



## Yes We Can, #21

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It had to happen. My galpal got a wicked cold at the inauguration. We called it America's Cold. I did my Florence Nightingale best - very cute in a nurse's cap - with chicken soup, aspirin, plenty of fluids, the Mucinex drip. I remained confident, okay cocky, that I would not succumb. After all, I'd had a flu shot. Of course, at the end of every flu season, some government agency announces that the shots weren't for that flu.

**Because another big winter storm was predicted to hit NYC just as I was supposed to be leaving for Denver for the Task Force's 21st Annual National Conference on LGBT Equality, AKA Creating Change, I got rebooked on an earlier flight.** That allowed me to arrive in Denver early to have a whole extra day to be sick there. My America's Cold arrived via a stomach flu we will just call Bed, Bath and Beyond. Then I got the cold. Is this TMI?

You might find it hard to believe, but I am a terrible patient. I find it unacceptable when I get sick. I have my own timetable for wellness. Then I moan that I have never been well. It can get very dramatic. **My healing was not helped by my anger, because dammit I love the Task Force's Creating Change conference and I love the city of Denver.** Although I could have done without the compounding high altitude head ache.

We were welcomed to Denver by their charming and progressive second term mayor, John Hickenlooper. A staunch LGBT supporter, who hosted an amazing Democratic Convention, the mayor had lobbied for CC to come to Denver. A core committee of eighty-five Denver volunteers worked for a year to make the conference a success. **They were well deployed to their volunteer tasks by CC co-coordinators, the Task Force's Russell Royball and Sue Hyde.**

**CC draws LGBT activists from all over the country and features all day institutes for youth organizing, community centers, race and social justice.** A wide range of daily workshops - my favorite title was "What a Pisser" about gender-neutral bathrooms - and plenary sessions keeps everybody busy when they are not hanging out doing what Task Forcers do best - yacking and scheming.

In the opening plenary, [Dolores Huerta](#), the co-founder with Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers, a friend of Harvey Milk and a strong and long Latino LGBT ally was inspirational not only for her long history of activism but also for her still buoyant challenge to white supremacy. The plenary panel on HIV/AIDS chaired by GMHC executive director Marjorie Hill demonstrated

the Task Force's continuing commitment to fighting the disease, 28 years into the epidemic. **In her State of the Movement plenary address, new Task Force executive director Rea Carey first denounced the race blaming post-Prop 8 analysis and then laid out the Task Force goals for 2009, a year of the new Obama administration and the old Bush financial misadministration.**

The farewell plenary featured the comedy and musical stylings of America's favorite dragapella beauty shop quartet, [the Kinsey Sicks](#). They are hilarious, irreverent and fully made-up even at 1130 Mountain Time.

**Plan now to go to the next Creating Change in Dallas the first weekend in February.** I am already organizing the field trip to George Bush's house. Watch for details about the citizen's arrest!