

Witness Name: ANNA ARNONE

Statement No: WITN3755001

Exhibits: WITN3755002-003

Dated: 20 November 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANNA ARNONE

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 05 September 2019.

I, Anna Arnone, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction and Professional History

1. My name is Anna Arnone. My current address is [GRO-C] [GRO-C] East Sussex, [GRO-C]. My date of birth is [GRO-C] 1960.
2. Following completion of my BA Degree in Photography around June 1981, I started doing documentary photojournalism on a full time basis. This work involved a mixture of commissioned work, individual pieces of work, and what I describe as long term documentary project work. My photographs were published in various places and I exhibited widely, having regular solo exhibitions and taking part in group shows. I did this until the mid-1990's. At that point I became involved in a campaign in [GRO-C] to save the homes of residents, including myself, living in what was known as "Shortlife Housing".

3. The Housing campaign involved a lot of legal research and assisting fellow tenants and residents with legal issues. That led to my studying law part time. I completed my LLB in 2000 and my Bar Vocational Course in 2002, I was then called to the Bar in 2002. I undertook a pupillage and then practised full time as a self-employed barrister in independent practice for around ten years, firstly at Eastbourne (rebranded as Sussex) Chambers until it closed in 2014 and then for just over a year from Maidstone Chambers.
4. I ceased to practice as a barrister in 2016 and decided to resume my previous work as a documentary photographer. My intention was to set up my own publishing project. I did this, setting up Arandora Press, and I am now working on various projects to update and expand some of my previous work. In November 2017 I then published my book of archive work about British Reggae Sound System culture of the 1980's.

Section 2. Interview of Gerard Healy

5. In 1988 I was asked to be one of the six photographic practitioners to put a piece of work together for the proposed exhibition "Bodies of Experience: Stories about living with HIV". My recollection is that I submitted a proposal to Camerawork and the Photo Co-op who were the funders and organisers of the show. There was to be a touring exhibition, opening first at Camerawork in Bethnal Green on the 13 April 1989.
6. My proposal was to interview and do portrait photographs of a variety of people in respect of their knowledge and experience of HIV and AIDS. I wanted to include people directly affected by the virus, those working with people who had the virus, and also people who were unaffected and had little knowledge. At that point I knew very little about HIV and AIDS and I set about doing the necessary research to learn about the issues and to meet people who might be willing to talk about their experiences, and who would also be willing to be photographed and be in the exhibition. I emphasise that in 1988 the level of ignorance and fear about HIV and AIDS in the general population

was such that many people directly affected by the virus were unwilling to be publicly exposed in an exhibition. However, I did find people willing to take part and one of them was Gerard Healy.

7. A natural starting point at that time was to speak to people working at The Terrence Higgins Trust and that was where I met Gerard. I cannot remember much about meeting him and how that introduction was made. I would have explained the nature of the project I was undertaking. Gerard agreed to take part and to let me interview him and to sit for a portrait. My recollection is that Gerard had recently come to live in London from Southern Ireland and he was very keen to talk publicly about HIV and Haemophilia because he was a haemophiliac who had contracted HIV through being given contaminated blood products, namely Factor 8, to treat his haemophilia. Gerard had already done community and campaigning work in Ireland and my understanding was that he wanted to continue and expand the work he had done in Ireland.
8. I photographed Gerard on 30 November 1988. I have referred to my photo log for the dates and the photograph reference numbers are 10B26 and 88C29. The latter number indicates that the photographs were shot in 1988 and are in colour. Two of the monochrome portraits are exhibited [exhibit number **WITN3755003**]. I probably interviewed Gerard on the same day. I cannot recall where the interview and portrait photograph were done. As was, and is, my usual practice, I tape recorded the interview and then made a full transcript. My recollection is that it would have been keyed in on a basic computer or word processor, which I can see from the transcript print out being split into two parts and there being a lot of typos which would have been more time consuming to correct. I no longer have the original cassette tape or computer files. The interview is fairly lengthy and Gerard gives a lot of background information. He recounts how he found out that he was HIV positive in 1985 after his doctor decided to test all the haemophiliacs that she treated. It also then goes into how Gerard came to terms with the diagnosis, the effect on him and his family, and how he came to get involved in HIV community based work. I refer to the full transcript which I exhibit [exhibit number **WITN3755002**] for what Gerard said during that interview.

9. Gerard and I became friends at the time and he visited me at my flat in GRO-C on a number of occasions. One thing that stuck in my mind was that I lent him my copy of Germaine Greer's book "Sex and Destiny" and he did not return it to me. I later asked him for it and he said that he couldn't return it because his ex-landlord had found out about his HIV status and had thrown him out and destroyed his possessions. I think that he also experienced a period of homelessness or unsettled housing at that time. I eventually lost contact with Gerard and I do not know, if he is still alive, of his whereabouts.
10. There was also a book titled "Bodies of Experience: Stories about living with HIV" published to accompany the exhibition. Although one of my portraits of Gerard was used in the section of the book devoted to my contribution none of the text from the interview I did with him was used. There are some typographical errors in my section in the book that make it rather confusing. I had nothing to do with the production of the book and was not invited to check the copy before it was printed. My section of the actual exhibition would have had extracts from all the interviews to accompany the portraits and I would have selected those extracts.
11. When I heard about this Inquiry into the issues of contaminated blood, my initial reaction was surprise that such an Inquiry was necessary more than 30 years after I had first known of haemophiliacs being treated with imported contaminated Factor 8. My interview with Gerard, and the research I did in 1988, made it clear to me that there was a problem with contaminated blood products, which I understood to have originated in the USA. My understanding was that these blood products were contaminated with both or either HIV and Hepatitis C. I was a member of the part-time teaching staff at HMP Brixton from 1989 to 1991. I also knew of the issues around both these diseases from working on Ward C in the hospital wing of the prison. This was the wing that housed known intravenous drug users.
12. My view is that if haemophiliacs like Gerard were being routinely sent for HIV tests by their GPs, as he was at the end of 1984, then it must have been

known within the medical profession by the early to mid-1980's. It is not credible that such testing and the reasons for it would not have been made known to Government at that time by the medical professions or even by the producers and importers of the contaminated Factor 8. I form this view because the only obvious reason to have been carrying out such tests routinely on this particular group of people would have been the known risk of infection from the blood products used to treat them. There can have been no other common HIV transmission risk factor that would have led to such testing. Also, there was publicity and information about the issue starting to emerge in the media, as well as the work that community activists, like Gerard, were doing. Gerard, an Irishman living in [GRO-C] was infected with contaminated Factor 8 used to treat him in Southern Ireland. His account of the development of treatment leading to the use of imported Factor 8 is clear. From that I drew the conclusion that both the English and Irish Governments and the respective professional medical bodies would have been fully aware in the mid-1980's that imported contaminated blood products had been used to treat haemophiliacs. I do not recall when or in what media but I did at some point not long after my work on Bodies of Experience and in HMP Brixton become aware of stories of people being infected with Hepatitis C through the same route. These issues were fully in the public domain by the early 1990's.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

20/11/19