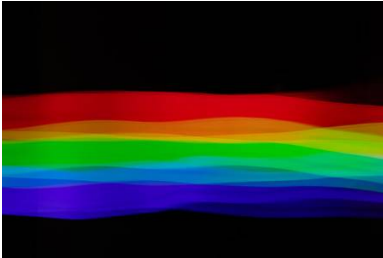


Guest Column: Rainbow Light | CPD Blog

Melissa Malcolm King

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On March 4th, 2021, individuals gathered in the darkness to shine hope into the hearts of those who suffer and are dying emotionally and physically at the hands of those who say they are not enough. Individuals in their silence, pleading for new hope, climbed the Y mountain. Each rainbow light glowed in honor and remembrance of a past that no one wants to endure and future that demands endless possibility.

Just a few weeks prior, BYU had announced a major change in policy that provided hope by demonstrating inclusion and support of my radiant rainbow family. Celebration soon turned into somber realization that nothing had changed but a few words. So together in spirit and in person we gathered in unity and love in hopes of not losing another life. In hopes that healing and gentle peace could find a place among the tears and anguish.

Each person on the mountain represented the moments that I, too, have stood in the darkness with my rainbow light, only to have religions tell me to turn it off. I have stood on the mountain in the dark, climbing each obstacle, wondering where the next turn will take me and not wanting to go on any longer. With each movement, I can sense danger lurking, and despite my earnest attempts for equity, I am cast aside. Nevertheless, I keep climbing, knowing that my journey creates a pathway for others to find refuge.

Each person who stood on that mountain represents rainbow family members who couldn't hold on any longer—that desperately clung to the cliffs of injustice only to have others stamp on their hands and then scoff when they fell. I have lost so many rainbow souls who decided that life itself was no longer worth living because they, like me, have had to endure endless sorrow and turmoil. It is these precious spirits that I carry with me as I give a voice to the voiceless. My deceased rainbow family has become the beacon, purpose, and strength to carry on. I dodge and duck the corrosive bullets that attempt to eat away at my soul so that I can become a shield for those less defenseless than I.

Blood of oppression lays on the hands of those who project rejection, dismantle hope, and destroy peace in the name of religion and morality. This warped thinking leads me and so many to feel that our very existence is not worthy of God's unconditional love or acceptance. God does not live within the bounds of oppressive assimilation as a measure of love, and neither shall I.

I will be silent no longer. I will not stand idly by and accept souls' dismantling as a pathway to so-called righteousness. I will not accept performative allyship as a method or means to extinguishing this civil war.

Instead, I issue a call to action.

It is a call to display rainbow support on every mountaintop and the world's valleys around us, even when there is no hashtag. Outrage should never be a trend or socially appropriated when it is popular. The willingness to change our environment begins with the desire to change our perspectives and broaden our horizons to include the suffering of the marginalized.

I issue a call not only to continue the uncomfortable conversations but to have the words follow a commitment to the cause's full measure. A plan for allyship and supporting the Rainbow Family begins by not planting frivolous attempts at hope through catchy slogans, buttons, and bumper stickers. These actions are foolish without fighting against injustice in all forms and embracing all intersections' marginalization, and uplifting People of Color's voices. It is facing that reality that had this peaceful demonstration at BYU described a campaign to uplift People of Color, the outcome would have been very different.

This call to action will take time, sacrifice, and commitment to be in awkward and painful spaces to nurture others who live there and do not have the privilege to move away from and avoid this trauma. Please do not speak for me but rather support the platform I am fighting to stand on. My voice is strong and does not need dilution, condemnation, or passive activism. My voice becomes amplified when those around me do the work independently and do not use me as a search engine or research guide.

If you are willing to take the journey:

- Can you hear what those tears beyond lights on the mountain say?
- What will your response to our wailing be?
- Do you see what the world of privilege allows you to ignore?
- Will you act today to not only answer the call but make the change?

Guest Columnist Melissa Malcom King is a queer, disabled person of color. Her opinions are her own.

Also by Melissa: [The Cure Within](#).