



Creating Change, Day 1: Racial and Economic Justice

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January 28, 2009 6:30 PM

Today was the first full day of Creating Change and it started with a subject that touches everyone- Racial and Economic Justice.



This topic has kicked off the Creating Change Conference for the past 35 years and continues to be a foundation of the work done during the week.

The day began with the Opening Welcome and plenary speakers. I will say that just to be in a room full of engaged, passionate, queer activists was a moving experience. As the opening ceremony began, you could feel the atmosphere of determination and motivation. Attendees ranged the full spectrum of our community- every age, race, religion, gender, and identity you can imagine was represented with smart and vocal participants.

The Opening Session

The opening session was a great overview of what the day had in store. The plenary speakers showed some incredible videos- one of torture and its connection between queerness, justice, free market capitalism and an incredible video of an oral history of the New York's Village and the Stonewall Riots.

The speakers touched on many topics that would be fleshed out throughout the sessions, from connecting global movements with local ones to create connected learning experiences to how being queer gives us a unique ability to rebuild the ideas of love, family, and community outside of the traditional heteronormative or supremacists ways.

It was an amazing introduction into moving beyond the queer movement's disconnect to large scale social, economic, racial, and other justice issues.

Challenging White Supremacy: Building Community and Solidarity from the Inside Out

The full day of learning institutes had many tracks, ranging from ways to help newer activists to seasoned vets. I chose to attend the intermediary track on "Challenging White Supremacy."

The focus of the session was to understand "white privilege" and use it to challenge white supremacy. It was themed "Liberation, Access, and Sovereignty."

It was amazing to really take a hard look at how whiteness dominates every institution in our society- employment, housing, family, religion, government, healthcare, immigration, the criminal justice system, education, media, finance, politics, and every other system you can imagine.

We also discussed how we were living in a time of seismic change, a "perfect storm of possibility", as the moderator called it. We were living in a time when we can really challenge the privilege that dominates thanks to the horrendous Bush years, the wars, the stolen 2000 election, and the crash of the economy- all of which ultimately lead to the election of Obama.

The morning session was mainly about recognizing instances of white privilege in our workplaces or organizations, as well as discussing ways that we have seen to counter the supremacy that have been successful. It was amazing to see people really dig deep and talk about the things they've seen or experienced. The honesty of the group only proved the dedication of those attending.

We still have sessions to add this evening where the ideas will be discussed further. It has already been an enlightening experience and one that I am looking forward to continuing.

Keep checking back for more of our updates on the Creating Change Conference in Denver!