If Iowans made movies about Iowa...

Ever wish that you could be a film critic, a director, or a voting member of the Motion Picture Academy? Here’s your chance to participate in a state-wide conversation about films and Iowa. Please enter our “If Iowans made movies about Iowa” survey.

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1. In your opinion, what images are the most common and the least common in movies with an Iowa setting? To get you started, here are a few examples. What would you add to these lists?

Frequently seen images:
- Hogs and cattle
- John Deere tractors
- Carnivals, parades, or fairs
- Small-town or working-class bars
- Men in seed corn hats
- Women in aprons
- Covered dishes and pies
- Flowered wallpaper, wooden floors, and white lace curtains
- Water towers

Seldom seen images:
- Skyscrapers and traffic
- Malls
- National franchises
- Computers
- Casinos
- Research universities
- Art centers and artists
- Shelves lined with books
- Cutting-edge fashion
- Suburbs

2. Of these films (State Fair, The Music Man, Country, Field of Dreams, The Bridges of Madison County, A Thousand Acres, or name your own), which gives the best portrayal of Iowa or Iowans, and why? Which do you like least?

3. Now you’re in the director’s chair! Suppose you’re a filmmaker with a huge budget and top-name stars. What would your film portray about Iowa or Iowans? What actors would you choose? Or, if you had a chance to make a documentary, what would the topic be?

4. How does your experience with films about Iowa or Iowans affect your assessment of Hollywood’s treatment of other regions of America (for example, New York, California, or Texas) or of historical events in America’s past?

5. Do film images of Iowa really make a difference? Or, as they would say in Hollywood, is it just entertainment?

May I have the envelope, please?

For your convenience, these survey questions also appear on the ivory-colored mailing cover that accompanied this issue. Send your responses to any or all of the questions (along with your name, address, and daytime phone) to: “If Iowans made movies about Iowa” survey Attn: Editor, Iowa Heritage Illustrated State Historical Society of Iowa 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240-1806

or by email to: gs wym@blue.wieg.uiowa.edu

Watch for survey responses in an upcoming issue. — The Editor