



CARING FOR LGBTQ REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS, PART 3



MORE LIGHT
PRESBYTERIANS



Presbyterian Mission
**Presbyterian
Disaster Assistance**



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TODAY'S TRAINERS

Susan Krehbiel, she/her

Associate for Refugees and Asylum Seekers,
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Alex McNeill, he/him

Executive Director, *More Light Presbyterians*

Jamila Hammami, they/them

Executive Director,

Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP)



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What we will cover today:

- Review of Part 1
- The current landscape for refugees and people seeking asylum
- An overview of the detainment process
- The cycle for asylum seekers - asylums
- The reality of the process on people's lived experiences



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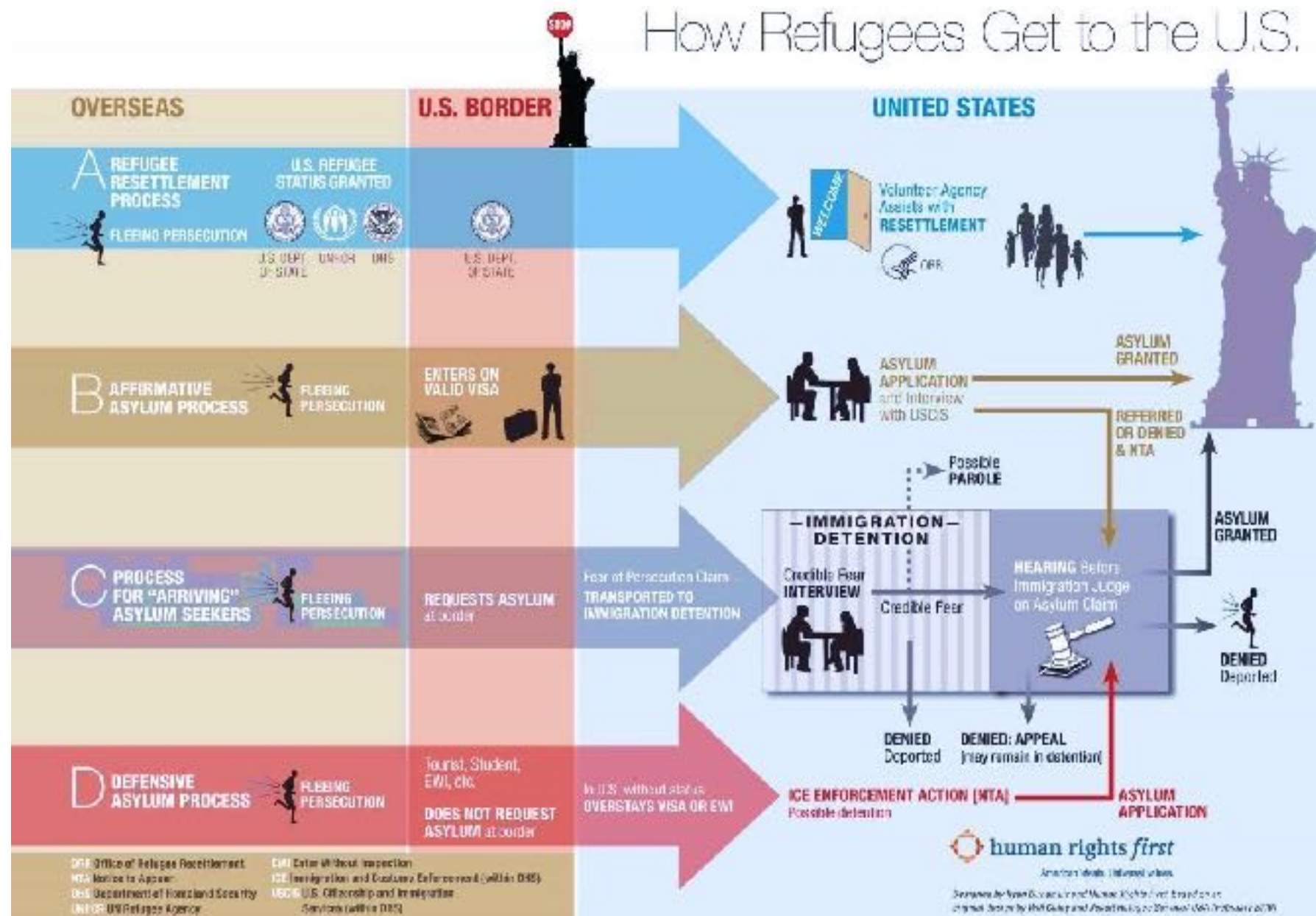
Re-Cap of Part 1



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HOW DO REFUGEES GET TO THE U.S.?



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WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?



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Detainees

Families

Asylee

Illegals

Alien

Neighbor

**Sisters,
Brothers,
and Siblings**

Threat to
National Security



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MATTHEW 2:13-18

13 Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

14 **Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, 15 and remained there until the death of Herod.** This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

16 When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and **killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under**, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

18 "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."



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DETENTION 101

Realities of American
immigration
detention & its impacts on
LGBTQI communities



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Jamila Hammami is a queer non- binary first generation Tunisian Arab American person of color community organizer & social worker from the south, now based in NYC. They are a founder and Executive Director of the Queer Detainee Empowerment Project. Founded in 2014, Jamila has worked with LGBTQI/ HIV+ immigrants in detention and post- detention. They have specifically worked on service provision, program development, organizing, advocacy and policy around the

realities of detention and violent xenophobic policies, while uplifting the voices of LGBTQI immigrants that were previously detained through the podcast Queering Immigration.

They are a graduate of the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College with a degree in Community Organizing Social Work, with a specialization in Immigrants and Refugees. They are also a Social Work Field Instruction at Columbia School of Social Work in New York City. Jamila comes to this work with personal and familial experiences with the incarceration system, a background in reproductive justice, working to center women, specifically trans and queer, of color's voices in movements, and witnessing the impacts of migration and racism in their formative years in Texas.

Jamila is a survivor of police brutality and the carceral system; but is fortunate to have been able to remain in the free world based on procedural civil rights violations. They are also a leader of the NYC chapter of Black & Pink, an organization run and led by those that are currently or are previously incarcerated and free world allies.

Jamila is a contributor to the books Centering Intersectional Politics: Queer Migration Activisms "After Marriage", Profit/ Protest Asylum, and Queer Migrations 2: Illegalization, Detention, and Deportation. Jamila is also a member of the The Stonewall Foundation's Levin- Goffe Committee, a scholarship program for immigrant students in New York City.

Jamila is a recipient of the Metropolitan Community Church of New York (MCCNY) 2017 HEART Award, New York City Council LGBT Caucus 2017 LGBT Champion, Step Feed's Top 20 Arab Activist, National Association Of Social Workers of New York City's 2017 Emerging Leaderships Award, Opportunity Agenda 2015 Communications Institute Fellow, and an Opportunity Agenda 2016 Creative Change Fellow.



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About Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP)



The Queer Detainee Empowerment Project assists folks coming out of immigration detention in securing structural, health/wellness, educational, legal, and emotional support and services. We work to organize around the structural barriers and state violence that LGBTQIA TS & GNC detainee/undocumented folks face related to their immigration status, race, sexuality, and gender expression/ identity.

We are committed to assisting folks in building lives outside of detention, to breaking down the barriers that prevent folks from building fulfilling and productive lives, and to keeping queer families intact by demanding an end to deportations/ detention/ policing. We believe in creating a narrative of thriving, not just surviving.



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About Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP)



The Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP) is a post-release support, detention center visitation, direct service, and community organizing project that works with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Two Spirit, Trans, Intersex, Gender Non-Conforming, and HIV+ (LGBTQIA* GNC TS) immigrant prisoners and their families currently in detention centers, those that have been recently released from detention centers, and those at risk at entering immigration detention in the Tri-State area.



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Who QDEP Serves (countries)



Nigeria

Kenya

Uganda

Syria

Tunisia

Jamaica

Dominican Republic

Mexico

Guatemala

Honduras

And more



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Detention in numbers

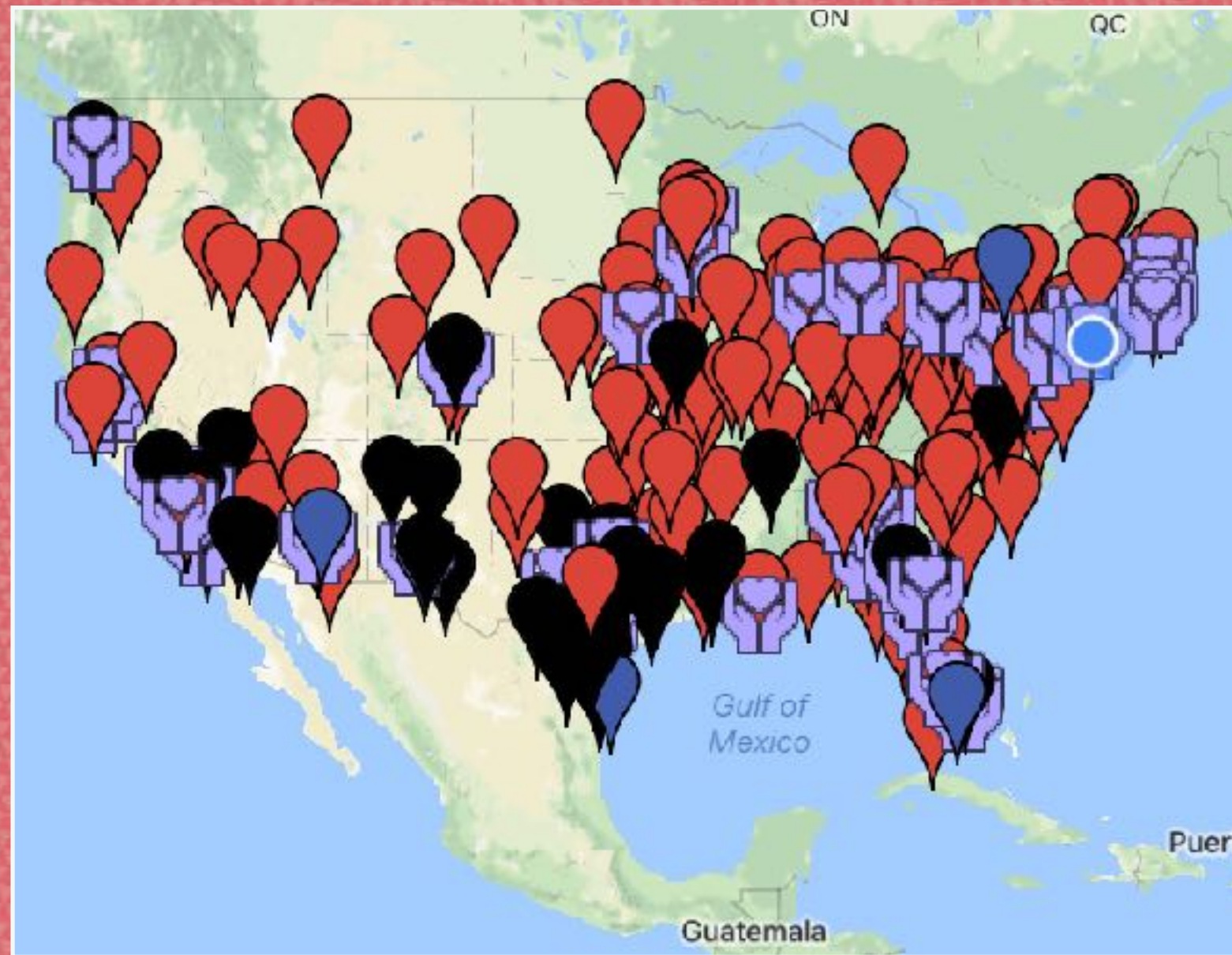
- 40,000+ people on any given day
- 400,000 a year
- Held in a network of 210 local, federal, and for-profit immigration detention facilities across the US.
- Civil detention system
- Break away from good immigrant/ bad immigrant narrative
- Even if criminal charges, serve time twice



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Detention Facilities in the US



Thank you to CIVIC for this map



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Realities of Detention

- Mandatory detention
- We must break away from good immigrant/ bad immigrant
- Medical neglect
- Physical violence
- Reproductive violence
- Pregnant women detained, forced to give birth in shackles
- Breastfeeding women detained
- Children detained
- Folks with disabilities/ differing abilities detained



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LGBTQI Realities

- Increased risk of physical violence
- Sexual violence and harassment
- Increased medical neglect
- HIV neglect
- Lack of hormones
- Lack of specialized care for trans community members
- Solitary confinement
- Retaliation for “special needs” aka human rights care



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Case Study: Victoria Arellano

Victoria Arellano was a Mexican immigrant to the United States who died from complications of AIDS while in the custody of the Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.



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Case Study: Marichuy Leal Gamino

Marichuy is a transgender asylum-seeker from Mexico, who was raped by cell mate, in all men's facility, and placed in solitary confinement in retaliation for outcry of sexual assault



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GBT pods

Adelanto-- California (closed)

Santana-- California (closed)

Cibola-- New Mexico



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Struggles post- detention

- Homelessness
- Employment (lack of work authorization)
 - Forced into alternative economies
 - Must move away from shaming sex work
- Medical care
- HIV care
- Mental health care
 - Incredible struggles with mental illness, often goes untreated (stigma)
- Substance abuse and alcoholism
- Criminalization
- Lack of trust of religious folks
 - Colonialism resulted in laws against LGBTQI folks



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What Can You Do?

- Visit folks in detention
- Raise bonds for folks once granted by ICE
- Provide temporary housing to folks post- detention
- DONATE to programs that are providing direct service
- DONATE toiletries, gender- affirming clothing, and cosmetics
- Provide other forms of material support-- employment, etc.
- Organize food programs for LGBTQI immigrants
- Show that people of faith are not the same of past experiences



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QUESTIONS?



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