**Paul**

Sex with his partner, finding out his partner was HIV postive and becoming ill himself. Partner being moved to the mildmay, partner's death and funeral.

**Extract 1**

It was only a short period, and that didn’t work out and we came back, and we lined in Putney. Thenwe moved out to West Ewell and um, when he was working in this company they had free medicalinsurance and erm, he’d been suffering, sort of felt very run down and things like this, and, youknow, he’d always not been the healthiest of individuals and then he was just … seemed to be, youknow, found it very difficult to sleep. He was having bad diarrhoea and things like this, and erm, andmeanwhile we were still having great sex you know? He did really teach me an awful lot about sex,and about, you know, what people enjoyed, because I’d always thought when you shaggedsomeone, fucked them, that they went … they didn’t enjoy it, but actually, in reality, there’s a lot ofpeople that really really enjoy it, and he taught me that sort of thing, and we … we fucked withoutcondoms because this was the days when, you know, if you … we thought that unless you wereactually clearly HIV positive erm, you weren’t, you know, that you could get away with it. There was no reason to use condoms in a relationship.

So we were shagging away and and things like this, so we were living in West Ewell and we werequite miserable really in West Ewell because it was … it was so far away. It was a long commuteevery day. It was long. His health was declining and er, he … with this medical insurance, they hadactually kept putting him through batteries of tests and saying that he needed to take this and thatand they were giving him all sorts of things like this, and then, surprisingly, when the … again lostthis job the moment the medical insurance ran out, that was the point at which they told him thathe was HIV positive. So, it was quite a shock to find out that he was HIV er, it … and it … he may … it’shard to know whether it was from the transfusions from the lymphatic strip for the lymph nodescancer, but it’s more likely that because he was from South Africa, from Cape Town, as much as hewas (?) from Africa, so he’s got the African …?... because it was still so rare in this country at thetime, and er, at the time I didn’t seem … well …

Interviewer: About what time was this?

Paul: This is … OK, it’s 1989. 1988, ‘89, yeah, and what had happened, I’d forgotten sorry, whenwe were living in … before we moved out to West Ewell - that’s right - before we moved out to WestEwell I was erm … we were living in this flat in Putney and erm, I’d suddenly fallen very ill and erm,I’d got er, I work up on August, 2nd of August 1988, I remember and there was like a … a hole behindthe head of my penis sort of sort of like a chancre, it looked like, and I had this rash and I felt veryvery unwell, and er, then Charles took me to a hospital, which was quite a way away and erm, andthey were very excited because they thought it was second stage syphilis which is very rare, and er,so they started photographing me and all of this and then they started to quiz me quite significantlyabout one or two things … and things like this and I was just very unwell, and I was very tired and

things like this, and erm, er, what was happening was I was converting I was seroconverting, anderm, and I didn’t know. I only found out much later that Charles at that point already knew that he’sHIV positive and didn’t and had told me and …

Interviewer: Oh.

Paul: And then erm, we continued to have we had unprotected sex. So it’s one of those thingsthat I still have difficulty with really, and I think it … you know, for instance, since then I’ve never hada relationship since his death because it just sort of out me off, you know, if somebody can betray you so badly …

**Extract 2**

then they moved him to the Mildmay and it was a big relief actually when they moved him to the Mildmay because, you know, they could look after him and I couldn’t, you know, sort of thing, ‘cos also in the meantime we had we had bought two dogs and they …. one of the dogs he … he bred …the Labrador was bred and had a load of puppies, so I was coming back from work and trying to lookafter these puppies and things like this. So it was all very stressful, and things like this, and I was really wishing this was all over, you know, really because it was just miserable.

My family were … didn’t really understand, you know? I had kept it quiet from them because I didn’t want them to know because I, you know, I was still only in my twenties so the … the … the big rupture of my family - not rupture but problem, happened when I went up for my father’s fiftieth birthday, it was a surprise party, and he er, when I met, you know, Charles was not able to make it up and he er, he just sort of ignored the fact that he wasn’t there and just, you know, and it just completely sort of made me feel like, you know, it didn’t matter that I was with Charles, but it so brought it clearly home to me that he was going to die and erm, pretty much ruined the party to an extent because I spent the party crying and er, weeping instead of telling everyone that he was dying. And he had been ill while I was away erm, and as I say, so that was going on in that … and I had told them he was dying of cancer. I hadn’t told them he was dying of HIV or AIDS and erm, so he er, so he was in the Mildmay, and it was actually the happiest time now because it was very nicely done, lovely staff, charming staff, very very nice, and then er, he just seemed to go on and on and on. He was still writing and he had beautiful penmanship and things like this, and we had a minor rowover the last week over something where he had actually … we only had a very small garden inSW18, and it was a little patio garden and he had bought a greenhouse for it, at a thousand poundsand erm, I said to him “I can’t fit it in there”, you know? I said “It’s not Versailles” you know, sort ofthing and that was one of our … but then he cancelled it and erm, so it didn’t happen. But then I was called at work one day and they said “Oh he’s er, he’s got a chest infection and it doesn’t look likehe’ll make it to the end of the day, so you need to come.” So I went, and I remember being in a taxivery rarely take a taxi, being … and saying erm, thinking to myself “I just wish this is the end. I hopethis is the end. I don’t want to keep this going on because he cheated death” But every time he’dcome back it seemed to be ruining his dignity, his lack of dignity and it was just awful really, and Ijust, you know? But of course you wish for things that just when they happen you didn’t, but youknow?So when he … he did die that day, and it was … he took as long time, several hours to die, he … hejust stopped breathing. It was remarkable. Still one of the greatest moments of my life and the most memorable ‘cos you never see somebody actually, you know, a thing die in front of you, and I was relieved and happy that I had been there and that he’d been in good care, and things like that, and then my family came, my sisters … my parents were away on holiday in Spain, and my sisters came down and I didn’t really expect them to, but they came down for the funeral, and we had a lovely funeral and it was very nice er, it was very charming and and things, and he’d made a great impacton the nursing staff there. They’d liked him a lot erm, so … and I remember the feeling was like someone had sort of stabbed me in the chest at the time, you know? You don’t really realise whatg rief was like, you know? So it was quite difficult. Work was very good. They were very helpful. I’dsaid he was a friend and they had sort of put two and two together I was gay but, you know, I …because I didn’t sort of, shall we say, shout about I think they were quite relaxed. So they were quitegood.