# Twitter Thread by Southern Anti-Racist | Abolition Now




**Southern Anti-Racist | Abolition Now**
@antiracistsouth

**While #Tulane school of medicine is rightfully being exposed for its contemporary racism towards faculty, staff, students (and patients) due to the racist firing of Dr. Princess Dennar, it's important to call out the deeply anti-Black history of this school, specifically... 1/**

The way #Tulane became a private institution (originally was a public university) at the end of Reconstruction to avoid having to desegregate. The school charter says it was founded for "white men" only... but there's more (much more) to this story... 2/

cw: medical racism

Tulane's school of medicine rose to national prominence for its collection of human "specimens" in their anatomy museum "rivaled only by Harvard". How did it acquire these "specimens" you might ask?

The collection was "curated" by a Dr. Edward Souchon... 3/

Dr. Souchon was mentored by the late James Marion Sims, the "father of modern gynecology", who himself had started collecting body parts, organs, and skeletal remains from enslaved Black people during slavery. Souchon continued "curating" his own collection in horrific ways. 4/

The Souchon Collection grew over several decades, eventually touring the state as a traveling "public health" exhibit- nearly all of the body parts stolen, harvested and illicitly acquired from formerly enslaved and poor Black people via Charity Hospital. 5/

In the early 1900s Tulane would even advertise its anatomy collection to attract medical school applicants from across the country, bragging that their Dr.'s had "trained" as physicians to enslaved Black people and therefore knew about the "peculiarities" of Black bodies. 6/

This of course was true in that one of Tulane's most famous founding physicians was Dr. Samuel Cartwright, who famously invented diseases like "Drapetomania" to justify enslavement and prescribed brutal violence as a cure. https://t.co/5IMEq0zdcP 7/

Tulane's school of medicine continued to receive a "bounty" of Black bodies through a special arrangement w/ Charity Hospital, which often supplied the school with so many cadavers per month that they often didn't know what to do with them... but it's for science right? Wrong. 8/

Tulane med school students (all white men at the time) were known to pose for raunchy and racist photos with the cadavers. During the New Deal, WPA oral historians recorded numerous stories about the "Black bottle men" or "needle men" who would steal human at night... 9/

There was a widespread belief in Black New Orleans communities that Tulane med school students would hide in the allies at night and use anasthesias to knock out unsuspecting Black victims to harvest their bodies for experiments and dissections. It's easy to understand why. 10/

Charity Hospital was also suspected of delivering substandard medical care to poor Black, indigent patients- letting them die- to help supply the flow of Black cadavers to Tulane. It's nearly impossible to confirm these facts now, but one can imagine why ppl thought this. 11/

Through a range of nefarious methods (enslavement, exploitation, shady deals), Dr. Edward Souchon built up his anatomy "collection"- robbing the deceased and their families of the right to perform sacred traditional African burial customs, dehumanizing & profiting off them 12/

This "Souchon Collection" was still proudly exhibited by Tulane med school until it started to draw negative attention, and for many decades now has been hidden in the basement of the Hutchinson building downtown. Still, faculty access it to show their students... 13/

Tulane must acknowledge the Anti-Black history of the Souchon Collection, work to repatriate all human remains to surviving family, provide reparations & facilitate proper burial rights. This is an abomination and this racist legacy and present situation must be addressed. END