



"SAME-SEX ATTRACTED"

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*What is it like to be LGBTQ at  
The Lord's University?*







## syn·op·sis

In “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*,” two LGBTQ alumni follow a handful of their fellow LGBTQ and Same-Sex Attracted peers at Mormon-owned Brigham Young University (BYU). Combined, the stories from these students paint an elaborate picture of what is really going on in the trenches of the larger national conversation about faith and sexuality, religion and community, and love and life.

After years in the making, “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” presents the real experience of being queer at “the Lord’s University” from the perspective of current LGBTQ students.







## back·ground

It is widely recognized that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints holds a traditional stance on homosexuality. BYU, the prized jewel of Mormon culture and target destination for many Mormon youth, even has a specific section in its infamous Honor Code for ‘Homosexual Behavior’, including the following:

*One’s stated same-gender attraction is not an Honor Code issue. However, [...] Homosexual behavior is inappropriate and violates the Honor Code. Homosexual behavior includes not only sexual relations between members of the same sex, but all forms of physical intimacy that give expression to homosexual feelings.*

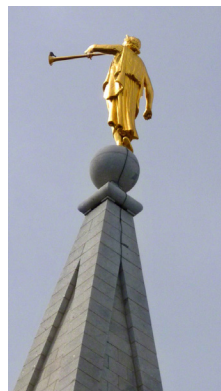
This definition of *homosexual behavior* illustrates the complexity of being LGBTQ at BYU. As of 2007, students at BYU can be “out” as LGBTQ and SSA and attend the university and remain in good standing. However, they cannot act in any way that would “give expression to homosexual feelings.”

The sentiment is both poignant and vague. LGBTQ students obviously cannot have sex with members of the same sex in accordance with the mentioned “law of chastity” (defined as abstinence outside of marriage). But they also cannot kiss or hold hands, even though there is no specific explanation of where the boundary extends. Can they hug their straight but same-sex friends? Can they speak with a feminine lilt? Can they have a rainbow button on their backpack? Regardless of the ambiguity to LGBTQ individuals, the understanding from the administration is clear: *just don’t be gay*.

Breaking the Honor Code can result in a variety of consequences, ranging from apologetic essay requirements to immediate expulsion. According to policy, individuals can also anonymously report other students to the Honor Code Office for any alleged crime, with or without evidence. Consequently, LGBTQ students at BYU live with the constant fear of being “turned in” to the Honor Code Office, even if they have done nothing against the rules. This means that as each of the LGBTQ students develop over the course of their time at BYU, they face not only typical coming-of-age growing pains and college stresses, but also the specific struggles that come with being LGBTQ at “the Lord’s University”; namely, crises of faith, family, and mental health.

The LGBTQ students at BYU are very familiar with the stakes of homosexuality in the LDS Church.







## back·ground

Though BYU has drastically improved its policies towards LGBTQ issues from its long history of school-sanctioned conversion therapy and police raids, it continues to be clear to the LGBTQ community that BYU is not always a safe environment for students who are “out”.

As reported by the Salt Lake Tribune, “Brigham Young University remains one of the most hostile campuses in the country for gay and transgender students,” according to the Princeton Review. Such a hostile environment has prevented students from speaking out, until now.

Because the filmmakers of “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” are also LGBTQ and were current BYU students for the majority of filming, other students were finally willing to share their stories to a camera.

There is already a sizeable collection of films that address the topic of Mormonism and LGBTQ issues, including political documentaries like *8: The Mormon Proposition* (2010) and *Church & State* (2018), straight-saviorism films like *Believer* (2018) and *Quiet Heroes* (2018), and narrative rom-coms like *Latter-Days* (2003) and *The Falls* (2012). “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” is the natural addition to the collection as an observational, reflexive documentary about the young, LGBTQ individuals at the Church’s private university, told by its current LGBTQ students.

Of the collection of films about Mormonism and LGBTQ issues, “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” stands out as a film that does not set out to persuade the audience of any specific injustices done to the LGBTQ community directly. It is neither an exposé nor a biography of either the school or the LDS Church in general; it is, however, steadfastly honest in its storytelling, which does effectively involve some negativity towards the university and the LDS Church in general.

Remarkably, “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” presents the story of the LGBTQ student experience at BYU with the intention of offering an olive branch of understanding. By allowing the audience the freedom to watch, recognize, and empathize with real people, the film patiently approaches larger, controversial issues and simply encourages the audience to come away from the film with a broadened understanding, demanding nothing more.

Since its conception in 2015, “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” has developed into an in-depth, inside look at the controversy surrounding LGBTQ issues and the Latter-Day Saints with powerful, exclusive testimonies from LGBTQ students at BYU.







## sto•ry

In Mormon terms, it is often said that LGBTQ individuals *struggle*; specifically, that they *struggle with their feelings of same-sex attraction*. These individuals could be categorized as Same-Sex Attracted, or SSA. For example, an appropriate way for someone to discuss their *homosexual tendencies* would be to say, “I struggle with same-sex attraction,” “I am Same-Sex Attracted,” or “I have SSA.”.

After filming LGBTQ students at BYU for over two years, it became apparent that this approach is not always accurate for the individual. Most commonly, these students say they did not struggle with their attraction to people of the same sex. Rather, they struggled with how they were treated because of their assumed label as someone who was *same-sex attracted*.

“*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” presents the LGBTQ experience at BYU as it really is, from a holistic, boots-on-the-ground perspective. Collectively, the subjects of the film address the many common stories that come from the LGBTQ communities at BYU; one is gay, one is bisexual, one is a lesbian, one experiences same-sex attraction but is married to someone of the opposite sex, and so on. Similarly, some of the students have served LDS missions, some hold callings in their student wards, some hope to remain lifelong members of the Church, and some leave BYU as newfound atheists.

The film follows these students as they live and grow over several semesters at BYU. Each of the students face their own personal set of trials, including crises of faith, family, and mental health, but emerge triumphantly by the end as new individuals.

As members of the LGBTQ community and as students-turned-alumni of the university themselves, filmmakers Maddy Purves and Zoie Young were able to capture the essence of what it’s like to be queer at the Lord’s University. The camera follows the subjects into their classes and churches, to meetings and parties, on dates and to therapy. Audiences are allowed access into the invisible, underground world of the LGBTQ communities at BYU from the sometimes-shaky, handheld perspective of real, current LGBTQ and SSA students.

“*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” boldly explores larger questions of faith and sexuality, religion and community, and love and life. By presenting the experience of being LGBTQ at BYU from the voices of actual LGBTQ students, “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” aims to build a bridge of empathy and understanding between the Mormon and LGBTQ communities.







## style

The creative vision of the film is to present the life of a LGBTQ student at BYU through the student's eyes. The camera follows the subjects—often on foot, and generally without a steadicam—into their classrooms, their meetings, and their apartments.

Much of the film is shot in guerrilla fashion, using barebones crew and equipment, both out of necessity and for aesthetics. In many situations, the filmmakers resort to using iPhones or laptops to record whatever had started happening in front of them, by nature of both being on and around BYU campus and by being part of the LGBTQ community there. Ironically, the shaky-cam, hear-the-person-behind-the-camera footage stylistically enforces the reality that the filmmakers were, in fact, on and around campus as legitimate LGBTQ students of the university.

## struc·ture

As the film follows the half-dozen highlighted students over several semesters, the filmmakers also check-in with the subjects in formal interviews. These interviews structure the narrative of the film as the students evolve over time, as they grow and learn more about themselves, and as they grapple with their individual story arcs. Most of these interviews are held in the subjects' apartments and bedrooms, both for the sake of intimacy and to reemphasize the students' need for privacy or discretion.

The rest of the film includes observational footage from significant moments in the students' lives. The audience attends meetings with the students, participates with the students in on-campus discussions or off-campus rallies, and sits with the students in their quiet moments of reflection and prayer.

## theme

Ultimately, the strength of the film is its realism. The stories within the film highlight many of the current discussions surrounding LGBTQ issues in America, especially with regards to faith and religion; namely, of Mormonism and homosexuality. By showing the students as they are, as friendly and as flawed as they can be, they become relatable and—more significantly—lovable.

The purpose of "*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*" is not to persuade the audience of anything other than the fact that the people on the screen are real, living human beings, and as such, deserve the same amount of love and attention as anyone else.







## **film·mak·ers**

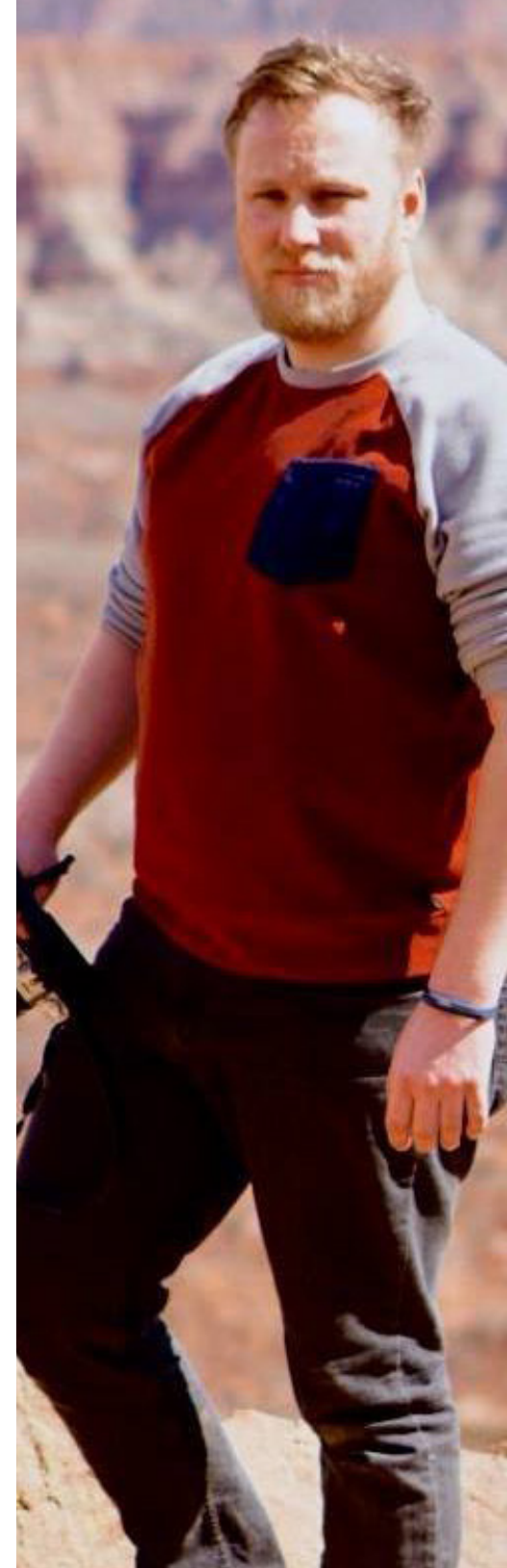
### **ZOIE YOUNG** *DIRECTOR, EDITOR*

Zoie finished at BYU in December 2016, studying Graphic Design. They were raised in the Mormon church in Salt Lake City, Utah with their parents and three siblings. They are passionate about helping other kids at BYU and to bring awareness to the hardships of being queer at a Mormon University.

### **MADDY PURVES** *DIRECTOR, PRODUCER*

Maddy realized she was gay during her freshman year at BYU. Though was raised LDS, she no longer believes in the religion. She recently graduated from BYU in Theatre & Media Arts with a focus in Nonfiction/Documentary Production.







## pro·duc·ers

### **KATY DRAKE BETTNER** *EXECUTIVE PRODUCER*

In addition to an extensive career in producing both fiction and nonfiction films—including PBS’s upcoming documentary *Dark Money* (2018) and Sundance select *Always in Season* (2019)—Katy Drake Bettner has been prominently involved in Utah’s LGBT advocacy group for several years. She helped found and was a member of the board of Encircle, Provo’s nonprofit LGBT resource center and is a key figure in organizations such as Equality Utah and Mormons Building Bridges. Katy’s producing prowess will continue to fuel “Same-Sex Attracted” and push the film into Utah’s elite film societies.

### **TYLER MEASOM** *PRODUCER*

Known mostly for his award-winning films *Sons of Perdition* (2010) and *An Honest Liar* (2014), Tyler Measom has a long and colorful resume of directing and producing credits. His work has premiered at Tribeca Film Festival, Sundance Labs & Sundance Film Festival, MipDoc Cannes, HotDocs, and more. Tyler’s expertise has proved crucial to the development of “Same-Sex Attracted”.

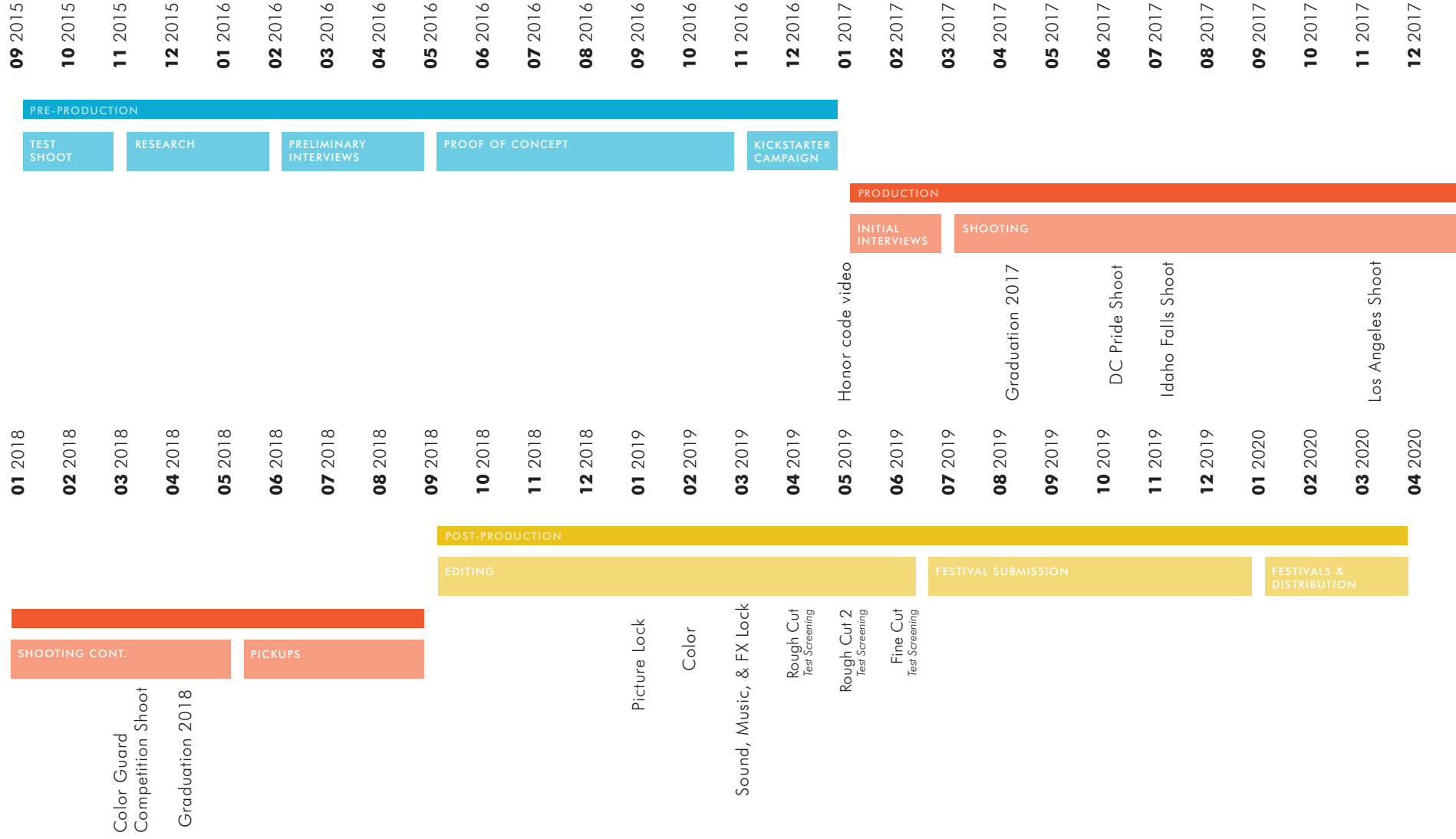
### **HOLLY TUCKETT** *PRODUCER*

Holly Tuckett produced, directed and edited her first short documentary, *Timi Earl Skeleton Girl*, which screened at the Park City Film Series in conjunction with the Sundance Film Festival. Most recently, Holly shot and directed *Church & State* (2018), the heavy-hitting documentary about the political turmoil surrounding legalizing same-sex marriage in Utah. As an accomplished LGBT filmmaker and documentarian herself, Holly is a priceless voice for and vehicle behind “Same-Sex Attracted”.

### **AARON EGBERT ALLSOP** *PRODUCER*

Aaron Egbert Allsop is a documentary director and editor based out of Salt Lake City, UT. His first documentary that he edited and co-produced, *Llama Nation*, won best documentary at the Omaha Film Festival and the Utah Film Awards. He also teaches Digital Video Production at Salt Lake Community College as an adjunct professor, and has worked to help “Same-Sex Attracted” behind the camera, in front of the computer, and in print.







## **prog·ress**

- 500+ hours of footage
- Traveled 9200+ miles (LA, DC, Idaho Falls, Albuquerque)
- Interviewed dozens of people including students, admin, faculty, & parents



## ("SAME-SEX ATTRACTED") BUDGET

### PRE-PRODUCTION

Overhead	\$5,000
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### PRODUCTION

Crew	\$44,660
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Equipment	\$6,039
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Travel	\$1,895
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SUBTOTAL PRODUCTION	<b>\$52,594</b>
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### POST-PRODUCTION

Crew	\$46,000
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Equipment	\$2,000
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Masters	\$9,000
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Color   Fx	\$12,000
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Sound   Music	\$14,000
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SUBTOTAL POST-PRODUCTION	<b>\$83,000</b>
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### ADMINISTRATIVE

Overhead & Legal	\$10,480
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Marketing	\$15,000
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Contingencies	\$20,000
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SUBTOTAL ADMINISTRATION	<b>\$45,480</b>
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### FUNDING SOURCES SECURED

Producer's Own Contributions	\$6,240
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Fundraiser	\$7,739
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Private Donations	\$336
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TOTAL FUNDING SECURED	\$14,314
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### FUNDING SOURCES PENDING

Private Donation	\$10,000
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TOTAL FUNDING PENDING	\$10,000
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Subtotal Pre-Production	\$5,000
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Subtotal Production	\$52,594
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Subtotal Post-Production	\$83,000
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Subtotal Administration	\$45,480
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TOTAL REQUIRED COST	<b>\$186,074</b>
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Funding Sources Secured	-\$14,314
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Funding Sources Pending	-\$10,000
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TOTAL FUNDING NEEDED	<b>\$161,759</b>
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## your•help

*“SAME-SEX ATTRACTED”* presents critical, unique evidence towards affecting positive change to LGBTQ issues in Utah. In 2016, over one hundred people helped us raise over \$8K on Kickstarter to launch Production. Halfway through 2017, the production team began funding their efforts out of pocket. Now, moving into Post-Production at the end of 2018, the film needs more help.

The finishing budget of \$161,849 will allow filmmakers Maddy and Zoie to retain control of the narrative, maintaining the integrity of the project as on that comes from the direct perspective of LGBTQ students and alumni of BYU.

The film is fiscally sponsored by the Utah Film Center, “Utah’s preeminent, year-round source for high-quality and curated film,” connecting the project to elite institutions such as the Damn These Heels and Tumbleweeds Film Festivals. Additionally, the Utah Film Center is also a 501(c)(3) organization, meaning any donations to *“SAME-SEX ATTRACTED”* through them are tax-deductible.

With your support, *“SAME-SEX ATTRACTED”* can begin submitting to festivals by Summer 2019, within the wake of attention surrounding LGBTQ issues in Utah.

*“SAME-SEX ATTRACTED”* has the potential to drastically improve the conversation between LDS and LGBTQ communities.

Be a part of it.







your·help

1 Unit = \$1,000

#### **REWARDS**

- 1 Unit** Earn your name in the credits under “Special Thanks”
- 5 Units** Earn your name in the credits under “Special Thanks” and receive a digital link to the film prior to public release
- 10 Units** Earn Producer credit and receive exclusive access to special screenings and VIP events
- 20+ Units** Please contact (530) 574-1404 directly for special circumstances



**UTAH  
FILM  
CENTER**



## do·na·tions

“All donations made to projects fiscally sponsored by Utah Film Center are 100% tax-deductible, and filmmaker recipients are awarded 94% of each of their donations. Utah Film Center retains 6% of each donation to cover administrative costs. Best of all, the fiscal sponsorship program also allows Utah Film Center to support artists and projects world-wide and provides Utahns access to each completed project free of charge.”

“*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” is fiscally sponsored by the Utah Film Center. To donate to “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*”, please visit this link: [goo.gl/XmxaAp](https://goo.gl/XmxaAp)

For questions about donating through our Fiscal Sponsorship with the Utah Film Center, contact Sarah Mohr ([smohr@utahfilmcenter.org](mailto:smohr@utahfilmcenter.org)) at (801) 746-7000.

## in·vest

After the success of the film, partners of “*SAME-SEX ATTRACTED*” will receive 115% return on investment.

Contact Maddy Purves at (530) 574-1404 for questions or arrangements.





## CONTACT

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