Inscribing Physical and Mental Pains: White Violence in Marking Black Territory in Melba Pattillo Beals' *Warriors Don't Cry*

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Abstract: This paper, through Beal's memoir "Warriors Don't Cry," discusses forms of violence deployed by whites in inflicting physical and mental pain on black students who are trying to integrate in an American white school, with the aim to mark white territory and maintain educational privilege for whites. The paper also explores factors and strategies which encourage those black students to survive and make the integration possible. The discussion indicates that in white Americans' perspectives, segregated white schools are regarded as intellectual privileged spaces reserved for whites only. The federal policy of integration is hindered by white segregationists who want to maintain the status quo. "Warriors Don't Cry" manifests that violence is deployed to inflict pain on blacks in order to mark white territory, rejecting the federal policy of desegregation and driving away black students from Central High School, a symbol of white intellectual privilege. Those black students are viewed as intruders to a white privileged space. The bodily and mental pains instigated by white supremacy is linked to the history of black pain when they were severely abused and brutally oppressed by whites. Symbolic violence, such as the use of ropes and fire, is employed to provoke fear in their minds, rendering them powerless and ideologically enslaving them under white supremacy. The violence by segregationists causes physical hurt, psychological wounds, and ultimately soul persecution. In spite of great wounds and pains, those black students do not give up. The factors for their survival and success in integration include strong determination, family support, faith in God, affiliation, and non-violence reaction. "Warriors Don't Cry" is informed by stories of black pains, serving as an arena where various forms of pain are inscribed.

Keywords: African American Literature, Integration, Black Pain, White Violence, White Territory

Introduction

In the United States, blacks had long been segregated from white spheres such as communities, facilities, and education. For the last aspect, in particularly, black students were excluded from white schools, which were regarded as privileged areas for whites to maintain their intellectual superiority. There were attempts to integrate black students into white schools. However, the journey of the integration, one of the federal policies during the Civil Right Movement, was not smooth and pleasant due to massive resistance by whites (Frankenberg & Debray, 2011). Before this mission was accomplished, a great number of black people had to fight in the perilous battle against white segregationists aiming to maintain privilege, supremacy, and the purity of white blood in their community. Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas was among the most important institutions where the integration was initiated, and massive resistance by white segregationists became phenomenal. It can be said that the failure or success of Central High's integration would mark an unprecedented change in American society: to be integrated or segregated. Melba Pattillo Beals and her eight friends, known as the Little Rock Nine, were the first group of blacks enrolled in Central High, under the integration policy of the federal, which seemed unable to protect them from ferocious segregationists as can be seen in her memoir. From their first day until last day in the school, they inevitably encountered violence instigated by white parents as well as white students in order to expel them from their white territory. Many forms of violence are evident in Beals' *Warriors Don't Cry*, a memoir portraying blacks' painful experience during the period of the integration campaign.

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This paper, through Beals' *Warrior Don't Cry*, discusses forms of violence whites deployed in creating physical and mental pain in blacks' bodies and minds, with the aim to mark territory for themselves as well as blacks, and to maintain white privilege in education. That is to say, this paper studies how white segregationists employ violence to stop the integration of the Little Rock Nine into Central High School. With the success of the Little Rock Nine in making the integration possible, this paper also discusses their survival strategies both inside and outside the school, focusing on Melba, who is the narrator and the main character of the memoir. The discussion of this issue also includes important factors encouraging them to fight in the battle of segregation, amidst several downfalls and fatal threats. With such strategies, the Little Rock Nine successfully cross the border of segregation, overcome racial obstruction, and become an important driving force for the integration of the whole region. For Beals, this memoir serves as an arena for her to inscribe the physical and mental pains she received from the violence by white segregationists. It provides her with voice to tell the story of her and her friends' struggle to attain equality in pursuing education.

Literature Review

Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas is one of the biggest schools with modern facilities in the South of the United States. In the past, it was marked as a segregated institution for white students only. When President Eisenhower declared the integration policy, Central High School became the very first place where the policy was brought into action. The journey of the integration, however, became a very tough one when the mob of massive resistance maneuvered to the school, aiming to terminate the policy.

With its huge space, luxury, modern facilities, and recognition, Central High School has become a symbol of white privilege in education. In the mindset of white people, it was a place where blacks did not deserve to tread. Despite their strong aspiration to enter the school and gain knowledge in the white territory, the Little Rock Nine were deprived of such privilege and forced to retreat by massive resistance boiled with anger and violence (Fitzgerald, 2007). To whites, Central High School was their personal space where they desperately desired to maintain the segregated way of life, particularly in the intellectual aspects. Whites always viewed that they were much more intellectually superior to blacks, so the inferior blacks did not deserve to gain knowledge in white territory, as Mills (1999) stated that "Knowledge, science, and the ability to apprehend the world intellectually are thus restricted to Europe" (p. 45). In this case, Europe refers to American whites, the descendants of white Europeans, who insisted on segregating the school and preserving intellectual privilege to only their people.

The aim of segregation is to prevent blacks from gaining equality in the American society, as Thurman (1989) posited that segregation was an effective way to "keep the Negro from being completely in the unequal struggle for survival in our society" (p. 65). In other words, whites aimed to put blacks in the inferior, unequal status in the society whites claimed their own. Segregating blacks from their territory, whites employed several reasons to claim legitimacy over their actions. For example, Johnson (1943) argued that whites tried to create assumptions to confine blacks to their place. These assumptions included both negative thoughts like "'Negro quarters' are dirty, disease laden" and positive imagination like "Negroes are happier in their own neighborhood" (p. 202). Some even referred to God in order to support their segregation, as Lewis (2006) noted that "God wanted the white people to live alone. And He wanted colored people to live alone" (p. 10). Furthermore, the author of this seminal work, *Warriors Don't Cry*, claimed that there was another reason for segregation to remain. Whites wanted to maintain the purity of their blood, as a white mother shouts to Melba: "Next thing, you'll want to marry one of our children" (Beals, 2007, p.74). This excerpt indicates that one of the important consequences of the integration was that whites feared the possibility of interracial blood, the state of impurity.

This claim is also supported by Lewis, as he contended that whites "feared that the inevitable result of such close social contact between impressionable young students from both races would be widespread inter-racial sexual relations" (p. 11). All of the claims above, however, were only excuses to maintain white supremacy and privilege, which stamp blacks deeper and deeper into the abyss of inequality.

To segregate blacks from white space, in the case of the Little Rock Nine, violence was the strategy deployed in various forms. Regarding blacks' attempt to integrate in white school, whites viewed that blacks were transgressing the color line, trying to trespass on their territory. Although the Supreme Court declared the provision of separate schooling for white and non-white pupils unlawful on May 17, 1954 (Lewis, 2006, p. 2), the segregationists did not seem to be afraid of or respect the law. They simply aimed at maintaining the segregated way of life, which had long been practiced. The Supreme Court's declaration was even challenged by the segregationists' use of violence. Southern whites expressed that "the South should not give up an inch of its segregated systems on the whim of federal judges comfortably ensconced in Washington DC" (Lewis, 2006, p. 9). Their statement clearly indicated that they would not surrender to the law, which would change their way of life. The law was meaningless for them because they believed that they "were armed with a cornucopia of rationales, justifications and explanations for the continued dominance of whites in southern life" (Lewis, 2006, p. 20). This statement seemed to provide them with legitimacy in refuting the desegregation law legislated by the federal.

As part of the Civil Right Movement, Sokol (2006) is of the view that the integration was also viewed by white people as "a threat to their very notion of freedom" (p. 17). Such freedom was identified as the freedom to exercise white power, abuse others, and freely maintain an exploitative activity. Therefore, it was necessary for whites to terminate the movement and prevent their power from being negated, since the increase of black rights meant the decrease and limitation of white rights in exploiting blacks. Since whites could not change the federal decision, violence was deployed to create pains and wounds in the bodies and minds of blacks, or even to take their lives, so that they would lose spirits and retreat from the white territory and return to black territory. As stated in Melba's memoir, there were many moments when the Little Rock Nine almost lost their lives to either the ferocious mob of segregationists outside the school, or white students inside the school. The life-threatening incidents they encountered also brought their spirits so down that they almost gave up.

It is evident in *Warriors Don't Cry* that there are two major forms of violence, including physical violence and verbal violence, employed by whites to eliminate the Little Rock Nine from Central High. Both forms bring about great pains and wounds to the nine black students as well as their families. Based on the history, creating pain for blacks was an easy way for whites to exercise their power, since black bodies were already a representation of pain, as stated in King's (2008) *African Americans and the Culture of Pain* that black pain was "a symbolic and intrusive abstraction of black people as living beings" (p. 17). This was because throughout the history, blacks had suffered many forms of both physical and mental pains instigated by white supremacy. Therefore, it was undoubted that creating pains was the first strategy for whites to keep blacks in control. In *Warriors Don't Cry*, pains and wounds are clearly expressed through Melba, who narrates the story revealing her physical and mental states and conditions while attending Central High School. Despite her awareness of the formidable menace of the segregationists, Melba is willing to risk her life for opportunities to access the educational privilege, which has long been preserved for only white people. She and her eight friends volunteer to enroll in Central High School because they would like to make change for

themselves as well as their people. Especially for Melba, she is always discriminated against as can be seen in the beginning of her memoir. Being refused by a white hospital and driven away from the merry-go-round, for example, are important inspiration for her to access privilege in the society. Unfortunately, it is not an easy task when she is welcomed by white violence, which inscribes wounds and pains in her body and mind.

Pain through Physical Violence

Physical violence is regarded as the greatest harm to the lives of the Little Rock Nine. Sometimes, it is used as only a threatening device in order to warn them not to challenge the white power. However, many times, it is also used with the aim of taking the victims' lives. On their first day at Central High, Melba and her friends are received by massive resistance in the form of an angry mob equipped with violence ready to take their lives. Instead of attending class, the Little Rock Nine have to run away from school and the ferocious mob in order to save their lives. It seems that their crime of trespassing on white territory must be punished by death. Melba herself almost loses her life: "One of the men closest to me swung at me with a large tree branch but missed. I felt even more panic rise up in my throat. If he hit me hard enough to knock me over, I would be at his mercy" (Beals, 2007, p. 39). Overtly, the use of violence in this scene is not a warning, but it is intended to take Melba's life.

Some threatening actions of segregationists in the mob also provoke fear and trauma in Melba, reminding her of the wound by an attempt to repeat the history about lynching of black people: "The men chasing us were joined by another carrying a rope. At times, our pursuers were so close I could look back and see the anger in their eyes" (Beals, 2007. p. 38). A rope carried by a segregationist is regarded as a great weapon to destroy Melba physically and mentally. In a way, it means that the mob intends to kill her; in another way, it reminds her of the lynching of blacks in the history, a dreadful nightmare haunting all blacks until the present. This brutal, arbitrary punishment claimed a large number of black lives, especially during the turn of the century. It was employed to repress blacks and indicate white supremacy. As asserted by Ida B. Well (2006), a black journalist, "more than ten thousand Negroes have been killed in cold blood, without the formality of judicial trial and legal execution" (p. 4). Those victims were judged and hung by white mops without proper trials. The rope, in Melba's case, becomes a symbolic pain with psychological effects upon herself and other black people.

Melba is not killed by the rope but suffers from the psychological effect, which is in the same vein as King's argument that the psychological violence causes "racial hurt, psychological wounding, and, ultimately, soul murder" (p. 34). For Melba, the rope initiates a great pain in her body and soul by rubbing her deep wound caused by the history of lynching. At the same time, it implies to her that history might repeat itself. She might become a victim of lynching, since the segregationists legislate their own law to punish blacks who are condemned for challenging their power, like what had happened in the past. Despite Melba's survival from the chasing, the rope as a symbolic violence is a "soul murder," based on King, which will never stop hunting her psychologically. Therefore, whites' use of the rope can also be interpreted as an attempt to deploy the pain in the past to create pain for the present. Their action can be explained by King's statement that history "forces black people to become inextricably likened to or linked with historical black pain" (p. 33). For blacks, lynching was a timeless pain, which might be unable to be eradicated from their memory and imagination. Thus, the use of the rope is regarded as an effective way to stimulate mental pain in blacks' souls, with the aim to drive them away from white territory.

The rope also represents the exercise of white power in provoking fear in the Little Rock Nine, with the purpose of scaring them away from the school, an important symbol of white

privilege in Little Rock. It is believed that fear was an effective strategy to keep blacks in place, as Sokol stated, "keep blacks powerless and enslaved by fear" (p. 17). Although slavery has long been abolished, it seems that black people are still mentally enslaved to white supremacy under fear, an apparatus for whites to keep them in control. As argued by Thurman, whites also claimed a reason to create fear for blacks: "the more Negroes lose their fear, the more white people increase their fear" (p. 26). The whites' fear can be construed as the fear of losing their supremacy. Whites saw that there were only two choices for them: to victimize or to be victimized. If they failed to create fear for blacks, such fear would return to them instead. Finally, they would not be the one who control the racial game if black people gained equality in the society, resulting in the loss of their supremacy and privilege.

Throughout the school time of the Little Rock Nine, they have to encounter daily, unpredictable physical violence from both white parents and students. A lot of unmerciful and inhumane tactics are deployed to eradicate the nine students. For Melba herself, although she is only a young girl, she is kicked in the shin, spat on the face, and treated in other unimaginably brutal ways. Some of them can lead to fatal danger. For example, when Melba goes to a school toilet, she is almost burnt alive by white girls who claim the toilet as their territory:

> "Bombs away!" someone shout above me. I looked up to see a flaming paper wad coming right down on me. Girls were leaning over the top of the stalls on either side of me. Flaming paper floated down and landed on my hair and shoulders. I jumped up, trying to pull myself together and at the same time duck the flames and stamp them out. I brushed the singeing ashes away from my face as I frantically grabbed for the door to open it. (p. 119)

Burning alive is a form of extreme violence, which was also employed during the period of lynching, as victims were sometimes burnt to death. The white girls' brutal action in trying to burn Melba, like the rope, can also be interpreted as the repetition of history, a strategy to rub the wound and exacerbate the pain. This is a detrimental result of the crime of trespassing on white territory, as one of the white girls says, "Did you think we were gonna let niggers use our toilets? We'll burn you alive, girl" (119 italic mine). The concept of white space is very significant for white people, as Mills (1999) stated in *The Racial Contract*, "This space is *our* space, a space in which we [whites] are at home, a cozy domestic space" (p. 42). This suggests that whites were so protective of their space. They would do everything to prevent blacks, whom they viewed as intruders or dirty creatures, from entering their space. In the case of the white girls in Central High, since they claim the toilet as their own space, Melba is accused of being an intruder who must be punished, in order to protect their territory. Likewise, blacks as a whole are not only denied to enter white space, but also treated with violence when attempting to do so. As a result, the Little Rock Nine have to suffer from physical violence as a white reaction. In addition, they are bombarded with the other forms of violence wounding their bodies and minds, which will be discussed in the following section.

Pain through Verbal Violence

Apart from physical violence, verbal violence appears a very significant strategy in inflicting pain on blacks in order to keep them in place. Throughout their school time in Central High, the Little Rock Nine encounter harsh words, scorn, insult, and unwelcoming, rude expressions from segregationists as well as white students on a daily basis. Like physical violence, verbal violence is a great destructive force, engraving deep wounds and scars on blacks' minds. On the first day of their school, the Nine are received by the mob yelling and scorning to drive them away: "Niggers, go home! Niggers, go back where you belong!" (Beals, 2007, p. 35). Along with harsh words, ferocious facial expressions of those people also indicate an aggressive force to protect

their territory, like wild beasts trying to drive their intruders away: "Others with angry faces and wide-open mouths were screaming their rage" (Beals, 2007, p. 36). These unwelcoming expressions hint at the danger from physical force, which immediately follows, and the Nine have to run away in order to save their lives. Some of the insulting expressions from white students show that the Nine are valueless and unworthy of the privilege to enroll in this white school: "They ain't nothing but animals" (Beals, 2007, p. 75). The Nine, who represent blacks as a whole, are obviously dehumanized through verbal violence. This situation also indicates that blacks are unable to value themselves through self-recognition, but they have to be valued, as Mills states, "through the eyes of the other" (p. 58). In addition, being driven away and devalued shows that the lives of black people are destined by others, especially whites, who take advantage from objectifying and dehumanizing them. In fact, African American people never see themselves through their own eyes but "through the eyes of others" (Dubois, 2007a, p. 3), based on Dubois' concept of double consciousness as he discussed in *The Souls of Black Folk*. That is to say, they are created by whites, in the case of the Little Rock Nine, to be human or nonhuman.

In fact, the wound from verbal violence has grown in Melba's heart even before she enters Central High School. This wound reminds her of the lack of rights and privilege to access certain places preserved for whites. When she is a child, for instance, she is driven away from the merry-go-round at a fair. The money collector reacts in a very aggressive way when she hands him her money to ride the merry-go-round: "'There's no space for you here,' the man said. But I pointed to Prancer's empty saddle. That's when he shouted at me and banged hard on the counter, spilling my coins on the ground. 'You don't belong here'" (Beals, 2007, p. 4). As an innocent child, Melba might not understand the concept of white space, so she points to the empty saddle. However, this concept becomes clear to her when she hears the words "You don't belong here," as it marks the limited territory for her. It can be said that this expression creates a wound in her heart and at the same time becomes her inspiration to gain opportunities to access privilege in which she has been denied: "I would also get access to other opportunities I had been denied, like going to shows at Robinson Auditorium, or sitting on the first floor of the movie theater" (Beals, 2007, p. 19). Although she is aware of what she will encounter at the school, according to her painful experience from verbal violence at the merry-go-round, she views the integration as a promising opportunity to make change for herself as well as her people.

Verbal violence is also used with the aim at repeating history, in the same way that physical violence does. Whites use it to remind blacks of nightmares, which still haunt them and do not seem to fade away. It is like whites step on the wound in blacks' hearts, rendering terrible pain for them. In *Warriors Don't Cry*, the word "hang" is repeatedly yelled at Melba and her friends. This word causes great pain, since lynching is a deep scar in blacks' bodies and minds. Some expressions as shown in the memoir, such as "Let one of those kids hang" (p. 80) or "Get the niggers! Hang those niggers!" (p. 83), are successfully employed in provoking pain and fear. They cause a severe psychological effect on the addressee; this can be clearly seen when Melba depicts her state of mind and body after hearing such threatening expressions: "Hang one of us? They were talking about hanging one of my friends, or maybe even me. My knees were shaking so badly I thought I would fall over. I held my breath, trying not to make any noise" (p. 80). Fear grows in Melba's mind, and it is shown through her body, as her legs are shaking, and she has to hold her breath. Although the above violence is just verbal attack, it can cause a great harm as much as physical attack.

To reserve the white space, verbal violence is also displayed in the written form. The use of this method is to reaffirm that wherever blacks are, they can neither escape from the threat of white power nor secure a safe place to live. This is evident when Melba enters a restroom in Central High. Looking at the mirror, she is appalled at what she sees: "I noticed it—written all over the mirror with lipstick was 'Nigger, go home'" (Beals, 2007, p. 99). Even though there is

no white student or segregationist in the restroom, Melba unavoidably encounters threatening expressions and unwelcoming messages trying to expel her from privileged space for whites.

Another important function of verbal violence is to insult and show the disgust towards black people. Such feelings result from the notion that blacks are uncivilized, dirty, and savage. Regarding the intellectual aspect, whites always view that they are much more intelligent, while blacks are stupid and ignorant, as DuBois (1987b) stated, "It is therefore assumed that all Negroes in Reconstruction were ignorant and silly. Therefore a history of Reconstruction in any stage can quite ignore them" (p. 1038). In the case of Central High, this notion is expressed verbally, indicating that white students despise and are disgusted by the inferiority of the Little Rock Nine as well as other blacks. When the Nine enter a classroom, a white student poses a question to his teacher: "You're not gonna let those niggers stay in here, are you?" (Beals, 2007, p. 73). His reaction towards the presence of the Little Rock Nine reveals his mindset that the black students are disgusting to him, and they do not deserve to receive education opportunities from the white school system. His expression also indicates that he and other white students strongly oppose the integration, since blacks are unworthy to be in the white school. It is like they have a fear that their classroom will be contaminated with diseases if they allow the integration to happen. Similar to the above cases, pain is also grown in the Little Rock Nine, as they are being insulted and degraded through verbal attack.

Verbal violence not only hurt the Little Rock Nine at school, but also haunts them at home. Since the Nine refuse to retreat from or give up the notion of integration, the segregationists extend their threat to black territory. The Nine and their families are threatened by phone calls, although they are at their homes, their own spaces, as Beals explains that:

> The segregationists organized a systematic process for phoning our homes at all hours of the night to harass us. They also phoned our parents at their places of work and any other relatives or friends they could annoy. One day, Terrence's mother rushed into the principal's office, having been called and told her son was seriously injured, only to find the call had been a hoax. Repeated bomb threats were telephoned to our homes. (p. 159)

Even their homes are no longer safe places for them to live peacefully. The threatening phone calls cause the home to be "unhome" for the Little Rock Nine and their families. Through phone calls, they also receive a more dreadful message about a reward on their head: "We got a way of gettin' you darkies now, for certain. We're offering ten thousand dollars for your head of a platter" (Beals, 2007, p. 212). All life-threatening phone calls aggravate the pain in their minds when learning that their sweet homes are unable to shelter them from the exercise of white supremacy. In addition, the parents are also threatened through phone calls at their workplaces, indicating that there is no place for them to escape from the threatening. Their space is being narrowed down and limited day by day, while white territory is being expanded.

The deployment of violence in both physical and verbal forms is very successful in provoking fear in the Little Rock Nine and their families. It is almost successful in terminating the integration. After encountering daily violence, Melba realizes that she is engaged in an arduous task, which seems far away from possibility as she explains, "integration is a much bigger word than I thought" (Beals, 2007, p. 113). The battle between integration and segregation is so intense that sometimes she feels that she no longer exists: "I think only the warrior exists in me now. Melba went away to hide. She was too frightened to stay here" (p. 170). In this battle, although she is still alive, she is so exhausted physically and mentally, due to her long fight against white power. Especially when the 101st Airborne Division, which has been sent to protect the Nine, leaves Central High, it seems that she can no longer seek protection and has to

rely on only self-protection. Despite several downfalls, none of the Little Rock Nine retreats; they keep on fighting in order to make the integration possible and finally make it. Although one of them cannot not reach the finish line, their successful mission marks an important change in American history. Their survival and success are supported by several factors and strategies from both themselves and others, which will be elaborated in the next part.

Factors and Strategies for Surviving Pain and Violence

As can be seen in *Warriors Don't Cry*, white violence encountered by the Little Rock Nine is overwhelming for common people to tolerate. In many moments, the Nine almost give up as a result of the recurrence of depressing feelings throughout their school time. However, they choose to fight and finally reach their goal. There are important factors and strategies helping them to deal with pain from white violence and, importantly, keep their spirits high, empowering them to be able to withstand horrible conditions in the battle of integration. These factors and strategies include strong determination, family support, faith in God, affiliation, and non-violence reaction.

Strong determination is marked as the most important factor for the Little Rock Nine to survive white violence and succeed in the integration. For Melba, moral support from herself is a significant factor to determine whether she will keep on fighting or retreat and return to her usual life. There are many times when white violence is almost intolerable for her, negating her fighting spirit: "with each passing day, I began to doubt that I was strong enough to tough it out. Even as I watched the others weaken, I could feel myself growing weary and nervous" (Beals, 2007, p. 159). Sometimes, she is so down that she even wishes to be dead, so that she will not have to encounter brutal treatments from whites: "God, please let me be dead until the end of the year" (p. 159). However, Melba can overcome such downfalls because of her strong determination to improve herself through the access to educational privilege. The success of her mission will also bring about change for her people. She compares herself to a warrior in the racial battle with the mission to protect the rights of her people and bring true freedom to them. She realizes that if she fails, it means the failure of all people of her race. Despite a huge pain in her body and mind, as a soldier of her race, she needs to carry on her mission and cannot stop: "Move out! Warriors keep moving. They don't stop to lick their wound or cry" (p. 128). Giving herself moral support reinforces Melba's inner power and strengthens her determination, which ensures herself that she will not lose, as she states, "I will have tomorrow and the next day and the next" (p. 142). Her strong determination becomes a great driving force for her to fight and keep her spirit high.

The next important factor encouraging Melba to keep on fighting is the support from her family. Without this support, her determination might not be equipped with adequate power to withstand daily violence. The most important person in her family, who plays a significant role in her survival and victory, is her grandmother, Grandma India. Melba has a strong relationship with Grandma India; she also admires her for her great intellect, despite her lack of proper education. Grandma India always give Melba love and moral support. Especially when Melba is so down, she will find a way to cheer her up. When Melba cries for her horrible experience on the first day of the integration, Grandma India consoles her and provides encouragement: "You'll make this your last cry. You're a warrior on the battlefield for your Lord. God's warriors don't cry, 'cause they trust that he's always by their side. The women of this family don't break down in the face of trouble. We act with courage, and with God's help, we ship trouble right on out" (Beals, 2007, p. 44). Apart from Grandma India, Melba's mother also encourages her to fight and never asks for her giving up, although she knows that her daughter and the whole family are in a great danger. Both Melba and her family possess a strong will and great courage to break the racial boundary. Their mission is successful because they always support one another.

The relationship between Melba and Grandma India leads to her faith in God, another factor for her survival and success. Grandma India is a very religious woman with strong faith in God, which influences Melba to follow her belief. Throughout the memoir, she always assures Melba that God would be with her and help her through the troubles. As can be seen in the excerpt in the above paragraph, Grandma India analogously states that Melba is a God's warrior, and God

will be on her side. On the first day at the Central High, before entering the battle against the segregationists, Grandma India also assures Melba that she will not be alone: "God is always with you" (Beals, 2007, p. 33). In addition, God serves as an important source of power for Melba and her family to strengthen their spirits, in order to get through horrible moments, as Grandma India says, "Praise the Lord, we got us some power now" (p. 208). Amidst the hatred of the segregationists, God's love becomes the refuge and sanctuary for them whenever they feel down. When Minnijean, one of the Little Rock Nine, is expelled from the school, Melba and her Grandma also pray for God to help her: "Every day Grandma and I prayed hard for Minnijean to have strength and peace of mind and for all of us to be able to feel God's love for us, even in the face of those who spewed so much hatred our way" (p. 162). During their period of great depression, God has been proved to be a source of spiritual power and sanctuary for them to rest their mind.

Another factor, which can also be viewed as a strategy, for the survival and success of the Little Rock Nine is affiliation. The mission of integration is a collective task; they need to help and support one another in order to overcome violent tactics from whites. The most important thing is that they must keep themselves in high spirit and move forward together; otherwise, it will be easy for them to lose their courage to fight in this racial battle. Since they have to face with terrible experience together, their relationship is also developed, as explained in the memoir: "Being together in those classes, the nine of us were developing a true friendship—becoming closer knit than we might have been under other circumstances. We talked about our fears, what we missed at our old school, and our hopes that the integration issues would soon be resolved" (p. 54-55). Their true friendship is an important factor to ensure that each of them are not fighting alone, providing them with encouragement to fight in this racial war.

In addition to supporting one another, the Little Rock Nine are also affiliated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). This organization plays a significant role in pushing the integration policy and supporting the Little Rock Nine to achieve their mission. It also provides consultation when they are in trouble and helps to solve problems for them, especially when the massive resistance is at crisis, as Beals explains, "We were having more frequent meetings with Mrs. Bates and other NAACP officials about our problems" (p. 159). The meetings are arranged to solve problems for the Nine as well as to boost their spirits. In addition, when Minnijean, is expelled from Central High School, NAACP also helps to transfer her to another school in New York. This also proves that the Little Rock Nine are not alone. The rest of them, including Melba, achieve their goals with the great help of NAACP.

Apart from NAACP, Melba also affiliates to a white student, Link, who always saves her from great dangers or prevents her from encountering violent attacks. Although Melba and her family sometimes doubt him, fearing that he might be one of the games the segregationists invent to destroy them, he turns out to be their true ally. His great heroic action is shown when he saves Melba's life from white male students by urging her to take his own car for her escape. This white ally also becomes an important source of information for Melba, telling her what will happen to her and how to avoid harms from attackers both inside and outside the school: "Stay off the far end of the second floor tomorrow. And don't go to your locker after lunch" (Beals,

2007, p. 184). Link's help proves his true, genuine friendship towards Melba and her family, which is almost impossible to find from her white peers in school. For the Nine, white students are great dangers whom they must avoid. However, the friendship between Melba and Link indicates that not all white students are segregationists. If black students can make friend with white students like Link, they will become great helps for the survival of daily violence.

Walking through the storm of violence, the Little Rock Nine have to find strategies to survive and get through each day at school. Another important strategy is non-violent reaction. Violent reaction does not help them to cope with horrible treatments from their white peers, but only brings about more terrible consequences. In the case of Minnijean, who spills chili on white boys out of her anger, she is finally expelled from the school. This situation indicates that violence cannot be overcome by violence. Melba, after encountering recurring violence, realizes that non-violent reaction must be effective in dealing with violence. She reads about Gandhi's experience in fighting against violence in India and learns from him that she needs to stay calm and react in a non-violent way: "I was reading about Mr. Gandhi's prison experience and how he quieted his fears and directed his thoughts so that his enemies were never really in charge of him" (Beals, 2007, p. 181). Melba brings this idea into action when she is attacked by insulting expressions: "'Niggers are stupid, they gotta study real hard, don't they?' he said in a loud voice. 'Thank you for the compliment,' I said, looking at him with the pleasantest expression I could muster so he would believe I wasn't annoyed" (p. 181). Her calm reaction prevents violence which might ensue if she reacts in an angry manner. Gandhi's method effectively helps Melba to overcome her fear and the attackers. This helps her to get through such terrible moments without a more violent consequence. Beals depicts her feeling as follows:

> My heart slowed its rapid beating, and my hands stopped shaking. I felt safer, even comfortable, as something inside me settled to its center. I had a powerful feeling of being in charge. I was no longer allowing hecklers' behavior to frighten me into acting a certain way. For that moment, I was the one making decisions about how I would behave. A little choir of voices in my head was singing, "Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!" (p. 181)

With her calmness and non-violent reaction, Melba feels that she gains victory over pain from insulting expressions, as she is the one who controls the game. She terminates the game of violence by using Gandhi's method, rather than allowing this game to be continued by anger or violent reactions.

With the above factors and strategies, eight of the Little Rock Nine survive daily violence instigated by white segregationists and finally make the integration possible. Those factors and strategies provide them with both physical assistance and mental support to keep their morale high during this crisis, which can be called racial battle. The success of the Nine is set as a model for other schools to integrate black students into white schools. For blacks in general, Melba and her friends are their heroes and heroines who brave all difficulties, hardship, and suffering, in order to make change in American society.

Conclusion

Central High School has long been a symbol of white privilege, which is forbidden for black people to access. In "'Occupied Territory': Mapping the Spatial Geographies of White Identity and Violence," Watson (2015) posited that "Its massive presence and well-maintained landscape reminded all of the benefits of White privilege and the meaningful pay-offs to those who invest in Whiteness" (p. 5). Central High marks white territory while, at the same time, indicates a line warning blacks to step back. Any attempts to cross that line are reacted by massive resistance in

forms of violence, physically, mentally, and verbally, with the aim to inflict pains and deep wounds on the bodies and minds of the intruders. In Melba's case, such wounds from the exercise of white violence are transformed into a narrative in the form of memoir telling her stories and horrible experiences to readers. As stated by Scarry (1985) in *The Body in Pain*, "physical pain has no voice, but when it at last finds a voice, it begins to tell a story" (p. 3). For Melba, she endures both physical and mental pains, which becomes her voice and stories. In a similar way, Slatterly (2000) stated in *The Wounded Body* that "Wounds, misshapen bodies, scarred or marked flesh always tell a story through their opening onto the world" (p. 14). Throughout the history, uncountable stories come from narrators' wounds, and so does Melba's memoir, which has become an important historical account regarding the integration. This historical account is inscribed by the author's pain and wounds.

Slatterly also argued that "Slavery as national and communal wound marks all the characters in the story, white and black, with the taint of shame" (p. 207). Although Melba's stories happen during the Civil Right Movement era, long after the slavery, the traits of slavery still haunt her and other blacks. Whites still view and evaluate them with their ancestors' humble origin as slaves, which is an important argument for segregation. Melba's story is significant evidence to reaffirm that blacks are dominated and discriminated against simply because of their race and their origin. Her story also represents the discourse of racial oppression, as Byerman (2005) states that "The 'true' story of black life in America is one in which the dominant discourse of race, with its attendant practices, intends the victimization of a group of people distinguished primarily by their color" (p. 3). Obviously, throughout Melba's memoir, the Little Rock Nine as well as people of their race are victimized merely because they are black.

Racial discrimination is a crime in the society, since it creates wounds in human bodies and minds. Apart from giving pain to blacks, these wounds are also engraved on some whites' minds, who have feelings of shame and guilt on what their people have done with black people. In *Warriors Don't Cry*, white wounds and shame are reflected through Link, who possesses the sense of guilt of his own people, white people who have suppressed and created wounds for blacks since the age of slavery. This guilt then becomes a driving force for him to help Melba and Nana Healy, his family's old black servant, who is abandoned after she can no longer be any of use, due to her old age. Therefore, it is clear that the exercise of white power is a destructive force towards both blacks and some whites who have the sense of guilt.

Melba and her friends finally overcome pains and wounds, making the integration possible. When Ernie, one of the Little Rock Nine, becomes the first black student to graduate from Central High School, it marks the change for all his people. All of the nine students also become heroes and heroines for other blacks to follow, as they successfully break down the racial barrier and step out of their territory after it has long been limited. Later, when the Little Rock Nine return to Central High School after they have left it for a long time, they also find that a black boy becomes the school president. This is compelling evidence indicating that the situation of blacks is totally changed. Absolutely, the change is attained by the pains and wounds of the Little Rock Nine, their families, as well as all black people.

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