



Dr. Manning Marable: An Appreciation

by Dr. Glenda Russell

The minute I read of the untimely death of Dr. Manning Marable in last weekend's paper, tears sprang to my eyes. As a fierce ally to the LGBTQA community, Dr. Marable was as much a member of the movement for LGBTQ liberation as he was a straight, Black man who exhorted white people to be active members of the movement for justice for people of color. For Dr. Marable, it was never a matter of identity politics—not only about Black liberation, not only about LGBTQ liberation, not only about any single liberation.

Dr. Marable's death, like his life, should serve as a reminder to the LGBTQA community of what roles allies can play in the progress of movements. He knew—and he taught us—that all struggles for liberation are intertwined. "There is an inextricable connection which brings together all people who are oppressed into a fundamental, collective interest," he wrote in his *Beyond the Color Line* column back in 1993. Those of us in Colorado who were still smarting from the deep pain of the passage of Amendment 2 heard his words as balm and as a challenge to understand our pain in the broadest possible context. He was offering us the basics of a blueprint for healing ourselves and the world. I was shocked to think that this brilliant man had died at 60 years of age. It was an incomprehensible loss. He was young and productive. His long-awaited biography of Malcolm X was due to be released the next day. He should have had many more years to teach us, to prod us, to challenge us. Instead, we are left with huge gaps in the places where his writing and his incredible talks once stood like beacons to all who care about social justice.

It is appropriate that we honor Dr. Marable. We can do so by looking for the interconnections among all forms of oppression, by working to end all oppression, and by pushing ourselves to see that LGBTQA self-interest extends—to borrow from the man himself—far beyond the lines of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.

From 1989 to 1993, Dr. Marable was a professor of ethnic studies at the University of Colorado.

This piece was posted as a blog on the Out Boulder site.