

THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE AMERICAN LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

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The K-shaped economy

- We live in what some have called a K-shaped economy. The upper arm of the K is comprised of the small group of upper-income people. They have invested in the stock market and are making an enormous amount of money by investing in Artificial Intelligence and Defense. Their wealth has recently increased by 25%. The lower arm of the K is comprised of (a) the middle class, which has increased its wealth by about 10%, since they have 401K and other wealth instruments (but the size of the middle class is decreasing) and (b) lower-income people, who are predominantly not invested in the stock market and who are dramatically impacted by higher fuel costs, higher inflation and lack of increase in their income.
- The upper-income class has a disproportionate impact on the politics of our nation at this time. Their money has flooded into the political sphere and influenced the implementation of a wide variety of actions, including:
 - (a) US Supreme Court decisions, and especially the destruction of the Voting Rights Act, in *Louisiana v. Callais*,
 - (b) Redistricting
 - (c) Campaign Finance
 - (d) Women's issues, including abortion
 - (e) Targeting Critical Race Theory, and LGBTQIA+ theory

Trump/Republican 1.0

- The Republican administration and the corporate interests have designed a plan to redesign the American government. In my 2019 book, I summarized the impacts of the first Republican/Trump administration on LGBTQ people. I summarized
- State-level anti-LGBTQIA efforts,
- Religious liberty laws,
- Conversion Therapy,
- Laws opposing Transgender rights,
- Nullification,
- Punishment of staff of state-level courts for supporting same-sex marriage,
- Proposals designed to reduce the impact of Obergefell v. Hodges, and

Trump/Republican 1.0

- Federal anti-LGBTQIA actions (incidents directed against immigrants, incidents directed against Blacks, incidents directed against Muslims), and
- Incidents directed against LGBT people (department head appointees who were anti-gay, and especially those who were in favor of conversion therapy, and US Supreme Court designees who were anti-gay).
- We saw a Vice President who was not supportive of LGBTQIA people,
- The elimination of the term LGBTQIA from the White House website and subsequently all federal bureaucratic websites,
- Elimination of the US Census data collection on LGBTQIA people,
- The president speaking during Pride month to an anti-gay organization,
- Taking sexual orientation and gender identity out of departmental equal opportunity statements,
- The elimination of protection of federal employees, and a number of specific but not particularly systematic actions. (Swan, 2019).

Trump/Republican 2.0

- **But Republican/Trump 2.0 is qualitatively different than Republican/Trump 1.0.** Although it started with the vast majority of American voters who clearly wished to deal with immigration and cost-of-living issues, this was only the opening stage for dealing with a broad range of “targeted repression” actions, based upon the underlying assumption that the President’s word is law (based upon the *Trump vs. United States* court case in July 2024). When we saw a White House graphic design showing Donald Trump as a King, we should have been alerted to the full meaning of this. Components of this new authoritarian regime include the following:
- Attacks on the judiciary---including habeas corpus, due process, not obeying court orders (e.g., regarding people being sent to El Salvador, South Sudan, Eswatini, Costa Rica, and Panama).
- Masked agents sweeping up hundreds of people (both undocumented, green card holders and 170+ American citizens) and detaining them in remote locations.
- Targeting political opponents---including the fundraising website for the Democratic party (Act Blue), as well as elected officials (a Congresswoman in New Jersey, Rep. LaMonica McIver).
- Efforts to silence the media, including anticipatory obedience by the LA Times and Washington Post) and the arrest of Don Lemon, as well as limited coverage of protests.
- Systematic attacks upon the administrative state, including setting up Schedule F to allow presidential control of high-level appointments, eliminating independent agencies, and eliminating hundreds of thousands of federal jobs.
- Attacking universities with the result that many universities have lost their federal grants (Columbia University---\$400 million, Johns Hopkins University---\$800 million, Harvard University---\$9 billion, Brown University---\$510 million, Princeton University---\$210 million, Cornell University---\$1 billion, and Northwestern University---\$790 million; University of Tennessee---\$38.69 million) with some recent settlements if the universities met the demands of the federal government.

Trump/Republican 2.0

- Attacks upon elected officials because they supported sanctuary city protections, with the reality of possible criminal charges.
- Attacks upon law firms that did pro bono work for opponents of the Trump regime, with the resulting punishment that they must provide work for Trump programs. These settlements included \$940 million in pro bono services promised:
 - A&O Shearman: \$125 million.
 - Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft: \$100 million.
 - Kirkland & Ellis: \$125 million.
 - Latham & Watkins: \$125 million.
 - Milbank: \$100 million.
 - Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison: \$40 million.
 - Simpson Thacher & Bartlett: \$125 million.

Trump/Republican 2.0

- We also need to be especially aware of the provisions that were quietly added into HR1, the “Big Beautiful Bill” (where press coverage typically highlights taxation impacts) that was passed by the US House of Representatives. Some of these provisions were discussed by Rep. Jamie Raskin on MSNBC on May 24, 2025 (Raskin, 2025) . They include the following: (1) stripping the ability of courts to use contempt citations, unless a large bond is provided by the litigant, and (2) designating some 501 (c) (3) organizations as terrorist organizations if they are supportive of Palestinian efforts (which might include the ACLU, if broadly interpreted). We also know that HR 1 forbids medications for both adult and child transgender people. And of course, the elimination of \$700 billion for Medicaid and \$280 billion for SNAP (Food Stamps) which disproportionately impacts LGBTQ people, according to the Williams Institute. And the Department of Justice is subpoenaing 20 physicians who provide medications and services to transgender youth in order to intimidate other providers. Also included was funding for 23 detention centers designed to hold 80,000-100,000 people.
- And LGBTQ+ research has been eliminated as discussed in an article entitled “What happened in Chicago when science became the enemy.” [E:\\(Interlandi, J. 2026\)
https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/23/opinion/doge-hiv-funding.html?smid=nytcore-android-share](https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/23/opinion/doge-hiv-funding.html?smid=nytcore-android-share) (Interlandi, J. 2026)

Project 2025 is not done yet

- We all know about Project 2025 and its many implications for LGBTQIA+ people. About 40% of the recommendations are left to implement as follows:
- Criminalize pornography, thereby allowing the Department of Justice to track down users and define them as “sexual offenders”. This provision has been partially implemented by the US Supreme Court, *Free Speech Coalition, Inc. v. Paxton*, which has now approved a Texas law that requires users of pornography to register their age and personal identification information. Once this is implemented, it is a small step to creating a list of users who could then be criminalized. (A bill in the US House, the TAKE IT DOWN Act, S. 146) is designed to do just this)
- Make librarians who emphasize Critical Race Theory or LGBTQ+ issues be defined as “sex offenders.”
- Define those who utilize “transgender ideology” and LGBTQ+ ideas as purveyors of “pornography,” which would be criminalized. (This would criminalize textbooks, articles, and discussions such as the PowerPoints you are reading).
- Ensure that parents who attempt to assist their children with LGBTQ+ or Critical Race theory issues would be labeled as “child abusers.”
- A proposed “Department of Life” (replacing the current Department of Health and Human Services) would emphasize programs encouraging marriage, nuclear families, fatherhood and motherhood and de-emphasize all other programs that do not fit this narrow definitional pattern.
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Project 2025 is not done yet

- The Insurrection Act would be used to shut down protests. The U.S. military would be charged with doing this.
- Ensure that Christian non-profits could prohibit adoptions by atheists, Jewish people and certainly LGBTQIA+ couples.
- Implement sodomy laws, thereby making most LGBTQ+ sexual behavior illegal (the “spirit of the manuscript” moves in this direction).
- Repeal same-sex marriage (A recently passed Tennessee law, HB878, which says that “A person shall not be required to solemnize a marriage,” will most likely wend its way to the U.S. Supreme Court). This is not explicitly stated, but can be inferred from numerous sections of the document—particularly the first chapter/forward, p. 481, 489 and under “defending the rule of law,” p. 557, p. 585.
- Abortion might be banned *nationwide*. This is not explicitly stated, but abortion is mentioned many times throughout the document.” (Swan, 2025)

The Four LGBTQIA+ Scenarios

- Now we need to think about four scenarios that face the LGBTQIA+ community as a result of the implementation of the Republican/Trump Regime 2:
- Scenario 1---Following in the footsteps of previous authoritarian regimes
- Scenario 2---Following in the footsteps of Hungary, with “competitive authoritarianism.”
- Scenario 3---Fleeing to another country
- Scenario 4--- a particularly American scenario, resulting in a life for LGBTQIA people that is considered worse than it was in the 1950’s, but with possible resistance.

Scenario One

- Scenario One----Anyone who has watched the Netflix video entitled “Eldorado: Everything the Nazis hate” (Netflix, 2023) is well aware that at first Adolph Hitler tolerated LGBTQ people, because of his support of the Brown Shirts, headed by Ernst Roehm (who was a somewhat “out” gay man). It started with attacks on transgender people, followed by attacks on the broader LGBTQIA+ community. This changed dramatically because of the “Night of the Long Knives” engineered by Heinrich Himmler, head of the Geheime Staatspolizei (Gestapo). Suddenly, LGBT people were criminalized, the Eldorado was closed, and systematic persecution of LGBT people resulted in their placement in detention centers (or concentration camps) like Sachsenhausen (in the suburbs of Berlin). The argument favoring this possibility is that transgender people in Germany were a special target of Nazi repression and that if there were a traumatic event (e.g., Reichstag fire) that led to national martial law, this expansion to the remainder of the LGBTQ+ might occur. Transgender people are already a special target of the Trump administration. In Germany, this then broadened to attacks on the socialist and communist parties in Germany. The assassination of Charlie Kirk led to an intense reaction by the Trump administration (because of the actions of a partner of a transgender person), resulting in the redefinition of many people as “domestic terrorists”.

Scenario Two

- Scenario Two---The model of Hungary (“competitive authoritarianism”) is one that has been clearly favored by a number of the thought leaders (e.g., Steve Bannon) in the Trump administration. The passage of the “2021 Propaganda Law” had the effect of causing self-censorship and state censorship by the media, closing down bookstores, placing limitations on children’s books, limitation of issues relating to LGBTQ people in television programs, and attacks on writers on social media. “Hungary: Propaganda Law has ‘created clouds of fear’ pushing LGBTI+ community into the shadows”. (amnestyinternational.org, 2023) This was followed by a law forbidding LGBT Pride Celebrations and the use of facial recognition technology to identify and prosecute those who participate in such events. (Cabrera, Cristian Gonzalez, [March 20, 2025]).” A positive movement here has involved the June 2025 Pride celebration, where over one hundred thousand participants filled the streets of Budapest, while the police stood idly by and took no action to levy the proposed \$600 fine for participants. However, after the Pride parade was completed, the Mayor of Budapest was charged with violation of the law. The recent elections repudiating Orbán are a positive sign, but have not stopped the Trump administration from continuing to support Viktor Orbán, who is rumored to be moving to the United States...

Scenario Three

- Scenario Three---Fleeing to another country is yet another option for LGBTQIA+ people. The necessity for doing this has been identified by a Scottish parliamentarian who proposed that the United Kingdom offer asylum to American LGBTQIA+ people. ““I think if there are people in America who are unhappy with a lot of the things [Trump] is talking about domestically – the LGBT community for example, a lot of minorities – they have skills, we could welcome them here. And I think we would be a much more welcoming society for an awful lot of people who are finding America, at the minute, difficult.” (Jackson, L. 2025). “Timothy Snyder, author of “On Tyranny”, an internationally known expert on dictatorship (originally a tenured faculty member at Yale University), and his wife, as well as another faculty member, fled to the University of Toronto shortly after he announced on March 17, 2025, that the United States had become a dictatorship. One of the co-editors of our most recent book, a gay man, has left for Veracruz, Mexico, for the same reason, as well as economic reasons. We have also seen polls indicating that 75% of 1600+ scientists polled are considering moving to another country. (Witze, 2025)
- “An estimated 180,000 or more American citizens moved abroad in 2025 following Donald Trump’s return to office, contributing to the first net outward migration in decades. Driven by political dissatisfaction, high living costs, and a desire for better safety, this record exodus is coupled with over 2.5 million immigrants leaving as part of a federal crackdown, according to Yahoo News Canada and WSJ.” (Google.com)

Scenario Four

- Scenario Four---This alternative is a particularly American scenario, resulting in a life for LGBTQIA people that is considered worse than it was in the 1950's (when this author grew up). Here, I would suggest some indicators: According to the Annual LGBTQ+ Community Survey from the Human Rights Campaign,
- Acceptance is eroding:
- “One in five U.S. adults (21.6%) say acceptance of LGBTQ+ people has declined in the past year. Three in ten (29.7%) LGBTQ+ adults share this belief.
- Outness is fading: Nearly half (47.5%) of LGBTQ+ adults report being less out somewhere in their lives over the last 12 months. This retreat cuts across workplaces (26.5%), healthcare (25.4%), and public spaces (28.3%).
- Visibility is slipping: More than half of LGBTQ+ adults (51.1%) report being less visible than a year ago. 40.1% of LGBTQ+ parents with school-aged children report being less visible at schools, the highest of all measured environments.” (HRC, 2026)
- But at the same time, **resistance** has been a hallmark of some elements of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Financial insecurity---HRC

- “Financial security is declining: LGBTQ+ adults are nearly twice as likely as non-LGBTQ+ adults to say their financial situation worsened over the past 12 months.
- Discrimination is destabilizing: Among LGBTQ+ adults, those who experienced discrimination were nearly twice as likely to report being financially unwell.
- Lower-income means higher vulnerability: LGBTQ+ adults and families earning below \$75,000 per year are five times as likely to say they are financially insecure than those earning \$75,000 or more. Those who recently lost a job or experienced a loss of household income are twice as likely.”

Some Questions

- If the goal is to “Define those who utilize ‘transgender ideology’ and LGBTQ+ ideas as purveyors of ‘pornography’ which would be criminalized”, will authors and publishers become criminalized?
- If the goal is to “criminalize pornography, thereby allowing the Department of Justice to track down users and define them as ‘sexual offenders’,” will both LGBT and heterosexual users of pornography both be prosecuted? (c)
- There are “773 bills, 43 states, 48 passed, 655 active, 70 failed.” (Trans Legislation Tracker, 2026). If this is true, will the judiciary (federal and state) remain as a bulwark to protect their rights?
- How far will the dismantling of DEI go, since it is currently directed against African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, women and LGBTQIA+ people? For instance, most corporations are eliminating specific provisions protecting DEI, and as a result, corporations are eliminating financial support to Pride festivals nationwide, with serious impacts (Wolfe, 2025). The courts have ruled against the dismantling of DEI, but the Trump administration still implements anti-DEI measures in its grants processes.

So which scenario is actually happening

- **It is fairly obvious that we are rapidly pursuing Scenario 1. Why?**
- (1) Watch the PBS special entitled “The US and the Holocaust,” and the similarities will jump out at the viewer. (Burns, L. et al. 2026)
- (2) Rights have repeatedly been stripped from Transgender people. Watch the movie “Nuremberg.” (Nuremberg, 2025) We see the analogy of the Nuremberg laws being implemented against transgender people. At least one foundation has characterized these steps as being the beginning of a program of genocide. (Lemkin Institute, 2026)
- (3) Renee Good was a lesbian who, along with her surviving wife, was labeled as a “domestic terrorist.”
- (4) My own All God’s Children Metropolitan Community church minister was held at gunpoint three times, and only released because he was white.
- (5) Don Lemon, both gay and African American, has been charged for recording activity in a church, as has his producer.
- (6) Much of the machinery of the federal bureaucracy has been aimed at us, and that machinery involves very sophisticated technological surveillance...
- We have already seen the attacks on Critical Race Theory, which underlie the arguments for the rights of African American people.
- We have seen efforts to move massive numbers of undocumented people out of the country.
- We have seen the way in which scientific literature about Transgender people has been twisted into the term “transgender ideology” and used to track transgender people.

Academic attacks, social media, and NSPD-7

- And now we see universities like Texas Tech working to ban student research on LGBTQIA+ topics (Priest, J. 2026) and Pensacola State College forbidding student newspapers from covering LGBTQIA+ stories. (FIRE, 2026)
- We see social media (e.g., Meta) targeting the elimination of LGBTQIA+ news
- The NSPD-7 memo, activating the apparatus of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, reportedly directs investigation of individuals exhibiting 'indicia' of political violence, including 'anti-capitalism, anti-Americanism, anti-Christianity, and 'extremism' on race, gender, and migration". This means that "no fly" rules (in addition to the names of 2 million people on the "no fly list") may prevent LGBTQ+ people from leaving the country.
- The 2027 US Budget includes a "proposed mission center (which) would include personnel from 10 federal agencies tasked with targeting 'domestic terrorists' associated with a wide range of ideologies. Among them is what the administration labels 'extremism' related to gender, alongside categories such as 'anti-Americanism,' 'anti-capitalism,' 'anti-Christianity,' and 'support for the overthrow of the U.S. government.' The document also cites 'hostility toward those who hold traditional American views' on family, religion, and morality — language LGBTQ advocates have increasingly warned could be used to frame queer and transgender rights movements as ideological threats. The mission center is one component of a proposed \$166 million increase in the FBI's counterterrorism budget," according to the *Washington Blade* (Rebekenny, J. 2026).
- That center, referred to as the 'NSPM-7 Joint Mission Center,' follows a directive issued by the Trump administration last year to prioritize investigations into perceived political threats from the left, as previously reported by independent journalist Ken Klippenstein. (Walker, J. April 13, 2026))

The surveillance society

- “Justice Department’s weaponization group recently said (they) planned to use...authority to expose and discredit those(they) believe to be guilty, even if (they) cannot find evidence to prosecute them.” (Thrush, G. and Feuer, A. 2025)
- A chilling article in techdirt magazine discusses a power tool which endures surveillance of Facebook, Instagram, Chaturbate (a gay porn site), Google, Threads, Substack, TikTok, Telegram, Yelp, YouTube, Zillow, Yahoo, WhatsApp, PayPal, Snapchat, Skype, Reddit, ProtonMail, Pornhub (another porn site), Pinterest, Pandora, NissanUSA and Honda (note that *only foreign cars* are included), Amazon, Indeed, LinkedIn, GoFundMe, Glassdoor, Etsy, eBay, DuckDuckGo, Bluesky, and Bing, among many others. (Cushing, T. 2025) The purpose of the power tool is primarily to detect opposition to President Donald Trump as well as undocumented people.
- I have purposely eliminated a number of slides that provide detailed explanations of surveillance, because it would almost double the size of this 10-minute presentation.

What comes next?

- Professor Ruth Ben-Ghiat at NYU says what will be next will be the illegality of simply sharing social media posts, and this is already starting to happen, when people are accosted for saying something critical, and the police or ICE agents end up at their doorstep. The professor says that when the undocumented people are no longer the target, who will be next? We have 23 detention centers that will hold 80-100,000 people. She says: “The net always widens.”
- ICE is buying and converting 16 buildings across the country to serve as regional processing centers, each holding 1,000 to 1,500 immigrant detainees at a time, according to one of the documents, an overview of the detention plan. Another eight large-scale detention centers will hold 7,000 to 10,000 detainees at a time, and serve as “the primary locations” for international removals. ICE Detention Centers. There is considerable opposition to these centers.
- What will happen with the November 2026 elections: Will a President willingly give up power? Did he on January 6th? Will the SAVE Act be passed? Will ICE agents show up at polling places? Will the President issue an Executive Order if SAVE is not passed?
- Many people are looking forward to the elections in November 2026 to prevent the implementation of this machinery. Their assumption is that the US House of Representatives and perhaps even the US Senate will be returned to the power of the opposition party.

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Will there be a November election?

- However, those who are in the upper arm of the K-shaped economy will not give up power easily. By contrast, Maggie Haberman, a prominent reporter from the New York Times, posits the following: She “has voiced concerns that Donald Trump could seek to use the U.S. military to influence or retain political power, citing past statements and policy moves. Her warning comes amid heightened scrutiny of Trump’s wartime conduct, escalating tensions with Iran, and debates over presidential authority. The discussion has intensified calls from figures like John Brennan to consider constitutional safeguards, including the 25th Amendment, to protect democratic institutions.” (Haberman, M. 2026)
- There is a 17-page paper circulating in the White House that defines how military force should be used to keep the administration in power. The “17-page proposal, a working document reviewed in full by PBS News, would give him extraordinary power over the 2026 midterm elections. It claims to address election integrity issues caused by foreign interference. By declaring a national emergency, the document hypothesizes, the president could take control over some voting mechanisms in the country, including requiring hand-counting of ballots and voter identification at the polls.” (Landers, L, 2026)
- See Richard Genhardt and Timothy Wirth “Warning: Trump’s Rolling Coup is already underway” (Reich, R.) 2026) and Maggie Haberman & Jonathan Swan “Regime Change: Inside the Imperial Presidency of Donald Trump” (documents that we almost saw the Insurrection Act implemented in Minnesota).
- Professor Timothy Snyder at the University of Ottawa recommends that we should be aware that the Republican administration will not give up power easily, but with this awareness, opposition may develop that will prevent it from happening.

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