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Author(s) Andorno, Roberto

Author(s) at UniBasel [Andorno, Roberto](#) ;

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Human rights and bioethics are conceptually and operationally much closer than usually assumed. This is not surprising as both normative frameworks emerged from the same dramatic events: the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the Nuremberg trials. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948, which would become the cornerstone of the international human rights law, was to a significant extent informed by the horror caused by the revelation that prisoners of concentration camps, including children, were used by Nazi physicians as subjects of brutal experiments. This shocking discovery led the Nuremberg trial to develop in 1947 the famous ten principles for medical research, which have come to be known as the Nuremberg Code. In this regard, it has been reported that "the details revealed daily at Nuremberg gave content to the rights recognized by Articles 4 through 20 of the Declaration" (Baker 2001, p. 242). Similarly, it has been pointed out that "World War II was the crucible in which both human rights and bioethics were forged, and they have been related by blood ever since." (Annas 2005, p. 160) The fact is that at present all major international ethical and policy instruments relating to bioethics adopt a human rights approach.

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