ambient birds and mandolin fade in and out]