

# Opinion: Letters

## Disgusting, hate-mongering statement

Editor:

Sheri Dew, President of Deseret Book and former member of the LDS Church Relief Society General Presidency, recently compared those who do not oppose gay marriage to those who did not oppose Hitler's rise to power. It is not my intent to debate the pros and cons of gay marriage. Such a discussion with her would be pointless.

It is, however, mind boggling that she could make such a naive, outrageous and patently offensive statement. I can't decide if she simply doesn't understand the gravity of the Holocaust or if it was a calculated attempt to garner support for her point of view through the use of lies, fear tactics and sensationalistic rhetoric. Either way, it is a sad commentary coming from someone of her education and background.

I would have thought that the President of Deseret Book would at least be educated enough to know that homosexuals were also targeted by the Nazis. Homosexuals were arrested and sent to Dachau, Mauthausen and other concentration camps. Homosexuals were enslaved, beaten, raped, tortured and murdered alongside the Jews, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, common criminals and other "undesireables" considered to be a threat to Hitler, morality and the Nazi Party. Unlike the others, however, upon liberation by the Allied Forces, homosexuals were sent to prison to complete their sentences. Murderers, thieves and other common criminals were released from the camps while homosexuals were re-imprisoned for their sexual orientation. To suggest that those who support gay marriage would have also supported the Nazis is illogical, dishonest and just plain stupid.

If Dew still wishes to ignore documented world history perhaps a refresher course in LDS church history is in order. Concerned members of the LDS Church in Germany asked then-president Heber J. Grant what they should do about Hitler's rise in power. He told them not to make waves but rather to obey the 12th Article of Faith, which required them to honor and sustain their elected leaders. I could more accurately rephrase her statement to say those who oppose gay marriage are like the members of the LDS church who, at the counsel of their prophet, did not oppose Hitler and the Nazi Party.

Certainly she must aware of the story of Helmuth Hubener. Deseret Book has sold at least three books about him and one of its recent ad campaigns featured his story. He was an LDS youth who, with a few friends, secretly fought against Hitler and the Nazis. He was eventually arrested and executed for those actions but not before the LDS church excommunicated him for "conduct unbecoming a member of the church" or, as she so succinctly put it, opposing Hitler's rise to power. By her comparison, the LDS leaders of the time, including President Heber J. Grant, were the type of people who would have supported gay marriage.

Maybe she should learn a little bit about Hitler and the Holocaust before calling anyone else a Nazi.

As much as I disagree with her, I am realistic enough to understand that her views vis-à-vis gay marriage will not change. She has been told what to believe and, like so many Nazi soldiers, she will unquestioningly follow orders. Still, she should be ashamed for what she said. She should beg her God, her church and every group that was ever targeted by the Nazis to forgive her for having made such a disgusting and hate-mongering statement.

William H. Munk  
 Salt Lake City, Utah