

## Filmmakers Seek “Boys of Boise” Stories

*This year marks the 50th anniversary of the ‘sex scandal’*

One of America's most notorious homosexual scandals is the subject of a documentary film now in production. *The Fall of '55* tells the story of men and women touched by the Boise morals drive of 1955. The producers are looking for people who have first-hand knowledge of the scandal—possibly former Boiseans who fled to Utah to avoid prosecution or family members of the men prosecuted.

The morals drive started as an investigation of men having sex with teenage boys. But as public outrage grew, the direction of the investigation changed, eventually encompassing consenting adults. In all, 16 men were prosecuted. Countless others lived in fear that each knock at the door could bring the police. Other men, even whole families, fled Boise.

The events generated nationwide attention at the time, including articles in such publications as *Time Magazine*, *The Denver Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. In an example of the misinformation during the era, one tabloid greeted readers with the inflammatory and incorrect headline, “Male Pervert

Ring Seduces 1,000 Boys.” The events gained the most prominence, however, from John Gerassi's 1966 book, *The Boys of Boise*.

The documentary production team, led by Idaho native Seth Randal, has uncovered a number of untold stories about the prosecutions, including compelling first-hand accounts from people who fled Boise to avoid prosecution. The documentary will include a dramatic interview with a now-deceased man imprisoned as part of these events.

Still, the team is making a last effort to find people who remember the prosecutions. “I want to tell these stories because it's important to understand what really happened,” Randal said. “This is part of our history.”

Randal and the production team hope publicity about the documentary can help draw out more potential interview subjects. “This is the last chance for many of these stories to be told,” he said. “We have already lost so many voices from that era.”

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*The production team can be contacted at 208-284-0982 or [sethrandal@gmail.com](mailto:sethrandal@gmail.com). There is a blog at [falof55.blogspot.com](http://falof55.blogspot.com)*



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