

You compulsively spend money on queer books (online, because the closest book store is over 30 minutes away, and the local library discarded their only book aimed at queer people, an outdated book from the 90s, and didn't get anything newer to replace it) so at least you can have good mail days and live vicariously through fiction.

Organizing a queer group yourself is incredibly difficult because everyone is so far apart, has different and often unpredictable work schedules, and there's no public transportation for those who are unlucky enough to not drive.

Not telling your high school best friend you have a queer crush on them because if it went wrong you'd probably lose the friendship and there aren't a whole lot of other friend options in your area because everyone within a 40 minute drive in your state go to the same regional high school, and you already know you don't get along with most of them.

You travel over an hour to get to the nearest non-student queer group or pride or any other queer event.

All the people in your high school group of friends were either most of the only open queer people in your small regional high school or ended up coming out after they graduated because the school administration made life hell for the GSA (which had one out gay guy and a bunch of "straight allies") and students pulled down their event posters.

YOU KNOW

YOU'RE A

RURAL QUEER

WHEN...

You have a bunch of queer t-shirts and jewelry (again, bought online), but can never wear them in your hometown because you never know who's going to be a bigot, and everybody knows everybody and they all gossip.

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ISOLATED

QUEER

SOLIDARITY!

You see more confederate flags than pride flags in your town, despite not even living in the South.

The only pride in your county is an exclusive, expensive fundraiser for rich people with weekend homes in your area, supposedly fundraising for local queer youth despite not hosting an event accessible to local queer youth.

You've had multiple depressive episodes because how on earth are you going to find a partner in your area you're actually compatible with? Better start collecting cats.

You can count the number of non-school affiliated queer events you can find evidence of having happened in your county on a single hand. And you couldn't make it to any of them.

You grew up feeling like an alien because of your different ways of feeling love and attraction, but didn't have the words to describe your feelings or lack thereof, and the one open queer person in middle school was mocked and "lesbian" and "gay" were used as insults. And not one teacher, even in health class or sex ed, said anything affirming about queerness or gave you the terms you needed. And sex ed and lgbt websites were banned on the school computers so you had to sneak onto those sites on your dad's computer and delete the search history.

You buy stuff with unintentional pride colors as pride gear because no store nearby will carry actual pride gear and the only Target in your county didn't opt in to their pride collection. Or you make your own pride gear.

The internet is your lifeline because all the college friends you actually connected with live hundreds of miles away and all the queer people who went to high school with you had the sense to get out.

You live in the exact center of a circle where the radius represents an hour or more in any direction to reach a queer community center.

