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## Black Women and Their Bodies: Final Project

*How do stereotypes of Black bodies developed during slavery continue to influence contemporary medical practices and outcomes?*

*What does slavery have to do with 21st century inequities?*

### Assignment Overview:

Create a presentation in which you analyze how current inequities in the medical field can be traced to slavery. Aim to focus your study specifically on Black women, past and present. Use the overarching questions as a guide for your study.

You could approach this in one of two ways:

- Examine a contemporary inequity or health problem and link the contemporary issue to the legacy of slavery.
- Examine how the narrative around medical racism and the legacy of slavery is shifting in the medical world today; this could include protest efforts, artistic efforts or modern advancements that specifically target medical racism.

### *Specifics:*

- Find **one** primary source and analyze the source
- Provide **three** articles/sources that provide relevant information on the contemporary issue you are researching
- Create two parts of your presentation:
  - ◆ The primary source analysis ([source, contextualize, close read](#))
  - ◆ The contemporary connection argument (form a connection between the past and today; reference at least four quotes during your process)
- Cite everything in Chicago style

**Grading:** 50 Points

[Final Project Rubric](#)

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**Step-by-Step:**

*Step 1:* Find a primary document that demonstrates an aspect of matrilineal slavery. For access to primary documents, students may use:

- [National Museum of African American History and Culture website](#)
- [Documenting the American South](#)
- [The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History collection](#)
- Also look at the slides, articles, and resources from class. Your document can be one that we've seen before.

*Step 2:* Analyze the document. \*Use the [historical thinking chart](#) provided as a guide.

- Source the document
- Contextualize the document
- Close-read the document

*Step 3:* Find a connection between your primary document and a contemporary issue. As you research contemporary documents, be thinking about the connections between the past and today. Students could examine topics such as:

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| → Weathering   | → Racial bias in medicine    |
| → How race affects treatment and outcomes for specific diseases (COVID-19, diabetes, etc. Use NIH statistics.) | → Pain management            |
|  | → Maternal mortality         |
|  | → Infant mortality           |
|  | → Activist/awareness efforts |
|  | → Artistic expression        |

Helpful Secondary Resources:

- Articles assigned in class
- [Overview of current statistics on health disparities/outcomes by race \(CDC\)](#)
- [Medical Apartheid - Harriet Washington](#)
- [Racial Disparities in Maternal Health](#)
- [“I Don’t Want to Die’: Fighting Maternal Mortality Among Black Women”](#)

*Step 4:* Form an argument that points to a connection between your primary document and your contemporary study. (Notice that many of the secondary scholars you've read/watched in this unit aim to do just this: they present historical information and then connect to the present day.) If you aren't seeing a direct connection in your research, don't make a false claim. Instead, aim to find a parallel observation between the historical past and today.

## **Black Women and Their Bodies**

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*Step 5:* Create your project. The way you do this project can be creative, as long as you include an analysis of both the primary document and the contemporary issue. Possible modes of expression: slides, essay, ArcGIS, artistic expression, bulletin-boards.

*Step 6:* Present your project to the class. After you present, engage in discussion about your topic and ask for peer feedback.

*Extension:* Post your project on a bulletin board around the school.