

My name is Marena Tucker and I was born in 1983. I currently live in Bend, Oregon. I have known I was donor-conceived for as long as I can remember. My mom was living in Clarkston, Washington and had gone to her OBGYN, Dr. Gary Davis, and was told she would need to have a hysterectomy soon if she ever wanted to have a child, she would need to get pregnant quickly. My mom was devastated because she was not in a relationship. Dr. Davis suggested she use a donor to conceive quickly while she was still able. Dr. Davis told my mom he would use donor sperm and gave her a physical profile of the donor who my mom approved.

Knowing about the circumstances of my conception and birth did not take away the nagging questions I had about the unknown half of my biological roots. I wanted to know if I looked like my biological father, what he was like, and what personality traits did we share. Around 2013, I decided to take an Ancestry DNA test to see what I could learn.

When my results came back, I got some answers. I learned I was 31% Irish and 56% Western European, while it wasn't much information at least I had something. About six months later I received a message on the Ancestry website. The person explained I was a close match, possibly first cousins with this person's dad, and asked how we might be related. At this point I may have overshared a bit responding, "Gee, I don't know because my dad was an anonymous sperm donor. Thanks for reaching out!!" I wasn't too surprised when I did not get a response.

In 2016 I had a couple more close matches on Ancestry. Through a little research using the matches' family tree on Ancestry and Google, I was able to figure out my two close matches were brothers, and they were likely my uncles. There was a total of four brothers in the family, so I knew I was halfway to discovering who my birth father was. At the same time, I still felt some reservations about continuing to research because I believed the donor's anonymity should be protected. But, in the end, the inalienable pull of biology won, and my research continued.

I learned the majority of the donor sperm used around the time of my conception came from a sperm bank in Georgia where one of the four brothers lived. I focused my search on that brother but came up with very little concrete evidence. I learned many sperm donors tended to be medical students and this did not fit with the brother I had been researching. While googling the fourth brother I found a previous address for him in the town I grew up in. I frantically searched for my birth certificate and saw Dr. Davis, the brother of my Ancestry matches, signed as the doctor that delivered me but the line for my biological father was left blank.

One of my first thoughts was perhaps my mom had a relationship with Dr. Davis and kept this a secret from me. My first step was to contact my mom and ask for the truth. I called her and calmly confronted her with this possibility. Mom told me this was not what had happened and she was horrified by the news. She explained she would not have gone through with the procedure if she had known it was Dr. Davis' plan to use his own sperm. My mom said it felt as if she had been assaulted all those years ago. After I was born my mom began a relationship and had two children. She never had to have a hysterectomy.

My mom also told me she felt cheated because the OBGYN was not at all like the description of the man she had chosen as her donor. That comment stung but I did my best not to take it personally because I felt cheated too. Instead of an anonymous donor, my biological

father was a man who grossly misused his power. The truth suddenly felt much worse than the possibility of never knowing who my biological father was.

This discovery led to a gambit of thoughts and emotions. Some days I was consumed by anger and a desire to punish Dr. Davis. On other days it felt like this new knowledge changed everything in my life only to be followed up with thoughts that really nothing had changed because I was still the same person I was before I learned the truth. I reached out to several attorneys and was shocked to learn there was no avenue to hold Dr. Davis responsible for the fertility fraud he had committed.

For a long time, I hesitated to go public with my story in fear that it might lead to people having a suspicion about my mother having a relationship with Dr. Davis. However, I did continue to research Dr. Davis. I learned he lost his medical license and then moved to Idaho. He went to the medical board and did not disclose he had previously lost his medical license so was granted a license again. I also learned Dr. Davis was sued for malpractice five times in four years and gave up his private practice in the town where I was born. Two of these lawsuits involved women he diagnosed as needing their ovaries removed only to learn later it was unnecessary. Even with multiple malpractice suits filed against him and the loss of his medical license in two states, Dr. Davis continued his practice in the military and later as a contractor for the U.S. Military overseas.

About two years after learning Dr. Davis was my biological father, I connected with two half-siblings through Ancestry DNA. One appalling revelation I had was my half-brother and I had gone to rival high schools in the same small community. Many of my friends dated boys from that school. I could have unknowingly dated my half-brother. I learned all of our mothers had similar stories of fertility fraud. Dr. Davis never had any children with his wife as she was unable to have children. With everything I learned, including the fact that Dr. Davis had done this to other women, I finally felt comfortable sharing my story publicly.

To this day, four years after this discovery, I am left with unanswered questions and worries about what the future holds. I have not reached out to any of Dr. Davis' family. I do not know about half of my medical history. I was afraid I would one day find an obituary and learn my opportunity to get answers directly from Dr. Davis had been lost while I was trying to decide the best way to move forward. This fear came true in June of 2019 when he passed away.

I wonder what kind of man Dr. Davis was: was he funny. did he ever think of me, what was it like to hold me for a few seconds at my birth knowing I was his daughter, and he would never see me again. Through therapy I've learned this is not something I can just come to terms with and have it go away. This is a reality I am confronted with daily when I look in the mirror. I am still in the process of trying to decide what the next steps are to move forward to heal.

I was conceived in Idaho, grew up in Washington, and now live in Oregon. The issue of fertility fraud crosses state lines. Sometimes sperm sold by the donor in one state, shipped to another state to be used in artificial insemination, and then the mother gives birth in yet another state. It is my hope that all states will consider changes in legislation to hold doctors accountable for their actions.

Signed,

