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Empirical studies about Black graduate students have emphasized their experiences with oppression and marginalization, related psychological impacts, and the survival practices they enable them to persist within Historically White Institutions (HWIs). Yet, some literature falls short of examining how individuals thrive despite racial trauma experienced professionally and personally. Moreover, there is a need for research to explore the role Black faculty play in assisting Black graduate students with addressing racial trauma and engaging in healing practices. Thus, this paper aimed to understand how early-career Black faculty supported Black graduate students in their attempt to do more than thrive while pursuing master's and doctoral degrees in higher education.

Obtaining a graduate degree can be a challenging experience. Nevertheless, Black graduate students face a distinct set of challenges, particularly at non-Black serving institutions (NBSIs).[1] Research showcases these challenges, which exist as intellectual, cultural, and environmental disruptions for Black students (Gay, 2004; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Lewis et al., 2004; Maton et al., 2011). For example, Black graduate students encounter more academic barriers than their white counterparts, such as limited or no access to professional development, academic support, or training opportunities to work with specialized populations in their respective fields (Maton et al., 2011). These barriers limit access for Black graduate students to opportunities throughout the academy, including job obtainment. Further, Maton et al. (2011) showed

[1]In this manuscript, we draw upon Wallace's (2022) use of *non-Black serving institutions* (rather than *historically white institutions*) to decenter whiteness, as well as call attention to how such institutions do not foreground the needs of Black people in their college missions nor praxis.

students reported having limited access to meaningful interactions with their faculty members, which then leads to deficient faculty support inside and outside the classroom.

Black graduate students at NBSIs reveal how their experiences are shaped by oppression and its psychological impacts. Specifically, these works reveal Black graduate students' experiences with racial discrimination (Briscoe, 2022; Felder & Barker, 2013; Gildersleeve et al., 2011), personal and academic isolation (Felder & Barker, 2013; Gay, 2004; Lewis et al., 2004), and hypervisibility. These stressors prompt some Black graduate students to overperform in academic spaces or assimilate into the dominant culture to persist (Gay, 2004; Lewis et al., 2004). Moreover, Black graduate students have reported a lack of support from non-Black peers, exacerbating feelings of isolation and a lack of belonging on campus (Troutman et al., 2022). Experiencing these challenges and trauma calls for a unique type of support, specifically from faculty.

Extant literature underscores the importance of faculty support for graduate students; more specifically, faculty support is critical for Black graduate students at NBSIs (Troutman et al., 2022). While the culture of institutional neglect isfelt by all doctoral students, Black doctoral students at NBSIs experience this neglect in tandem with anti-Black racism and other forms of oppression and marginalization (Felder & Barker, 2013; Wallace, 2022). Faculty support, inclusive of socialization, formative feedback, mentorship, and encouragement is crucial to the success of Black doctoral students (Bertrand Jones et al., 2015; Blockett et al., 2016). Thus, this paper aims to understand how early-career Black faculty support Black graduate students pursuing master's and doctoral degrees in higher education. This paper adds to the existing body of literature with a unique focus on early-career Black faculty members at the nexus of navigating their professional journey while advocating for and supporting Black graduate students. With this paper, the authors attempt to articulate their dismantling of the hidden curriculum for Black graduate students.

Marginalization and Oppression

Empirical studies about Black graduate students have emphasized their experiences with oppression and marginalization, related psychological impacts, and the survival practices they use to persist within NBSI's. Marginalizing experiences tied to representation reveal Black graduate students' erasure through curriculum and course content (Briscoe et al., 2022; Daniel, 2007; Gasman et al., 2008; Griffith & Ford, 2022; Haskins et al., 2013; Lewis et al., 2004). For example, Black participants in these studies have reported a lack of course focus on equity issues, faculty members' ineptitude in facilitating discussions about national events related to racism, and overwhelmingly Eurocentric curricula (Briscoe et al., 2022; Daniel, 2007; Gasman et al., 2008; Haskins et al., 2013). Additionally, empirical studies overwhelmingly indicate the isolation, invisibility, and tokenism Black graduate students experience as a result of the whiteness of their academic environments—particularly the predominance of white faculty, program staff, and peers in their programs (Daniel, 2007; Griffith & Ford, 2022; Haskins et al., 2013; Lewis et al., 2004). Such experiences are further enabled by the lack of structural support for Black graduate students at their home institutions (Gasman et al., 2008; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Wallace & Ford, 2021).

While few studies indicate Black graduate students' racist interactions with white peers (e.g., Daniel, 2007 Griffith & Ford, 2022), the literature is much more robust concerning Black graduate students' interactions and relationships with faculty members and how these interactions contribute to the isolation, invisibility, tokenism, and erasure Black graduate students face. Participants in these studies report faculty members who held low expectations for Black students (due to racist stereotyping), withheld feedback or support, sent explicit messages that they did not belong in the program, offered opportunities to white students but not Black students, and enacted racist microaggressions (Daniel, 2007; Felder & Barker, 2013; Felder et al., 2014; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Griffith & Ford, 2022; Wallace & Ford, 2021). Extending the analysis to consider how intersecting forms of oppression shape Black graduate students' experiences, Wallace's (2022) study found Black women participants experienced *misogynoir* (Baily & Trudy, 2018)—anti-Black sexism or gendered racism that targets Black women—within their interactions with white faculty. Further, research also indicates how faculty enact epistemic violence on Black graduate students through devaluing and delegitimizing their perspectives, ways of knowing, and research interests (Felder & Barker, 2013; Gasman et al., 2008; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Wallace, 2022; Wallace & Ford, 2021). These experiences illustrate what Okello (2022) referred to as *epistemic asphyxiation,* or, an adherence to a white, colonized epistemological ideal that effectively suffocates endarkened knowledge production.

According to the literature, these varying experiences with anti-Black racism, misogynoir, marginalization, tokenization, erasure, isolation, and epistemic asphyxiation produce harmful psychological effects for Black graduate students. While imposterism is a common experience among many graduate students (Sverdilk et al., 2020), several studies reveal how imposterism among Black graduate students, in particular is connected to the anti-Black racism, misogynoir, and whiteness they experience within their academic environments (Daniel, 2007 Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Griffith & Ford, 2022; Haskins et al., 2013; Wallace, 2022; Wallace & Ford, 2021). For example, illustrative of this link, Wallace and Ford (2021) found Black doctoral students whose faculty members did not value their knowledge and perspectives to the same extent as their white peers experienced an intense imposterism—a finding echoed by McGee and colleagues (2019). Similarly, Wallace (2022) linked the misogynoir Black women participants experienced within their programs to various mental health challenges they faced. Other works have revealed Black graduate students' feelings of fear and distrust, carrying the burden of representing their entire race, self-censoring, second-guessing themselves, making compromises to their well-being, and burnout. These challenges are in response to navigating anti-Black tropes imposed on them, racist interactions with white peers and faculty members, and racialized isolation due to the whiteness of their environments (Daniel, 2007; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Griffith & Ford, 2022; Haskins et al., 2013; McGee et al., 2019).

Survival Practices

While the empirical literature is ripe with Black graduate students' marginalizing experiences within predominately white institutions HWIs, so, too, is the body of work illustrating how they survive these institutions. Several studies have revealed the critical role Black and non-Black Faculty of Color play in supporting Black graduate students. In particular, these studies reveal how Black and POC faculty rejected anti-Black myths,

provided encouragement, shared salient experiences with marginality, and were proactive in reaching out and providing support (Acosta et al., 2016; Daniel, 2007; Felder et al., 2014; Haskins et al., 2013).

Notwithstanding the critical role of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) faculty, numerous studies indicate Black graduate students draw from various forms of cultural capital (Yosso, 2005) to persist and succeed in their programs. These include students' uses of navigational capital (i.e., the ability for Communities of Color to maneuver through institutions that were not created with us in mind; Yosso, 2005) to overcome barriers to structural support (Briscoe et al., 2022; Lewis et al., 2004; Wallace, 2022), social and familial capital (respectively, Communities' of Color social networks and community resources and familial cultural knowledges; Yosso, 2005) to access support through various networks (Acosta et al., 2016; Daniel, 2007; Gasman et al., 2008; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Griffith & Ford, 2022; Haskins et al., 2013; Wallace, 2022; Wallace & Ford, 2021), and confidence capital marked by a self-assurance in their own skills and abilities, despite the oppression they experience (Wallace, 2022). Some studies illustrate the role of Black graduate students' faith and spirituality in enabling them to persist in their programs (Gasman et al., 2008; Wallace, 2022). Furthermore, Troutman and colleagues' (2022) study exploring the use of counterspaces in socializing Black graduate students revealed these spaces as instrumental in their feelings of liberation, shaping their scholarly identities, decolonizing knowledge through engagement with race-based epistemologies, and deepening their connections to Black culture and heritage.

Othermothering

Finally, the current study draws upon literature about *othermothering*, which includes the few empirical works that foreground the specific role of Black faculty in explorations of Black graduate students' experiences. Emerging from West African cultural values, *othermothering* refers to the practice of assisting mothers-by-blood in mothering responsibilities (Collins, 2000). The practice reflects a collectivist orientation towards child-rearing that instills cultural values and promotes fictive kinship networks that assist Black children in coping with and resisting oppression (Collins, 2000). Within higher education research, scholars have used this concept to explore how Black women faculty and practitioners support one another within the academy (Johnson et al., 2020, Black women faculty's relationships with Black graduate students (Bernard et al., 2012; Griffin, 2013; Mawhinney, 2012; McCallum, 2020), historically Black college and university administrators' relationships with students (Hirt et al., 2008), and how Black graduate students conceptualize and perceive faculty support (Flowers et al., 2015; Guiffrida, 2005). Broadly, this body of work has revealed Black faculty and administrators' practices of care and encouragement for Black students, how they go "above and beyond" in supporting Black students' development, their intimate relationships with Black students, their high expectations for Black students, and the salience of their shared social identities in Black students' perceptions of support (Flowers et al., 2015; Griffin, 2013; Mawhinney, 2012; McCallum, 2020).

Synthesis and Critique of the Literature

Empirical scholarship about Black graduate students at H WIs has been valuable in revealing how their experiences are shaped by racism (and, to a limited extent, racism *and* sexism) and whiteness. More specifically, this body of literature

reveals how these forms of oppression create environments that foster isolation, tokenization, erasure, epistemic asphyxiation, imposterism, and mental health challenges for Black graduate students. Additionally, empirical scholarship has revealed the myriad ways Black graduate students survive these conditions, persist, and succeed in their programs.

Notwithstanding the significance of Black students' survival practices for navigating racism, misogynoir, and whiteness in the academy, this study is premised upon an envisioning of the academy in which these survival practices are unnecessary. From this premise, we turned to the role of Black faculty and understanding how they disrupt oppression by creating liberatory spaces for Black graduate students. Although research indicates Black faculty play critical roles in Black students' academic success, few studies have foregrounded this relationship to explore the unique ways Black faculty members support Black graduate students—particularly at NBSI's and particularly from the perspectives of Black faculty themselves.

Further, notwithstanding the merits of othermothering as a practice in which some Black women faculty engage to support Black graduate students, we acknowledge that othermothering, in part, also historically emerged as an adaptation many Black women made to intersecting oppressions tied to race, class, and gender—including chattel slavery (Collins, 2000). Because of these oppressive conditions, many Black children were (and have been) unable to remain with their bloodmothers, rendering othermothering necessary (Collins, 2000). Through this historical lens, othermothering can be understood not only as a reflection of African-derived collectivist sensibility (Collins, 2000), but also as a residual manifestation of living in the afterlife (i.e., *living in the wake*) of chattel slavery (Sharpe, 2016). Accordingly, this study foregrounds Black faculty's experiences not only to understand how they disrupt oppressive systems to support Black graduate students but also at what cost. Recognizing that not all Black faculty desire to be othermothers, we use a framework that foregrounds healing to redress racial trauma and inform practices for supporting Black students *and* Black faculty.

Theoretical Framework

Radical healing is an emergent psychological framework that assists marginalized groups with addressing racial trauma due to systems of oppression (French et al., 2020). This framework provides individuals with the tools to cope with racial trauma experienced professionally and personally. One key aspect of radical healing is that it transcends the normative actions of self-blame and calls for attention to caste systems embedded in our everyday lives.

Radical healing acknowledges historical vestiges of racial trauma and assists marginalized groups with a paradigm shift towards healing rather than coping (French et al., 2020; Troutman et al., 2022). This push towards healing allows marginalized communities to focus on a pursuit of ending systems that result in racial trauma. This notion does not minimize or neglect the impact of racism but rather creates a new space for marginalized groups to foster a reimagined sense of hope toward justice and liberation.

With this framework, French et al. (2020) identified five concepts: critical consciousness, strength and resilience, emotional and social support, radical hope, and cultural authenticity. Each of the components above in the framework calls for a

collective effort between individuals to resist oppressive systems and move toward unified healing as communities. The first component of radical healing is critical consciousness. This tenet is defined as an individual's ability to "reflect on sociopolitical realities, deeply questioning and discerning for oneself (although often with others) how and why power relations are structured and maintained" (French et al., 2020, p. 25). Self-reflection is vital to understanding one's current place of being and how we engage with the sociopolitical environment surrounding us (Diemer et al., 2006).

The second component of radical healing is strength and resilience. This action-oriented tenet calls for communities to collaborate to mitigate harm due to racial trauma (French et al., 2020). The next component of radical healing is cultural authenticity and self-knowledge. This tenet is defined as "returning to ancestral roots, embodying cultural authenticity" (p. 27). Returning to our ancestral plains, we can resist ways of knowing rooted in whiteness and Eurocentric values. The fourth concept of radical healing is radical hope. This component is "a belief that one can fight for justice and that the fight will not be futile" (p. 26). Radical hope embodies our ability to operate in optimism while having an imagination toward a world free of colonization.

The final tenet of radical healing is emotional and social support. French et al., (2020) posited this tenet in the belief that cultural values underpin our ability to act as a collective unit to support each other through racial trauma. Through a spirit of collectivity, radical healing allows us to name systemic harms, unite in acts of resistance, honor our ancestral forebearers, and dream for liberation. This framework came to bear on our data analysis by way of highlighting the praxis of radical healing between early-career Black faculty members and Black graduate students at NBIs

Methods

Critical co-constructed autoethnography guided this study. Critical co-constructed autoethnography builds off Ellis' (2004) autoethnography work. Ellis described one's autobiography and personal experiences with culture; however, critical co-constructed autoethnography does not take a traditional ethnographic approach in that the approach is rooted in friendship and uses critical theories and pedagogical practices (Cann & DeMeulenaere, 2012). Explicitly, critical co-constructed autoethnography addresses systemic oppression in the research process that prohibits researchers from collaboratively creating space for critical reflection. Thus, critical co-constructed autoethnography enables researchers to highlight the unique experiences of marginalized individuals while centering intersections of community and respect to create a more socially just space for liberatory practices.

Friendship is an intricate part of the data collection and analysis process for critical co-constructed autoethnography, which means this work took place over an extended period (Cann & DeMeulenaere, 2012). We began the initial research process as doctoral candidates in March 2020, when we (five Black faculty members) all attended NBSIs. Our initial virtual research meeting included us reflecting on our experiences as Black graduate students and celebrating our upcoming transition to faculty members. Over time, our friendship and professional relationships evolved.

Friends vs Participants

In alignment with our methodological approach, we resist the hierarchical usage of the word participants and subscribe to the word friends to describe the partners of this study. We collectively entered this space as a community recognizing the physical,

social, emotional, and spiritual beings of each other. We were first connected by way of a professional academic conference. From there, our kindred spirits allowed us to build authentic friendship bonds within and beyond the academy. Being five Black tenure-track faculty members on similar pursuits of career goals at NBIs, we approach this work from an insider viewpoint. We all identify as critical scholars in the pursuit of dismantling systems of oppression within and beyond the academy through our research, teaching, service, and mentorship.

Data Collection

In 2021, we met virtually, through phone conversations, and frequently texted about our overall experiences in the professoriate. These conversations led us to co-construct a research project examining our experiences transitioning from doctoral students to faculty members. Next, we met collectively to establish a research interview protocol for each sharing circle (Brown & Di Lallo, 2020). Sharing circles are native to the Indigenous community, where members share stories and engage in radical listening (Tachine et al., 2017). This Indigenous way of collecting data prioritizes building relationships with one another, sharing power, and eliciting stakeholders' perspectives (Brown & Di Lallo, 2020). Once the interview protocol was established for each session, we scheduled sharing circles over three months. Each sharing circle was conducted via Zoom and recorded to be transcribed. Each session lasted between 120-150 minutes. Although we were not physically in the same place, the researchers were able to maintain the essence of the talking circles in the virtual space. Our session consisted of a variety of topics, such as our attitudes and experiences transitioning to the life of Black faculty members, first and second-year experiences, and how we have actively supported Black graduate students during our experiences. We discussed throughout each session how prevalent our experiences were in supporting and mentoring Black graduate students, especially those who often struggled to navigate institutional racism due to the white terrain within NBSIs.

Data Analysis

For this paper, we analyzed one focus group in particular where we focused on our experiences supporting Black graduate students as early career faculty members. Data analysis began with reviewing the focus group transcript. We employed Saladaña's (2014) code guide for thematic analysis. The approach allowed us to engage in three rounds of coding. The first round of coding consisted of a line-by-line review of the transcript. We interacted with each line of the data transcript to identify data chunks. Next, we assigned a code or short descriptive statement to each data chunk. From there, we engaged in the second coding round, where we sought to organize the codes based on patterns. Each pattern was documented and organized into a larger group category based on their relation to one another. We then examined each category to identify prominent thematic patterns representative of the comprehensive data set. The focus group transcript produced 69 data chunks, seven categories, and three themes. Lastly, we engaged in collective member checking to ensure the themes accurately reflected the data and the quotes within the context of the stated theme. We provide an in-depth analysis of the three emergent themes and subcategories in the following findings section.

Findings

Centering on the friends' experiences as early career Black faculty members, we offer three prominent findings for this co-constructed autoethnographic project: putting you on the game, show up and show out, and my Black is exhausted. These themes were named based on joint colloquial statements often used within the Black community. These themes represent how we actively supported Black graduate students while speaking to our personal experiences of navigating these patriarchal systems of domination. We employ these themes as a guide to take readers on a journey to understanding how five Black faculty members support Black graduate students at NBSIs.

Putting You on Game

Colloquially, "putting you on game," meaning resources, knowledge, and wisdom are being shared to advance the group. For us, this theme has a similar meaning. The friends defined this theme as the ability to build connections and unveil the hidden curriculum of the academy for Black students. Putting students on game was an act of resistance against white supremacy as it exposed how spaces were inaccessible to Black graduate students while strengthening the students' critical consciousness of the sociopolitical realities of the field. Jackson discussed how they began conversations with Black graduate students regarding the next steps in their careers. They stated:

> One of the first things that I ask my students, but especially I pull aside my black graduate students, is what do you want to do after this degree? … if this wouldn't happen, whatever X, Y, and Z is, what would you want to do next? … What are you most passionate about now? But what in the future potentially, could you also be most passionate about? And based on those responses, that's how I send them on tracks.

By having this conversation, Jackson was intentionally charting a path for Black students while informing them of the resources they will need to achieve their goals. When asked about why they take that approach, Jackson explained,

> if we don't create space, community, and opportunities professionally, I feel like oftentimes they won't have those, unless they get placed in really good environments with supervisors who go to bat for them. But many of them don't get those opportunities.

Jackson understood the importance of advocating for their students to have access to opportunities not typically afforded to them based on their race, given that white supremacy deprives Black students of resources and opportunities (Love, 2019; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Patton, 2016).

Similarly to the other friends Chris also took on a major role in advising Black students. They discussed the nuances of their day-to-day work with the students. They stated,

> And so those kind of day-to-day things, but the larger picture of getting them connected to the right resources, the right places, the right people's ears, helping them to build coalitions … I think that is where I see my work being most effective right now as it relates to supporting Black students.

Chris understood the importance of having students connected to the right resources to achieve their goals and become successful by understanding the sociopolitical landscape they are faced with navigating that is influenced and controlled by white

supremacy. Chris went on to elaborate on how they engaged in the work. They explained:

> And then building community with that too, like having writing groups where if I'm writing, I can write with some of my students, and I'm going to show y'all that I'm playing on my phone for 20 minutes before I started to write. Because that's my writing process, and it can be your writing process, too. So, like just finding ways to unveil.

Chris not only connected students to resources but also invited students to opportunities to work alongside them. Throughout the conversations, all friends identified how they invited students to various projects to help them build their portfolios. O'Neil shared,

> I've seen all of you do so well, inviting students to write on projects, doing the presentations, engaging them in the scholarly work that we probably are all socialized into or had experiences around helping us get to the stage—but starting them early as master's students.

These occurrences were rooted in the desire to connect Black graduate students to resources, opportunities, and people to advance their careers.

Yet, the connections were only the tip of the iceberg. The friends went on to discuss how they unveiled the hidden graduate education curriculum to Black students which illustrated a form of strength and resilience towards resisting white supremacy as outlined in French et. al. (2020). Chris shared an epiphany regarding assignments,

> We [doctoral students] had a lot of assignments that just, you turn these in to get the learning outcomes, to get a grade. Unfortunately, that's not enough for Black and Brown students. I need to know what this assignment is going to help me do in the real world and make money.

Chris understood the importance of employing culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) as a teaching strategy so that students could see themselves in the course and understand how the assignments would benefit them.

For many Black students, it is pivotal that they can see themselves inside of the curriculum as a form of cultural authenticity. This also allows Black students to move beyond Eurocentric ways of knowing. Jackson also spoke about the unknown opportunities that faculty provide for Black students behind the scenes. They said,

> I think the other thing that comes to mind, particularly for my doc students, what are the ways I can put them on shit that I know white people would never give them access to? I think about how … opportunities fall in the laps of white people. Like white grad students. Watch them being added to grants that would advance them, watch them being added to pubs, watch them get nominated for these things that they knew nothing about

Jackson believed in standing in the gap for Black students in the unknown, similar to how white professors do for white students. Standing in the gap is the ability to serve as a connector or advocator on one's behalf. In this case, Jackson was the bridge between students being added to projects to further their development.

Lastly, the friends discussed the importance of having conversations with Black students regarding the anti-Blackness that permeates the academy, which suppresses their ability to express their Blackness. Specifically, 24 spoke about showing up as your Black-self in these spaces. Here, we lean on Okello et al.'s (2020) articulation of *Black self-definition* to operationalize the friends' references to expressions of Blackness and

authenticity. Okello et al. (2020) defined Black self-definition as “an existential practice that involves thinking about the health and survival of Black bodyminds—the intertwinement of the mental and the physical—in reaction to white supremacy" (p. 425). 24 used an analogy to provide an example of the conversation occurring often. They stated,

> I have to really hone in myself to have the conversation of … I know that you want to show up authentically. I know that you want to speak this way. You want to write this way. I do. And I support it, but I want you to know that everybody is not me. And so there are going to be some consequences, and there are going to be some risks versus rewards if you want to be in this field.

This example highlights the struggles of Black students and faculty in practicing Black self-definition within the academy. 24 went on to discuss how they are constantly challenged by these thoughts:

> I kind of show that professional support around like, "I want you to dream. I want you to love all these things, and I want you to be as authentic as you can, but I also don't want to be a naive advisor, and I don't want you to be naive that there are going to be some risks that authenticity is currency and you got to pay for it, unfortunately."

24 wanted students to understand the potential hidden consequences of practicing Black self-definition in a white space.

Moreover, the group concluded by agreeing there is a delicate balance one has to come to grips with how Black folk decide to show up or engage in self-definition within the academy. All in all, the friends were adamant about putting students on a game regarding the academy. They did not want students to make the same mishaps they made. The friends fought to provide as much insight, opportunities, resources, and connections to students as possible. Next, we discuss how the friends spoke about showing up and showing out for the Black students.

Show Up and Show Out

Another saying within the U.S. Black community— “you better show up and show out”—has multiple meanings, such as performing at your highest degree, advocating on behalf of someone, or simply allowing your presence to be known in a fashionable way. We utilize this theme in a similar manner and define it as advocating on behalf of Black students, being your Black-self, and physically supporting students. O'Neil spoke of advocating for Black graduate students to white faculty members. They said:

> support often means talking to [Black] students who are not even in my area or my unit and trying to talk them through how they have conversations with white folks about the challenges that they're facing. And also, on the other side, having a conversation with white folks on how to have a conversation with a Black student.

O'Neil described their advocacy as being the liaison between the Black graduate students and white faculty members because the white faculty members did not know how to connect to the students, nor did they have the desire to learn. He added,

> And then subsequently, running that gamut of how do you support and tell them [white folks] what to do but at the same time, not come off as not understanding how to support the student. But needing this white man, a white woman to understand, you wrong. The student is low key, right? But at the same time, I

> can't come out and tell you all the ways that you're wrong until you step outside of that box where you know your whiteness starts showing.

For O'Neil, their ability to show up was rooted in advocating for Black graduate students to their white faculty peers who were unaware of how whiteness was inhibiting their ability to support Black graduate students.

Along those same lines, Jackson also expressed their commitment to advocating for Black graduate students. Jackson explained,

> I think being at particularly a HWI, it could be advocating for equitable policies … because I know no one else is going to root for them and advocate for them. I know oftentimes, if they're doing things, white colleagues may or may not serve as recommenders; they may not write them letters. So how can I do that? Also, how can I use the resources and networks that I have?

This example from Jackson described their commitment to show up for the students to combat oppressive practices while ensuring the students had access to resources, which is a common theme throughout these findings.

Another way the friends described their ability to show up and show out for Black students was by being their Black-self in their own ways. The ability to be authentic manifested in several examples such as language, physical appearance, and honoring the spectrum of Blackness. First, 24 described how they showed up inside the classroom.

> In your classes, it's okay to write about the Black experience or whatever it may be. And so, for me, that's what academic support looks like is me as a Black faculty member, showing people that it's okay to address and write about and celebrate Black people in the work that we do.

24 furthered this statement by providing an example of showing up for Black students.

> it's allowing Black students to dream again with the work, to be creative with the research, to say, "I'm going to use Sister Circle as a methodology," or, "I'm going to use participatory action research," or, "I'm going to use PhotoVoice or photo elicitation. I've had a conversation with at least three Black women in our EDD program. And I've had to say, "It's okay for you to say, 'I only want to research Black women.'" … One of my students, literally in class Monday, [said] "I'm so confident in saying the word Black woman now based off of just being in your research group.

Being their Black-self for 24 was more than a physical trait. It consisted of being authentic in their scholarship and pedagogy. Similar to 24, Laz also spoke to their commitment to being their Black-self. Laz said:

> the white messaging that you don't belong here in this space, and you can't show up as yourself, a lot of work has been sort of undoing that … And so I find another part of this is just validating their interpretations of what happened. Because again, this is an environment where you don't belong here.

Laz spoke about their physical presence for Black students and the importance of showing up to their events or accepting their invitations across campus. Laz further explained,

> I find that my work in terms of academic support really boils down to Black students in my program largely entering the classroom thinking that the academic space is not something that's for them...One of the students just graduated, but

> she was an advisee of mine… And I've worked with her a lot. She entered the program when I started, the fall 2020. And I remember our conversations, our advisory sessions, were largely around her being not taken seriously or seen as professional in her GA-ship because of how she talked. She has a strong Bronx accent and she's a black woman. And I was like, in my mind, well fuck them.

Laz's advisee's accent is a part of who she is as a Black woman, and to strip that away was to strip away a piece of her Blackness. Practicing Black self-definition is about more than just physical appearances; it is also an act of resistance to interlocking systems of oppression, as well as a healing practice (Okello et al., 2020).

Moreover, Chris spoke about their ability to physically show up as their Black-self as a faculty member. Chris described a conversation with a student,

> he saw me at the homecoming tailgate. And he was like, "Hey, do you wear your earrings when you teach every day?" I was like, "Yeah, that's what I wear." But it immediately reminded me because I remember being in multicultural [centers] in my early years of working and not wearing earrings, not wanting to grow out my hair, all this kind of stuff. Right? Because I knew that those would be barriers to me moving up in the field, whether people said it or not. Right? And so I was honest with him about that. Like, "Yeah, I do that now because I'm a faculty member, and I'm kind of settled in who I am and that kind of," but there might be [a] cost on the other side of that if you don't wear its hat to work every day on the other side. Or if you grow out your hair, you got visible tats as a black man. Right? All of those things.

Chris spoke to their ability to navigate being their Black-self as a faculty member while taking caution to some potential repercussions as a Black person. In sum, to show up and show out for Black graduate students manifested in ways of resistance through advocacy, standing in the gap, and showing up as their Black-self.

My Black Is Exhausted

The final theme that emerged from the data was "my Black is exhausted." After discussing the complexities of putting Black graduate students on the game and showing up and showing out, the friends articulated their nuanced experiences of being overwhelmed from resisting the ways in which white supremacy stifled Black graduate students' access to resources, opportunities, and possibilities for practicing self-definition. This theme highlights the personal challenges the friends balanced while supporting Black graduate students.

O'Neil began the conversation from a vulnerable state, discussing their struggles of supporting students socially.

> And support is being all the things but also trying to, I guess, tape yourself together long enough to make sure that you are able to advocate support, build community for students. And so that support part is trying to be all the things and trying to figure out how to be your best self but maneuver through a system that they don't understand, and to be quite frankly, I don't always understand either … That piece is what I've been struggling with because I think I don't even know how to do that anymore. It is complete autopilot at this point.

O'Neil's statement about being exhausted speaks to a common theme shared by Black faculty members throughout the academy (Griffin et al., 2013). How do we continue to

support the students when we are struggling ourselves? Sharing similar sentiments, Chris added:

> So I find that very taxing to continue to support them [Black graduate students] socially. It's a very taxing part of the job. For me, it's the most taxing part of the job. Everything else I can do, but I'm not a trained therapist. I'm not a minister. I'm not any of those things. I was lucky enough to been trained in student affairs, and so I kind of have those skill sets in some ways. I think students recognize that as well. My colleagues were not trained in student affairs, so they're very, very cold. They come off very cold.

Similar to O'Neil, Chris struggled with balancing supporting the students and themself personally. Chris felt as if they needed to be all things to the students but did not have the mental and physical capacity to do so.

24 was also in alignment with O'Neil and Chris as he felt the weight he was carrying from the students. 24 explained:

> It just reminds me of Erykah Badu's song, Bag Lady. As faculty members, especially, we're constantly getting bags, and I'm looking like, "What am I supposed to do with these bags? I can barely walk now. I got to tote my own bag, but I got all y'all bags with me."

24 used an analogy to describe the extra weight he felt supporting the students and not knowing how to release it. Yet, O'Neil discussed a potential release to carrying this weight, they stated:

> This space in the academy becomes so heavy that folx have different vices. For example, after 7 pm, do not bother me. I need my time just to get to the next day.

This statement by O'Neil resonated around the room with head nods of agreement throughout the circle as the friends all understood his sentiments.

Furthering the conversation on personal exhaustion, the friends discussed their frustrations with disrupting white supremacy and its impact on Black students through their everyday work. Jackson began the conversation by discussing their vulnerability.

> it really is humanizing the process and showing them that you are. I don't want to say a person, but literally, that's what it is … Black graduate students need us so much; I think it's hard to show them that we don't have it all together. And I think I sit on that spectrum. So I can only speak to myself. I think about the fact that, whatever it is, however it is, it's not necessarily me showing like, oh, shit ain't real. It's me showing them that despite all of these things that happen, they can come to me because they don't have anywhere else to go.

Adding to those sentiments, 24 stated:

> I'm a person. I'm a human. Right? And I want them to be able to see me in the setting but also see me in the streets. And I just really struggle with this idea of being overly open and overly available to them, my black students would get my cell number … but it's kind of like if you open that box, you go down that road, you got to be down that road.

Twenty-four discussed their struggles with balancing the idea of being vulnerable with students while maintaining a rapport with them. Expounding on the difficulties of building rapport with students, Laz added:

> I'm not an extrovert, but I would say I'm definitely more social. So that, I think, weighs into how I navigated that this past year in terms of personal connection

> with students. I also made the intentional decision not to live where my institution is about two-and-a-half hours from campus. So, that definitely creates barriers.

Laz was intentional in creating boundaries with students. However, he was also aware of how these boundaries could present barriers to providing support for Black graduate students.

Findings from this study illustrate the lived experiences of five Black early-career tenure-track faculty members who are on a mission to support, advocate, and uplift Black graduate students through their teaching, research, and mentoring. We highlighted how the friends connected Black students to resources and opportunities, advocated and showed up for their students, and internally navigated the weight of carrying out this vital work. In the following section, we connect these findings to the existing body of literature.

Discussion

Findings from this study reveal how five Black faculty members supported Black graduate students through the lens of radical healing (French et al., 2020). Our efforts to "show up and show out" illustrate how cultural authenticity (vis-a-vis Black self-definition; Okello et al., 2020) shaped our approaches to supporting Black graduate students who were responsive to the racial trauma perpetuated by white supremacy. Further, our modes of "putting students on the game" illustrate how Black faculty engage cultural values rooted in a spirit of collectivity to disrupt racial inequities to resources and opportunities perpetuated by the hidden curriculum of the academy (Duckworth-Warner, 2003). Lastly, "my Black is exhausted" portrayed a point of tension for Black faculty members as they struggled in multiple facets of supporting Black graduate students but held fast to radical hope (French et al., 2020; Troutman et al., 2022).

Previous research about othermothering as a practice among Black faculty and administrators has revealed their critical role in supporting Black students—particularly through emphases on care, intimacy, encouragement, mentorship, and skill development. Findings from this study extend this body of work to extend and nuance *how* Black faculty engage these and other forms of support, in addition to confirming the salient role of shared racial identity in Black graduate student support (McCallum, 2020).

Findings from this study extend scholarship about Black graduate students through revealing Black faculty's ways of knowing about whiteness and anti-Black racism within the academy and how this knowledge prompted race-conscious approaches to our teaching, advising, and mentoring Black graduate students. In referencing our ways of knowing as Black faculty, we draw upon hooks' (1989) description of the margins as a vantage point that resists ways of knowing rooted in a culture of domination and embraces:

> ways of knowing reality that affirm continually not only the primacy of resistance but the necessity of a resistance that is sustained by remembrance of the past, which includes recollections of broken tongues giving us ways to speak that decolonize our minds, our very beings. (p. 150)

Faculty in this study drew upon ways of knowing shaped by our positions at the racial margins as Black faculty members navigating institutions that privilege whiteness. For example, our knowledge of how whiteness within the academy stifles Black self-

definition informed our decisions to model this practice as possibilities for Black graduate students through our hair and clothing choices. Our knowledge of how the academy privileges whiteness informed our decisions to "put [Black graduate students] on game" by sharing opportunities and resources to which they may not otherwise have access. In light of previous scholarship critiquing the epistemic violence the academy enacts on Black collegians through devaluing and delegitimizing our perspectives and ways of knowing (Okello, 2022), findings from this study position our ways of knowing simultaneously as a form of resistance, and as a unique asset, we bring for supporting Black graduate students. These forms of resistance are vivid demonstrations of Black faculty engaging the psychological framework of radical healing through emotional and social support and strength and resilience (French et al., 2020; Troutman et al., 2022). Through centering Black faculty's ways of knowing, we illustrate how we operate within cultural authenticity and critical consciousness (French et al., 2020; Troutman et al., 2022).

Notwithstanding the value of Black faculty's perspectives about white supremacy within the academy, we position the knowledge of Black graduate students as equally valuable, insightful, and instructive. As Black faculty members, we recognize that our ways of knowing about white supremacy are products of our own time and are bound by our individual and collective experiences. White supremacy has been scaffolded into U. S. higher education since its inception and has endured over centuries by adapting to subsequent laws and policies (Corces-Zimmeran et al., 2021; Wilder, 2013; Williams et al., 2021). Thus, white supremacy continues to persist and shapeshift within NBSI's as future Black graduate students continue to enter the professoriate pipeline. With that, findings from our study reveal tensions with the existing literature and point to the necessity of intersubjectivity in understanding how intersecting forms of oppression (including white supremacy) shape Black graduate students' experiences and what subsequent forms of support they need. For example, while some of the ways in which we supported Black graduate students (e.g., showing up and showing out) redress barriers identified in the literature (e.g., instructors delegitimizing Black students' perspectives; Felder & Barker, 2013; Gasman et al., 2008; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Wallace, 2022; Wallace & Ford, 2021), we cannot presume these practices are necessarily perceived or received by Black graduate students as helpful in light of their own perceptions about their experiences and needs.

Finally, while previous scholarship has described the forms of emotional labor Black women faculty experience at predominantly white institutions (e.g., Androne, 2012; Anthem & Tuitt, 2019), findings from this study link emotional labor to the structural whiteness Black faculty members navigate to support Black graduate students, in particular. Additionally, findings from this study suggest that while efforts to "show up and show out" and "put students on game" engage modes of collective healing for supporting Black graduate students, the racialized conditions that make such healing necessary enact an emotional and physical cost on Black faculty. And despite the cost, the authors were rooted in maintaining radical hope (French et al., 2020; Troutman et al., 2022) with the goal of one day living in a world where Blackness is honored as a way of life and not a threat.

Implications and Conclusion

Notwithstanding this study's contributions to the literature, we recognize the bounds of this study—namely that we elicited data from a small set of Black faculty members whose perspectives are bound to our own experiences. Given the boundaries of this study, future research should continue to explore the role of Black faculty in supporting Black graduate students at NBSIs—particularly how Black faculty members' means of supporting Black graduate students is experienced by the students themselves. Such research should engage Black graduate students' and Black faculty members' intersubjectivity in analyzing how white supremacy, anti-Black racism, and intersecting forms of oppression come to bear on their experiences within the academy. Black graduate students and Black faculty have different vantage points for understanding how we are impacted by these systems and, subsequently, what practices would be responsive and healing. Such research can also nuance how scholars conceptualize "support" for Black graduate students in ways that are informed by Black faculty and graduate students' ways of knowing about white supremacy, as well as Black faculty's race-conscious approaches to teaching, mentoring, and advising. To that point, findings from this study also implore the need for research that moves beyond *support* in favor of frameworks that center *healing*, given the well-documented psychological and emotional harms enacted by whiteness and anti-Black racism that Black students and faculty at NBSIs experience (Mustaffa, 2017; Okello, 2020; Okello, 2022).

Regarding implications for practice, findings from this study reveal the psychological and emotional toll Black faculty at NBSIs experience through our efforts to support and uplift Black graduate students. To be clear, we do not locate the source of this burden on Black graduate students themselves; rather, we locate it within the pervasive whiteness and anti-Black racism at NBSIs that render the work of supporting Black graduate students emotionally exhausting. Black administrators at NBSIs should create means of supporting Black faculty in ways rooted in radical healing (French et al., 2020)—namely, through developing networks for Black faculty to engage in collective healing and increasing access to therapy services.

Additionally, graduate programs should scale up the practices named within the findings to increase support for Black graduate students in ways that engender healing. At a basic level, findings from this study suggest Black faculty's approaches to supporting Black graduate students are responsive to the literature. As we indicated above, many of the practices we named in the findings can be understood as means of disrupting the marginalizing experiences Black graduate students have described in the extant literature—for example, Black self-definition as a disruption to the conditions that shape Black students' experiences with marginalization and erasure; putting students on to the hidden curriculum as a disruption to conditions that result in lack of structural support and opportunities afforded to Black graduate students relative to their white peers. Notwithstanding the need for engaging these practices through a lens of intersubjectivity that positions Black graduate students as legitimate knowers, the alignment between the findings from this study and themes from the literature suggests their merit.

At the same time, we recognize that the oppressive conditions within NBSI's could present barriers to Black faculty from engaging in some (or all) of these practices

without risk--particularly in light of other studies revealing Black faculty's experiences with hypervisibility and heightened scrutiny (Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Haynes et al., 2020; Mobley et al., 2020). Therefore, scaling up the practices we named in this study requires higher education leaders to continuously dislodge the ways through which anti-blackness (as an ideology that constructs blackness in opposition to humanity; Dumas & ross; 2016) is embedded within their institutions. Specific implications for doing so are beyond the scope of this paper, so we direct readers to the works of Black scholars who have written about and offered recommendations for disrupting anti-blackness within the academy (e.g., Bell et al., 2021; Hotchkins, 2022; Pirtle et al., 2021; Stewart, 2019). In sum, the academy should no longer place the burden of care of Black graduate students solely on the backs of Black faculty. We have carried that burden for centuries, and it is time for institutions to practice what they preach. We, us, our, together; these are the things that last forever.

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