Why consider history?

“History would become all that men during the day, but nothing of what they did during the night”

--Barbara Omolade
Auction block

Stripped naked
Sold to highest bidder
Family’s divided
“Breeders” were valuable
Rape of enslaved women

According to historians, at least 58% of enslaved Black women between the ages of 15 and 30 had been sexually assaulted by White men.

Intra-racial Rape

The crime of rape does not exist in this State between African slaves...
The regulations of law, as to the white race, on the subject of sexual intercourse, do not and cannot, for obvious reasons, apply to slaves; their intercourse is promiscuous, and the violence of a female slave by a male slave would be a mere assault and battery.
—Mississippi Court (1859)
Medical experiments on enslaved women

Dr. J. Marion Sims
‘Father of Gynecology”
Speculum, 1845
Fistula repair on enslaved women
Culture of Silence

“Slaves could either go silently to the grave or go to the grave for breaking the silence.”

“Although we don't often discuss it, we carry this legacy in our cultural DNA. For me, to think about rape culture is to think about enslaved African women who bore the brunt of this horror. It's a dimension that belongs in the modern conversation just as surely as alcohol and victim-blaming, slut-shaming and rape do.”

--Akiba Solomon

http://www.colorlines.com/articles/how-12-years-slave-exposes-early-rape-culture
How has this history influenced Black women TODAY?

- Media influences
- Internalization of the Jezebel image
- Culture of silence/Political Gag Order
- Expectation of strength
- Racial loyalty
Contemporary Images/Jezebel

Have their roots in historical images and sexual stereotypes.