

Event: Anti-Racism in Health Focus Discussion - Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology

Creative Piece: **Embodied Voices**



I wished to create a piece that illustrated how Dr. Deirdre Cooper Owens' discussion blended the professional, personal, and political. During this event, Dr. Owens shared her expertise in the origins of American gynecology as well as how her wealth of knowledge became complicated by people's perceptions of her own *race* and *gender* as a Black woman. I used a black background and varying shades of colors traditionally associated with female gender identity, reds, pinks, and purples, to reflect this intersectionality. Furthermore, Dr. Owens's own first-hand experiences of being devalued have made her highly attuned to how the field of gynecology has celebrated J. Marion Sims at the expense of the enslaved women he conducted painful experiments on in the name of medical progress. I wanted my drawing to center the

humanity of these very women whose personhood Dr. Owens has honored in her book, *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology*. I visually played with images of *lips* and the *labia* to show how Dr. Owens has sought to give voice to the women who have been silenced and reduced to disembodied vulvas.