

Holocaust Exhibit Opens in Coeur d'Alene

Dr. Lisa Manning/Human Rights Education Institute

The Human Rights Education Institute (HREI) announces that it is hosting a traveling exhibition, from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. The exhibit will be open to the public beginning November 19, 2014 to January 7, 2015, Monday through Friday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Saturdays from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

The HREI will host a Grand Opening reception from 4:00-6:00 pm on Saturday, November 22 at the HREI center, 414 Mullan in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The reception and viewing of the exhibit is free and open to the public. Charitable donations are greatly appreciated.

At the hands of the Nazis along with six million Jews were victims including Roma (Gypsies), Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, Jehovah's Witnesses, the disabled, and thousands of homosexuals, primarily gay men, perished during the Holocaust in World War II. Their story is the subject of this United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's traveling exhibition titled *"The Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals, 1933-1945"*.

"The exploration why homosexual behavior was identified as a danger to Nazi society and how the Nazi regime attempted to eliminate it," says exhibition curator Edward Phillips. "The Nazis believed it was possible to 'cure' homosexual behavior through labor and 're-education,'" Phillips continued. "Their efforts to eradicate homosexuality left gay men subject to imprisonment, castration, institutionalization, and deportation to concentration camps," he concluded.

In 1933, the year Adolf Hitler assumed power, an estimated one million homosexual men lived in Germany. Nazi policy asserted that homosexual men carried a "degeneracy" that threatened the "disciplined masculinity" of Germany. As homosexuals were believed to form self-serving groups, the emergence of a state-within-the-state that could disrupt social harmony was also feared. Additionally, the Nazis charged that homosexuals' failure to father children was a factor in Germany's declining birth rate, thus robbing the nation of future sons and daughters who could fight for and work toward a greater Reich.



Between 1933 and 1945, an estimated 100,000 men were arrested for homosexuality, and of these, approximately 50,000 were sentenced to prison for the crime. An estimated 5,000 to 15,000 were sent to concentration camps, where an unknown number of them perished.

The local chapter of the Pride Foundation has awarded a grant to the HREI in support of the exhibit and pending a grant is in the process of approval. HREI is seeking grants and contributions for hosting future national and international exhibits of this caliber.