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To the Advocates and Community Organizers of East Harlem Preservation,

Countless screams were silenced during American chattel slavery and the subsequent racial apartheid that has spanned the entire course of this nation's history.

The bodies of Black and Brown people were made: obedient through torture, profitable through dehumanizing labor, and dispensable through unmitigated violence.

Being a woman in a society acculturated to undervalue your worth presented a plethora of civil and social injustices; but the intersection of race and gender was (is) egregiously hazardous to women of color.

J. Marion Sims is lauded as a founding American medical professional, with a statue in your milieu, despite his sadistic scientific experiments on enslaved women without anesthesia. He is celebrated as if the beings to whom he inflicted physical anguish and psychological damage, weren't human; but instead expendable, unresponsive cadavers. The life experiences of Anarcha, Betsy, and Lucy were already clouded with trauma and a loss of autonomy, being as that their wombs (and lives for that matter) were the reproducing property of their masters. But the gynecological advances achieved at their very excruciating expense created wealth for the mostly male-dominated field and health for the women privileged enough to receive a sedative before surgery.

Not only should we be advocating for the removal of Dr. Sims statue, we ought to be fixated on utilizing this opportunity to properly commemorate the sacrifices of Anarcha, Betsy, Lucy and the seven other unnamed and enslaved surgical patients.

**May we begin to hold our culture accountable for honoring the tortured as publicly as we still honor the torturers.**

J. Lorraine Frieson

