

Visiting exhibit puts Nazi racial theories under microscope

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The Tulane University School of Medicine is partnering with The National World War II Museum to bring “Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race,” an exhibition on loan from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., to New Orleans.



Students at the Berlin School for the Blind examine racial head models circa 1935. Students were taught Gregor Mendel's principles of inheritance and the purported application of those laws to human heredity and principles of race. During the Third Reich, Germans born deaf or blind, like those born with mental illnesses or disabilities, were urged to submit to compulsory sterilization as a civic duty. (Blinden-Museum an der Johann-August-Zeune-Schule für Blinde, Berlin)

The [exhibition](#), which examines the alliance between physicians, scientists and the Nazis that led to the murder of millions, opens July 25 and remains on display through October 15.

The exhibition traces history from the early 20th-century international eugenics movement to the development of the Nazi regime's "science of race." It challenges viewers to reflect on the present-day interest in genetic manipulation that promotes the possibility of human perfection.

"These issues and how they influenced fields like bioethics are topics of import," says Dr. Benjamin P. Sachs, dean of the medical school. "We hope both our medical community and the general public will walk away from '[Deadly Medicine](#)' with a better understanding that respect for all human beings has to be the essence of the medical profession. Today, the medical community has very strict safeguards to protect human subjects who volunteer to participate in biomedical research. These safeguards were put in place because of international outrage regarding human experimentation by the Nazis."

[Tulane](#) will hold these free, public events in conjunction with the exhibition:

- Aug. 27 ? New York University bioethicist Art Caplan will speak at the Tulane School of Medicine auditorium, 1430 Tulane Ave., on "Justifying the Unthinkable: The 'Ethics' of Nazi Medical Experimentation."
- Sept. 4 ? Eva Kor was a twin experimented on at age 7 by Josef Mengele. Kor's film, "Forgiving Dr. Mengele," will be screened at the medical school, with a second screening at the National World War II Museum on Sept. 5. Kor will speak on "Ethics in Medicine and Research: Lessons from Dr. Mengele's Lab" at the National World War II Museum on Sept. 6.
- Sept. 13 ? Attorney Baruch Cohen will speak at Dixon Hall on "The Ethics of Using Medical Data from Nazi Experiments."
- Sept. 20 ? Laurie Zoloth, director of the Brady Program in Ethics and Public Life at Northwestern University, will give the 2012 Daspi Women in Science Lecture: "The Thief of the Future: The Holocaust ? Women, Reproductive Science, Eugenics & the State," at the Freeman Auditorium in the Woldenberg Art Center on the Tulane uptown campus.

Tulane students will receive free admission to the exhibition with their identification cards.