

Article

“Healing Methodologies”: A Case for Researching Racial Trauma, Hidden Injuries, and Wellbeing in School

Laura Azzarito ^{1,*}, John M. Broughton ¹ and Pamela A. Koch ² 

¹ Department of Arts & Humanities, Teachers College Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, USA; broughton@tc.columbia.edu

² Department of Health Studies & Applied Educational Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, USA; pak14@tc.columbia.edu

* Correspondence: la2477@tc.columbia.edu

Abstract

In the context of today’s neoliberal governance of schooling, the psychological, emotional, cultural, and spiritual costs of internalized racism remain unaddressed. However, when Youth of Color embody internalized racial oppression (IRO), they become “psychologically homeless,” which affects their wellbeing in devastating ways. This article advances an anti-racist research agenda in education, suggesting that education researchers’ implementation of “healing methodologies” in school is key to tackling issues of IRO. To this end, this paper advocates for education researchers to embrace, incorporate, and combine art-based and walking approaches into participatory “healing methodologies” to provide students with embodied practices that can support them in exploring, reconciling, and repairing hidden injuries while re-establishing inner strength and equilibrium for wellbeing and body restoration.

Keywords: Youth of Color; racial trauma; wellbeing; neoliberalism; participatory research methodologies; arts-based inquiry; walking methodology; embodiment



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1. Introduction

“We [People of Color] blame ourselves because we feel we could have somehow prevented the racist act or bias. So, we create an emotional fortress to protect ourselves from further harm.” (Rowe, 2020, p. 25)

In the context of the current neoliberal governance of school, while the psychological, emotional, cultural, and spiritual costs of internalized racism remain unaddressed, when Youth of Color embody internalized racial oppression (IRO), the impact of internalized racism on their wellbeing can be devastating (Atari & Han, 2018; Hardy & Laszloffy, 2007; Hardy, 2022; Pyke, 2010; Rowe, 2020; Velez et al., 2019). In an increasingly competitive high-stakes test-driven educational environment permeated by Whiteness as the dominant ideology, as Saketopoulou (2023, p. 1096) recently asserted, the “burgeoning neoliberal economies” have nothing to offer to Youth of Color who struggle with racial oppression in their day-to-day lives. Moreover, such market-driven forms of education driven by neoliberal globalization supports ideologies of colorblindness, Whiteness, individualism, homogeneity, self-determination, and meritocracy (Giroux, 2005), denying the urgent need to deal with the impact of internalized racism on the embodied identity of Youth of Color and their wellbeing. This is hugely problematic, especially for many Youth of Color, who are often positioned as the fulcrum of deficit discourses. Neoliberal forms of education create a hostile climate for the incorporation of an anti-racist research agenda in schools,

including a lack of opportunities for researching with and for Students of Color to support healing from experiences of IRO (Daniel et al., 2023; Pyke, 2010; Rowe, 2020).

As long as racial issues remain unresolved, however, the day-to-day life experiences of Youth of Color in school will continue to be “stuck” with Whiteness. Whiteness refers to “a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed” (Hardy, 2022, p. 348), maintaining Whiteness as intangible and invisible. The dominant ideology of Whiteness institutionalized in school creates vulnerable spaces in which the body of Youth of Color is exposed to racialized messages of devaluation, and their embodied identity is subjugated to White supremacy. However, feeling racialized, inadequate, misrepresented, marginalized, oppressed, and/or invisible in society makes a young person feel disconnected from the body, “Othered,” and estranged from a sense of self. This sense of body/self-disconnection can develop into a disabling condition, which has a hugely damaging impact on the wellbeing of Youth of Color. In this paper, the notion of Youth of Color is defined as “those who are racialized in the United States as non-white. . . [who] may experience psychic and material violence as they relate to the institutionalized intersections of racism, classism, and heteropatriarchy” (Hanna, 2019, p. 233). The term Youth of Color is meant not to homogenize and universalize the diversity of experiences, backgrounds, cultures, upbringings, and languages. Instead, it is intended convey youth who, in heterogeneous and multifaceted ways, share intergenerational histories of racial oppression, struggle with internalized racism, and hurt because of experiences of racial trauma.

This article advances an anti-racist research agenda in education (Hardy, 2023), suggesting that education researchers’ implementation of “healing methodologies” in school is key to addressing issues of internalized racial oppression (IRO). To this end, the first section stresses that maintaining a “standard White curriculum” (Hardy, 2023, p. 23) reproduces the legacy of racialization, and, moreover, leaves the hidden wounds of IRO in the body of Youth of Color, having a devastating impact on their wellbeing. The second section contends that, in the current neoliberal times, while the psychological, emotional, cultural, and spiritual costs of internalized racism remain unaddressed in school, when Youth of Color embody IRO, they become “psychologically homeless” (Hardy, 2023, p. 208). Therefore, the last section advocates for education researchers’ incorporation of art-based and walking approaches into participatory “healing methodologies” implemented with and for Youth of Color in school. Healing methodologies provide students with embodied practices that can support them in exploring, processing, reconciling, and repairing hidden injuries while re-establishing inner strength and equilibrium for wellbeing and body restoration.

2. Today’s Neoliberal Governance of School: The Minority Model and Its Legacy of Racialization

“While many teens have insecurities about feeling as though they don’t fit in, these feelings often are intensified for kids of color, who receive powerful rejecting messages on the basis of their race and skin color.” (Hardy & Laszloffy, 2007, p. 48)

Today’s neoliberal logic of school enacts a “standard White curriculum” (Hardy, 2023, p. 23) that functions to preserve Whiteness as universal, taken for granted, and normalized, while cementing “Eurocentric, individualistic, capitalist values” in school (Trimble, 2018, p. 52). The standard White curriculum, according to Hardy (2023), refers to pedagogical practices that, in hidden ways, privilege stories, upbringings, and experiences of White people, maintaining White privilege. In the current colorblind landscape of education driven by neoliberal globalization, the “standard White curriculum” (Hardy, 2023, p. 23) represents a “minority model” (Rowe, 2020, p. 9) in school that is based on a Eurocentric approach of acculturation and assimilation to Whiteness and White supremacy. The minority model uses a multicultural approach to assimilate the “Other” to White norms,

upholding Whiteness as the dominant culture, while shaping Youth of Color's sense of self to "fit" racialized stereotypes (Rowe, 2020). In particular, the multicultural frame of the minority model adopts a colorblind approach to education, implicitly, "Othering" Youth of Color while failing to address the significant impact of racialized messages on Students of Color (Moya, 2009). The "Othering" process takes place when the standard White curriculum works, implicitly, to circulate a "natural" racial hierarchy that sustains White superiority, reinforcing racialized stereotypes.

In this way, the minority model implemented in school enacts the racialization process, creating a "learning environment" where Youth of Color are compelled to recognize themselves through universalized White ideals. Such a minority model informed by multiculturalism neither acknowledges colorblindness as a racialized ideology nor works to tackle White supremacy in school but rather keeps the process of racialization invisible and Whiteness intangible. Through the racialization process, many Youth of Color develop a racialized identity in White terms, constructing themselves through deficit stories (Trieu & Lee, 2018). The standard White curriculum works to "Other" Students of Color while neglecting the devastating psychological impact of IRO on their wellbeing. IRO is a repressive condition that involves persistent painful experiences of devaluation on the basis of race, having psychologically destructive consequences for the embodied self of many Youth of Color (Hardy, 2023). Moreover, the colorblindness attached to the multicultural "minority model" implicitly functions to uphold essentialist representations of the "Other" through the damaging lenses of Whiteness, keeping the social order and socio-economic-political structures of White domination and racial oppression unaddressed. In this vein, Pyke (2010) suggests that the "minority model" not only uses the "blaming the victims" approach as a means "to mystify and protect White racism" (p. 210) but also condemns Youth of Color as "guilty" for the internalization of negative messages of racialized devaluation they experience in their daily lives (Trieu & Lee, 2018).

Schools, like many other sites of public pedagogies (e.g., media, playgrounds, social media, museums, television, advertisements), are powerful institutions of socialization. A school environment founded on Whiteness and its colorblindness, for instance, implicitly pressures Youth of Color to develop a sense of self through the lenses of Whiteness while forcing them to disavow an identity developed on their own cultural terms. As a "standard White curriculum" (Hardy, 2023, p. 23), the "minority model" positions Youth of Color through deficit lenses, compelling Youth of Color to construct themselves through deficit stories, while homogenizing yet stigmatizing the embodied identity of Students of Color in damaging ways. When Whiteness as the racialized dominant ideology is institutionalized in school, Students of Color may endure persistent experiences of racialized devaluation, having to disassociate the self from their own culture, ethnic background, and upbringing. In other words, they become racialized embodied identities with a "whitewashed" mindset (Trieu & Lee, 2018, p. 73). This means that when the standard White curriculum is implemented in school, Youth of Color come to see and experience themselves through the eyes of Whiteness, having to wear "white masks" (Fanon, 1967) while alienating their sense of self in the world. Such a whitewashed mindset makes young people feel bad about their embodied self, leaving students with no skills to critically decode, problematize, and negotiate those deficit stories that define who they are in society in negative terms. As Hardy (2022, p. 9) pointed out, "racially oppressed" people find themselves struggling in their everyday life, having to negotiate, resist, and counteract toxic racialized messages that mark them as "deficient." Colorblind ideologies and/or deficit stories have a huge detrimental impact on the wellbeing of many Youth of Color. However, as Goessling (2020) points out, oppression causes traumatic harm. The following section contends that in the context of the current neoliberal governance of schooling, while the psychological, emotional, cultural,

and spiritual costs of internalized racism remain unaddressed in school, when Youth of Color embody IRO, they become “psychologically homeless” (Hardy, 2023, p. 208).

3. Hidden Injuries: Whiteness, Racial Trauma, and Becoming Psychologically Homeless

While adolescence is already a vulnerable time for many young people who feel they do not “fit in,” this struggle is intensified for many Youth of Color who endure persistent racist messages and devaluations in their daily life (Wray-Lake et al., 2022). At the psychological level, when Whiteness and White norms are institutionalized in school, Youth of Color have no other choice but to embody Whiteness, becoming subjugated to White supremacy. This means that Youth of Color become “racialized”—they are forced to see, construct, and experience the self as a “racialized subject” and/or as the “Other” in deficit terms. The process of racialization refers to a process of subjectification through which the “Other” exists and emerges only within power relations of Whiteness and White supremacy, being forced to develop a subjectivity in White terms. When persistently objectified, devalued by racialized encounters with Whiteness as the “norm,” and constructed as “Other” through colorblind lenses in negative ways, Youth of Color have no alternative but to construct an identity that is filtered, mediated, and distorted by Whiteness and White supremacy. As a result of the racialization process, the “Other” constructs a racialized identity through the eyes of Whiteness and thus comes to experience the self through a deficit lens as having an ambiguous and conflicted subjectivity. This process of subjectification can then result in the devaluation and/or alienation of the self. Without a stable, grounded, and coherent autobiographical narrative of the self but forced to develop an identity through the eyes of White normativity, a young Person of Color positioned as the “Other” comes to construct the self as having a particular subjectivity in conflictual and negative terms. Against the backdrop of Whiteness, Youth of Color become “colonized subjects” with a “double consciousness” (Du Bois, 1903, p. 3) or prisoners of a “colonized consciousness”—“Black bodies” with “White masks” (Fanon, 1967).

Psychologically, however, it is extremely difficult for racialized identities to escape their “Otherness.” Being forced to see oneself through the eyes of Whiteness does not sustain a coherent biography constructed in affirmative and culturally relevant terms but rather produces an inadequate sense of self. When Youth of Color internalize racism, they find themselves stuck in psychological identity conflicts, inconsistencies, and struggles: with no identity position for them to develop an autobiographical narrative in a positive light, they are left with a “colonized mentality” (Pyke, 2010, pp. 554–557), struggling with becoming “*some body else* or like *no body*” (Van Der Kolk, 2014, p. 249) in White terms. Internalized racism means that the “Other,” unconsciously, comes to accept the imposition of Whiteness on the self (Kohli, 2014). Internalized racism refers to the unconscious process through which a young Person of Color sides with the oppressor, developing a negative sense of self and/or self-hatred (Rowe, 2020). According to Trimble (2018, p. 52), internalized racism is “intrinsically a moral and spiritual affliction” that penetrates the body, leaving many Youth of Color with feelings of alienation and pain.

Unless there are conscious and intentional efforts to critically question and become aware of social messages attached to persistent Othering, over time, a young Person of Color might unconsciously side with the oppressor but also accept and internalize both White superiority and the inferiority of the Other. This process can result in IRO (David, 2014; David & Derthick, 2014). According to Hardy (2022, p. 533), IRO “manifests itself in two forms: internalized racial superiority (IRS) and internalized racial inferiority (IRI).” On the one hand, the “Other” represents an oppressed condition that “feels an irresistible attraction towards the oppressors and their way of life,” aspiring “at any cost to resemble

the oppressors, to imitate them, to follow them” (Trieu & Lee, 2018, p. 69). However, on the other hand, the “Other” develops a racialized identity in White eyes, learning how to suppress the “authentic” or “cultural self,” constructing an identity in alienation. This state of psycho-emotional disconnection from the body makes one’s self feel “Othered,” “different,” or “psychologically homeless” (Hardy, 2023, p. 208), developing an embodied identity constructed in terms of feelings of loneliness, disconnection, and insecurity.

This strenuous psychological process of IRO is unconscious and often results in the loss of one’s core self, which involves both the dislocation of oneself as well as the disruption of an inner balance. This is a troubling psychological condition for a young person: One’s self feels out of balance, lost, disoriented, alienated, and disconnected from the body. Under constant racialized attacks, the embodied identity of an adolescent cannot be nurtured in culturally relevant, supportive, and positive ways but rather becomes constrained by a “whitewashed” frame (Trieu & Lee, 2018, p. 73). Having to repress one’s “authentic self” denies a young person the human right to develop an autobiographical embodied identity that feels coherent, affirmative, and culturally relevant to who they are and how they see themselves in the world.

Racial Trauma. For many Youths of Color who are forced to endure painful experiences such as racialized devaluation, as they attempt to suppress the accompanying negative bodily sensations and internalized racism, their bodies freeze and disappear. Such a disembodied condition makes a young person feel lost, disconnected, disempowered, and out of control rather than in charge of the body and thus attuned to the self. In this case, as a result of internalized racism, when Youth of Color use a defensive mechanism to resist the Othering process, in their attempt to suppress the negative bodily sensations caused by traumatic experiences of IRO, they disconnect the self from the body. For a young person, however, disembodiment signifies a critical state of fragility: an inner state of disequilibrium or a condition in and through which the embodied self is constructed around feelings of vulnerability, disconnection, isolation, insecurity, internal conflict, and failure. Disembodiment is a psychological and emotional condition that many Youth of Color who internalize negative experiences of racism, unconsciously, build up over time. Living a disembodied condition means that in day-to-day life, a young person feels “uneasy” in the body. However, when the body ceases to express the self, the young person loses the capacity to feel worthy. This also means that when adolescents begin to silence parts of themselves, they start losing themselves in the world. This loss of one’s core self is traumatic and dehumanizing, having devastating psychological consequences for the young person’s wellbeing (Hardy & Laszloffy, 2007).

The psychological dissociation of the self from negative bodily experiences of devaluation on the basis of IRO is at the heart of racial trauma. Over time, Youth of Color’s embodiment of racialized experiences of devaluation, if untreated, inevitably result in out-of-body experiences, traumatizing the embodied self while damaging the body, soul, and wellbeing. Notably, the psychological effects of IRO are extremely painful and, moreover, leave hidden injuries in the body. When left unattended, over time, those invisible injuries turn into racial trauma. For instance, when a young Person of Color embodies a large number of experiences of devaluation on the basis of race, those painful embodied experiences of racial oppression add up psychologically, resulting in the subjugation of the self and, over time, in racial trauma (Comas-Diaz et al., 2019; David, 2014; Hardy, 2023; Kohli, 2014; Rowe, 2020).

Racial trauma is emotionally, psychologically, culturally, and socially debilitating. It is potentially devastating to the wellbeing of a young Person of Color. Writing about her own embodied experience of IRO, Rowe (2020) argues that racial trauma is “the physical and psychological symptoms that people of color often experience after a stressful racist

incident. . . [and] the effects of racial trauma include fear, aggression, depression, anxiety, low self-image, shame, hypervigilance, pessimism, nightmares, difficulty concentrating, substance abuse, flashbacks, and relational dysfunction" (p. 10). As [Rowe \(2020\)](#) autobiographically narrated, when racial trauma becomes embodied, the body and the self of a young Person of Color are both compromised. Further, challenging the "stigmatizing label" attached to racial trauma, [Daniel et al. \(2023\)](#) theorizes racial trauma as an embodied notion useful to "understand the consequences of racial violence and how that violence can live and grow both within a body and a collective" (p. 2063).

Expanding on this perspective, [Hardy \(2023\)](#) contends that "racial trauma is a type of unshakable hybrid of chronic and toxic stress that People of Color, regardless of other sociocultural factors, are coerced to live with, often without a conscious recognition that they are doing so" (p. 50). Racial trauma is caused by invisible toxic gas that, in hidden ways, penetrates, infiltrates, and damages the bodies of Youth of Color, while causing chronic stress that can be activated by memories, events, and racist incidents. To this point, as [Saketopoulou \(2023\)](#) underlines, racial trauma "has destructive, if not catastrophic effects" (p. 1095) on one's embodiment: While the mind might forget messages of devaluation, the body cannot. It is the body that bears the hidden wounds of racial trauma. Racial trauma affects the ways a young person feels, moves, and lives, leaving visceral wounds in the body. The body carries these injuries, which, while invisible, are symptomatic of an "all-consuming, crippling, and debilitating condition" ([Hardy, 2023](#), p. 50).

"Hidden Injuries." Neoliberalism and its colorblind agenda maintain a "standard White curriculum" ([Hardy, 2023](#), p. 23) that not only reproduces the legacy of racialization, having a huge negative impact on the development of Youth of Color's positive and coherent embodied identity, but also places the hidden wounds of IRO on the individual ([Goessling, 2020](#); [Trieu & Lee, 2018](#)). From this perspective, today's neoliberal's colorblind agenda maintains Whiteness as intact and invisible while denying the impact of IRO on Youth of Color's embodiment. Racial trauma is often unconscious and commonly goes undiagnosed and undetected. Because hidden wounds from racial trauma are the results of systematic emotional experiences of devaluation inflicted on the body over time, many Youth of Color might live their day-to-day lives unaware that they are carrying unhealed racial trauma in their physical bodies ([Rowe, 2020](#)). [Hardy \(2023\)](#) referred to hidden wounds as the negative experience of "living with fears, anxiety, and a sense of restlessness without comfort, tranquility, [and] peace of mind that a home affords," forcing many Youth of Color "to live day-to-day life with strong feelings of vulnerability" (p. 215). This is hugely problematic because many Youth of Color who embody racial trauma are often unaware of how its invisible injuries left in their bodies have an impact on their everyday life. Psychologically, racial trauma leaves invisible injuries in the body untreated, affecting the wellbeing of Youth of Color in devastating ways. Hidden wounds left unattended in the body remain a source of body vulnerability. This, in turn, causes one's embodied self to feel "out of balance," insecure or fragile, with negative emotions, pain, shame, anxiety, low self-esteem, anxiety, concerns, and emotional dysregulation.

As long as IRO remains a largely ignored research topic in school ([Phillips et al., 2022](#)), hidden injuries from internalized racism inflicted on the body through subjugation and self-subjugation to Whiteness will continue to hurt Youth of Color. Whiteness is "a disease of the soul" ([Trimble, 2018](#), p. 49) and if not tackled, revealed, and dismantled in school, Youth of Color's embodiment of Whiteness caused by persistent experiences of racialized devaluation might leave them with deeply internalized negative racialized messages. IRO might, in turn, manifest itself with self-denigration and self-subjugation to Whiteness. While IRO in school remains taboo ([Pyke, 2010](#)), the psychological effects of IRO, if unattended, can be extremely damaging to a young person's embodied identity, leaving many

Youth of Color with unhealed wounds in their bodies. Those hidden injuries cause a deep and sustained pain, and unless they are attended to, a young person is forced to live their everyday life with a sense of shame, inferiority, self-doubt, self-hatred, and disrespect for oneself. In the field of psychology, in the past decade, a substantial amount of literature has demonstrated how IRO leads to psychic and emotional injury ([Adames et al., 2023](#); [Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005, 2006](#); [Carter, 2007](#); [Comas-Diaz et al., 2019](#); [Mosley et al., 2021](#); [Wright et al., 2023](#)). However, the issue of racial trauma in school remains undertheorized. To address the taboo of racial trauma, the next section advocates for education researchers' incorporation of art-based and walking approaches into participatory "healing methodologies" implemented with and for Youth of Color in school. Framed by a participatory framework, healing methodologies provide students with embodied practices that can support them in exploring, processing, reconciling, and repairing hidden injuries while re-establishing inner strength and equilibrium for wellbeing and body restoration.

4. (Un)Doing Racial Trauma in School: A Case for "Healing Methodologies"

"Transformative potential arises in the self's undoing." ([Saketopoulou, 2023](#), p. 1095)

The journey of healing from racial trauma can take place only if the trauma is confronted by assisting Students of Color in feeling, sensing, perceiving, responding, moving, and learning how to be present, self-aware, conscious, and attentive to the multisensory experiences of the body. As [Fuller \(2020\)](#) has stressed, "trauma lives in the body and is passed on unless it is confronted, creating an opportunity for the body to heal" (p. 90). To address racial trauma, the body has to come alive, learn how to feel, and reconnect to the self in meaningful, culturally relevant, and therapeutic ways. This begs the question of what methodologies are more suitable when conducting anti-racist research with and for Youth of Color on issues of IRO in school. This last section suggests that education researchers' implementation of "healing methodologies" with and for Youth of Color becomes paramount to address the taboo of racial trauma in school. While mainstream research methodologies overlook Youth of Color's embodiment of IRO, healing methodologies embrace creative embodied practices to enable students to "speak up" about their subjective experiences of racial oppression, allowing students to recover their cultural voices and authentic identities. Using an anti-racist framework, healing methodologies combine arts-based inquiry and walking approaches to create a participatory research space with and for students' engagement in self-inquiry, embodied exploration, storytelling, healing, and body restoration.

Arts-Based Inquiry (ABI). The process of art-making represents an inquiry, a research methodology, and a pedagogy with the potential to cultivate critical race consciousness for students to explore, engage with, and express the embodied experience of racial trauma from a position of strength. Engaging Youth of Color in the art-making process can promote self-inquiry regarding racism in a safe and humanizing research space, revitalizing students' own histories, cultures, and cultural identities in affirmative ways ([Bode, 2022](#); [Goopy & Kassan, 2019](#); [Green et al., 2019](#)). ABI embraces dialogic race-consciousness-raising to address racial trauma, validating human relationships of dignity, respect, empathy, and care. It addresses localized manifestations of racial injustice and advances art therapies with a focus on (un)doing the self for body restoration and wellbeing. As [Fonseka et al. \(2021\)](#) have emphasized, arts-based research "provides participants with a safe forum to give voice to their lived experiences of racism and discrimination" (p. 49). ABI also supports research participants in "maintaining a sense of hope in the face of oppression by integrating their self-concept to better understand and reframe their experiences to develop a more positive outlook" ([Fonseka et al., 2021](#), p. 49).

In this vein, because "transformative potential arises in the self's undoing" ([Saketopoulou, 2023](#), p. 1095), the process of art-making incorporated in a participa-

tory research process positions Students of Color as “artists” as well as “co-researchers,” promoting the (un)doing of youth’s self through embodied work in creative and critical ways. Engaging students in a process of art-making to promote self-inquiry and the self-expression of feelings, thoughts, embodiments, and experiences is key to assisting students in becoming conscious of their own subjective experiences of racial oppression. ABI has the potential to help Youth of Color to become aware of their embodied feelings and IRO. However, it also engages students in a healing process in a safe, creative, and caring way, supporting them in learning how to recognize and release negative feelings, staging painful racialized experiences of devaluation with their artwork for body restoration. In this way, researchers’ incorporation of ABI intentionally positions students as “artists,” “producers of knowledge,” “collaborators,” and “active agents” throughout a participatory research process, promoting Youth of Color’s active engagement in multisensory emotional, perceptual, embodied practices. At the same time, researchers create a participatory space for students to invest themselves in the process of art-making, reflecting on, expressing, healing, reimagining, and rebuilding a positive sense of self in culturally relevant, affirmative, and validating ways.

In particular, art-making can tap into hidden wounds, assisting young people in feeling, expressing, and staging their own stories of racial oppression with creativity from their own embodied experiences (Archibald & Dewar, 2010; Fuller, 2020; Sunderland et al., 2023; Tabor et al., 2023). The embodied practice of art-making supports Youth of Color in exploring their bodily sensations, reactivating the body to explore, research, identify, process, and transform negative emotions attached to IRO. Kassin et al. (2020), for instance, advocated for researchers’ utilization of arts-based inquiry to better represent the embodied cultural experiences of racism, oppression, and marginalization from the viewpoint of racialized identities. In this way, the participatory process of ABI produces a research forum for the individual as well as collective discussion of racial oppression, using artwork to counter Whiteness and its colorblindness. It also opens up a critical research space for the recovery of subjugated knowledge from the embodied viewpoint of Youth of Color. Methodologically, the participatory component of ABI shifts the power relations from the researcher to the research participants, using a strength-based approach to cultivate a holistic “healing space.” In this therapeutic space, Youth of Color, positioned as co-researchers, have opportunities to learn how to investigate, engage with, understand, and creatively express embodied experiences of racial oppression with appropriate psychological support. In this way, the process of art-making establishes a healing space that affords Youth of Color the opportunity to engage psychologically in a gentle “touching” of hidden injuries through self-inquiry, empowering Youth of Color to express and validate stories of racial oppression that are hard to communicate in words.

Throughout the embodied practice of art-making, Youth of Color have ownership over the research process, becoming active agents, critical thinkers, and artists in (un)learning how to (re)frame their embodied experiences with a more positive outlook. Incorporating ABI into participatory research practices with and for Students of Color can transform “urban schools serving as data plantations” (Mutua & Swadener, 2004, p. 6) into collaborative, creative, and educational sites of healing (Kimmer, 2021). As Greene (1995) notes, “participatory involvement with many forms of art can enable us *to see* more in our experience, *to hear* more on normally unheard frequencies, *to become* conscious of what daily routines have obscured, what habit and convention suppressed” (p. 123). Because as “trauma inspires art or poetry” (Saketopoulou, 2023, p. 1100), through ongoing self-inquiry and self-expressions, ABI sets up a creative, healing, and transformative process through which Students of Color are encouraged to reimagine their embodied self in affirmative terms with self-resilience, hope, spirituality, and self-affirmation. Art-making, as an embodied

practice implemented with and for Students of Color in a participatory research space, has the potential to assist them in documenting and researching how they feel, think, perceive, interact, move, and respond. It fosters a therapeutic space in school for healing invisible wounds of racial trauma, with a focus on enhancing their wellbeing. Building upon the self's (un)doing, mutual body knowledge shared through the process of art-making makes Whiteness and its power structure tangible, affording "racialized identities"—which were identities historically silenced by racial oppression—to become visible from a position of strength. ABI positions students as "storytellers" throughout the participatory process of art-making (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 23), enabling them to become conscious and able to "speak up" about their embodied experience of racial oppression with their artwork. Moreover, ABI provides students with educational tools to turn deficit stories of internalized racism into affirmative stories of resilience, hope, healing, and transformation.

Walking Research Methodology. Researchers' implementation of a walking research methodology positions students as "moving bodies," opening up a path for Youth of Color to search for an embodied understanding of IRO, while investing in a process of healing and body restoration. Building on art-making, walking methodologies provide qualitative researchers across academic disciplines with "research on the move" (O'Neill & Roberts, 2020). In this way, students benefit from walking as it can reactivate the body to walk, move, feel, think, reflect, release painful feelings, and reconnect to the self in positive ways to enhance wellbeing. Drawing from Baudelaire's notion of the flaneur as a connoisseur of the street life (Baudelaire, 1863), walking is often part of daily routines: it is a pleasant practice that can contribute to forming, reimagining, or reshaping an autobiographical self that feels lively, good, and worthy. Like art-making, walking is deeply implicated in imagination (O'Neill & Roberts, 2020). Walking aids in the process of creativity, providing students with the educational tools to document, explore, and search for an autobiographical narrative of the self that feels culturally authentic, coherent, and grounded bodily.

From an embodied perspective, walking makes the body feel alive. When education researchers position participants as "walkers," they provide Youth of Color with time and space to investigate how, where, and why the body hurts. They learn how to recognize feelings of body neglect, body pain, body discomfort, and self-harm. In this way, walking provides education scholars with "research on the move" to help Students of Color to feel, acknowledge, touch on, and absorb hidden injuries of IRO inflicted on the body. In a participatory research space, for instance, when education researchers position students as "movers" or "walkers," the latter become "co-researchers" who are encouraged to move, feel, investigate, reflect, and express, learning how to be "in charge" of their bodies and attuned to the self, while releasing painful feelings attached to IRO.

Obviously, walking is not simply exercise. It engages participants in an embodied practice through which the body is reactivated to feel, explore, move, and learn how to be "at ease" with the self in gentle and pleasant ways. Along the way, walking can start enacting the process for the renewal of the self, assisting Youth of Color in getting their body and senses back. As an embodied, reflective, and creative practice, for instance, walking provides Youth of Color with an educational tool or "moving therapy" approach (O'Neill & Roberts, 2020, p. 121) to encourage them to feel, reflect on, and talk to themselves about themselves, rebuilding from a position of strength a positive, grounded, and coherent autobiographical narrative in their own cultural terms. As an embodied and multisensorial practice, walking creates a healing space for the body to move, relax, feel, and express, encouraging students to describe the feelings in their bodies while moving. In this way, walking can help Youth of Color to identify a wide range of feelings, including anger, fear, and/or anxiety. They might start with feeling, "not emotions", later becoming aware of a wide range of physical sensations, such as muscular tension, pressure, itchiness, discomfort,

tingling, soreness, or fatigue (Van Der Kolk, 2014, p. 95). As an exploratory, pleasant, and embodied research practice, walking can be useful to re-educate one's self to feel a wide range of physical sensations; to identify tensions in the body; to acknowledge how the body feels when moving through daily routines; to become aware of the breath, rhythm, gestures, postures, interactions, and motions; and to give time and space to self-regulate painful emotions. However, walking also reactivates the body, assisting Youth of Color in re-establishing body-self unity while moving the body toward wound repair, body restoration, and wellbeing.

Researchers' incorporation of a walking methodology can offer Youth of Color time, space, and a pleasurable activity to actively engage in self-inquiry while relaxing the body to re-establish one's core sense of self and wellbeing. By enacting "thinking while moving," walking provides students with a mindful, spiritual, and reflective embodied practice "to bridge the moving body into awareness and consciousness," "grounding [students] in bodily sensations" (Leigh, 2020, p. 131). In this way, walking can help youth to invest, slowly and in a gentle way, in a process of body-self reconnection. This body-self reconciliation then re-establishes "inner islands of safety within the body" (Van Der Kolk, 2014, p. 247), reactivating the body to feel and to experience pleasure and wellbeing. From an embodied perspective, walking positions students as "sensing and moving bodies" who learn how to tolerate discomfort in the body while sustaining the body in exploring how to enjoy the comfort, relaxation, and pleasure of moving. Walking can create body experiences of intrinsic pleasure, spiritual wellbeing, and self-care. As a mindful body practice, walking is a form of movement that calms down distress; assists Youth of Color in learning how to attune the self to the physical sensations of relaxation and pleasure; and "unlocks" the past to absorb the hurt, "moving" the body away from the past for body restoration, healing, and wellbeing.

5. Healing Methodologies: Art in Synergy with Walking for Wound Repairing

With a focus on research intersecting with art and theory, using embodied approaches to unify the mind and body (Springgay & Truman, 2017, p. 28), ontologically, both arts-based inquiry and a walking methodology promote "research-creation." Walking, in particular, is a pleasant activity that "moves the body" to feel but also to be active, generating embodied experiences "on the move" that are experiential, energetic, vigorous, sensory, reflective, and even transformative. Combined with ABI, researchers' use of a walking methodology positions research participants as "moving and embodied sensing bodies," assisting them in sensing, feeling, and reconnecting the moving body to the self with a focus on physical/mental unity, health, and wellbeing (Ellingson, 2017). To address IRO, its disruption and erosion of a school community (Hardy & Laszloffy, 2007), researchers' incorporation of walking and ABI approaches into healing methodologies has the capability to enact embodied anti-racist practices with and for Youth of Color to enable them to feel, reflect on, and express what it means to have experienced IRO.

Combining the embodied practice of walking and art-making provides Youth of Color with enjoyable, pleasant, creative, and relaxing healing practices, (un)doing the self in positive, therapeutic, and culturally relevant ways. Healing methodologies intentionally incorporate anti-oppressive work to generate a powerful collective dialog about issues of racial oppression. Such dialog empowers students not only to engage with (un)doing IRO but also to reframe, reimagine, and reshape their autobiographical narratives from a position of strength in their own cultural terms. Healing methodologies committed to an anti-racist research agenda capitalize on the transformative power of the arts (Greene, 1995) and implement a walking methodology (Springgay & Truman, 2019) to "unfreeze" the body. In particular, healing methodologies engage Youth of Color in therapeutic, active, and

creative embodied practices, enabling them to research, explore, re-evaluate, reimagine, and invest themselves in an embodied identity, rebuilding through body work and movement. While art-making is a mindful embodied practice that increases reflexivity, awareness, critical consciousness, expression, and empathy, walking is a pleasant activity that moves the body while calming the self, creating opportunities for Youth of Color to engage with embodied experiences that are active, moving, reflective, sensory, and healing. Art-making provides research participants with the educational tools for self-inquiry, self-expression, and storytelling of IRO with imagination. However, walking offers students a daily routine that is healthy, enjoyable, and active, encouraging them to connect to their day-to-day environment “on the move” in a positive and constructive way, actively investing themselves in body restoration.

Healing methodologies aim to mobilize the agency of Youth of Color, assisting them in shedding light on how Whiteness obscures the significance of race on their sense of self. Interrogating, revealing, and destabilizing Whiteness from the embodied experience of the racialized identities is key to an anti-racist agenda (Hardy, 2023; Rowe, 2020). Arts-based inquiry combined with walking mobilizes the agency of students, enabling them to attain a deeper understanding of their subjective experiences of racial oppression, while engaging in body restoration and wellbeing. Art and walking enacted together in the context of a participatory embodied research process positions Youth of Color as “artists,” “co-researchers,” “walkers,” “movers,” and “living, moving, and sensing bodies,” enabling them “to pick on their wounds” in gentle and sensitive ways (Saketopoulou, 2023) yet moving the body toward a healing process for the transformation of pain into wellbeing. Researchers’ combination of the embodied practices of art-making and walking together into a participatory research process plays a vital role in assisting Youth of Color to absorb painful experiences of IRO. Art-making in synergy with walking support Youth of Color in learning how to engage in self-care, spirituality, and emotional self-regulation practices, re-establishing inner strength, equilibrium, body restoration, and wellbeing.

In conclusion, education researchers’ incorporation of healing methodologies in school that intentionally use an asset-based lens to position Youth of Color as artists, co-researchers, storytellers, and moving and sensing bodies throughout the participatory research process is key to tackle issues of IRO. While mainstream research methodologies overlook youth’s issues of IRO in schools, participatory research approaches embrace creative embodied practices that mobilize the agency of youth, while nurturing self-body reconnection with a focus on healing, spirituality, wellbeing, and health (Goessling, 2020). The participatory component of arts-based inquiry combined with a walking methodology enacts a creative, critical, and transformative process through which Youth of Color explore, research, feel, and understand that their embodied experiences of IRO are valid. Art-making gives students the aesthetic language to name Whiteness and its racial oppression with their own artwork in tangible yet creative ways, while walking offers students a restorative practice that reactivates the body to feel, learning how to sense, acknowledge, and process the painful experiences of IRO. Art-making in synergy with walking provides education researchers with healing methodologies that can empower Youth of Color to recover from the psychological and emotional injuries of IRO, while *reimagining* who they are in the world in culturally relevant, affirmative, and humanizing ways for social progress.

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