

Decolonising the undergraduate curriculum in Women's Health

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Objective

- At King's College London (KCL), we recognise that BAME groups face injustices in their care.
- We endeavor to educate our students on the injustices faced by BAME women in the past and present to ensure that our graduates are equipped to improve the outcomes and overall care of BAME groups.



Method

- We performed a literature review on Marion Sims and his victims to refine our knowledge on the history of racism in obstetrics and gynaecology to then be educated to students.

Results

- Dr Marion Sims, a physician practicing mainly in the 1840s, is known as the 'father of modern gynaecology.' He is also accredited for inventing the Sims' speculum- named after himself.
- He came to many of his conclusions by torturing black women, who were slaves. He would perform various gynaecological procedures with little regard for their pain or safety.
- Lucy was one of women Sims performed his surgeries on. He documented acknowledging her pain, admitting that he thought she might die but refused to administer anaesthesia and continued the surgery whilst she was conscious.

Conclusion

- A review on the history of obstetrics and gynaecology has led our medical school, KCL, to rename the Sims speculum to the Lucy Speculum
- We hope this will draw attention to the suffering black people had to endure for the advancement of gynaecology and help work towards eliminating racial inequalities in today's healthcare system.

