



POSITION: SURGEON GENERAL

NOMINEE: Sanjay Gupta

BIRTH DATE: October 23, 1969 in Novi, MI

EDUCATION:

M.D. 1992, University of Michigan Medical School

B.A. in Medical Sciences, University of Michigan

(Interflex 6-year program, combining pre-medical and medical school, accepted directly from high school)

FAMILY: Married to Rebecca Olson Gupta; two daughters: Sage & Skye

Clinton White House: 1997-1998 White House Fellow, special advisor to First Lady Hillary Clinton

EXPERIENCE:

2001-present Chief medical correspondent for the health and medical unit at CNN

2001-present Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery, Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA

Associate Chief of the Neurosurgery Service, Grady Memorial Hospital, Atlanta, GA

2000-2001 Partner of the Great Lakes Brain and Spine Institute

1998-2000 Fellow in neurosurgery, University of Tennessee Semmes-Murphy Clinic

1997-1998 White House Fellow

1992-1997 Residency in neurological surgery, University of Michigan Health System

OTHER

Was embedded with a Navy unit, the Devil Docs, during the 2003 Iraq invasion. In that time, he performed five brain surgeries

Time magazine health column

ON ABORTION and PRE-NATAL TESTING

”Basically, the reason the tests exist, to try to give young parents, or parents, an idea of how to proceed.”

(Speaking on the benefits of prenatal testing)

<http://archives.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0312/16/ltm.05.html>

ON PHYSICIAN CONSCIENCE REGULATIONS and ABORTION

Gupta has, for example, sharply criticized the regulations published by the Department of Health and Human Services.

<http://www.rhrealitycheck.org/blog/2009/01/06/dr-sanjay-gupta-tapped-surgeon-general>

“...it’s a bit of a slippery slope. I mean, when you say, I’m not going to provide care based on my own conscience...you can imagine that opens up a whole wide range of possibilities, in terms of what is going to be treated and what is not.”

<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0812/19/cnr.02.html>

ON LIFE EXTENSION

“I think in the next couple of decades, we’re going to get to a point of practical immortality. It’s not true immortality, but practical immortality, meaning that we’re going to live much longer without getting sick, and as a result we’ll have many more functional years.”

http://www.lef.org/magazine/mag2007/aug2007_cover_gupta_01.htm

ON STEM CELLS

“Tissue engineering, with regard to stem cells, is very promising. We’re already able to use stem cells to basically improve cardiac function in someone who’s had a heart attack. The reason that this is so fascinating is that this therapy can now be applied and replicated, and also because cardiac cells and brain cells can now be regenerated.”

http://www.lef.org/magazine/mag2007/aug2007_cover_gupta_01.htm

[NOTE: the only stem cells used to improve patient cardiac function are ADULT stem cells]

“Federal funding is not necessarily vital for stem cell research, however scientists spend a lot of their time raising private funds for research that could be better spent on the research itself. Many scientists believe that if federal funding is approved, breakthroughs will be made much more rapidly.”

“Non-embryonic stem cell lines involve cells that are more differentiated and thus less capable of being programmed into various cell lines. Simply put, as the cell line ages it loses its capability to differentiate itself into various tissues and thus is less useful. An aging stem cell doesn't quite have the luxury of dividing into all these cell lines.”

“...The most useful cells come only from embryos.”

<http://archives.cnn.com/2001/HEALTH/07/11/gupta.debrief.otsc/index.html>

CLONING CONTROVERSY

In 2002, Clonaid, a group with a checkered past, announced the birth of the world’s first cloned baby. Despite the claims, the company could not produce any verification, either scientific or through pictures that they were able to accomplish what they claimed. Even though no proof was ever presented, Gupta ran with the story and called Clonaid a group that had “the capacity to clone.” Through his reports he conferred a large amount of credibility to a story that soon turned out to be a complete hoax.

http://scienceblogs.com/intersection/2009/01/sanjay_gupta_for_surgeon_gener.php

“We didn't know what they were going to say. They didn't tell us -- we didn't know whether they were going to have any proof. We didn't think they were. We just didn't know before the press conference actually took place. But, you know, again, today's hoax is tomorrow's possibility. And people know that cloning is out there. It's a possibility. People worry about it. And I think that's why it captured the public's imagination. Unfortunately, the Raelians probably have given cloning a black eye and the media may have contributed to that to a certain extent. But this press conference was certainly something a lot of people were interested in.”

“I think the Raelians have given a black eye not only to the media, but also to the cloning industry in general. And that's unfortunate.”

“Cloning will happen.”

<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0301/11/rs.00.html>

CONTROVERSY WITH MICHAEL MOORE

Dr. Sanjay Gupta examined the accuracy of the claims presented in Michael Moore's film *Sicko*. Gupta found that while there are complaints about America's health care system, "you won't find medical utopia elsewhere." Although Gupta did not show much skepticism in reporting that life expectancies in Cuba are about equal to those in America despite being outspent by American 26 to 1 in health care, the CNN correspondent did report that in countries with tax-funded universal health care, that "even higher taxes don't give all the coverage everyone wants."

<http://newsbusters.org/node/13866>

A July 9, 2007, broadcast of CNN's *The Situation Room* aired a fact check segment by Gupta on Michael Moore's 2007 film *Sicko* in which Gupta stated that Moore had "fudged facts".

<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0707/09/sitroom.03.html>

Immediately following the segment, Moore was interviewed live on CNN by Wolf Blitzer. Moore said that Gupta's report was inaccurate and biased. Moore accused CNN and Gupta of being biased in favor of the drug industry because most of the sponsors for their medical coverage, including Gupta's reports, were drug companies.

On July 10, 2007, Gupta debated Moore on *Larry King Live*.

transcript: <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0707/10/lk1.01.html>

ON GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO CONTROL OBESITY

On a law that would not allow fast food restaurants to be placed in some areas of Los Angeles, Gupta said, "[A]lthough obesity may not be eliminated entirely, studies show zoning laws are a good first step to fighting the problem."

<http://newsbusters.org/people/television/sanjay-gupta>

Gupta said, "There's a lot of extra corn that gets turned into this substance and it's now being used as a sweetener in lots of different products. That's what makes it cheap. What Mayor Newsom and others have proposed is that you actually bring it back to what would be a normal price point for these substances. It's going to be more expensive. People are going to be less likely to buy. It's going to sort of offset, if you will, the subsidies."

(In support of a tax in San Francisco that would supposedly help control obesity by introducing a tax on products made with high-fructose corn syrup)

<http://www.businessandmedia.org/articles/2007/20071218131610.aspx>

QUESTIONS ABOUT POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

However, a surgeon general would "need to demonstrate skills that are too often missing in medical news on TV: skepticism about the science and a careful analysis of both the benefits and harms of medical care," said Drs. Lisa Schwartz and Steven Woloshin of the Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice.

The pair raised questions about drug-company sponsorship of some programs Gupta hosted in a broader critique of medical media coverage last fall, and on Tuesday they urged careful examination of any potential conflicts of interest.

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/CNN-Gupta-approached-about-apf-13989724.html>

ON GLOBAL WARMING/CLIMATE CHANGE

Along with Anderson Cooper, Gupta made the CNN news program "Planet in Peril," in which he and Cooper travel the world showing how the increased population and use of natural resources by humans hurt the animals and plants kingdom and the environment as a whole.

<http://newsbusters.org/people/dr-sanjay-gupta>