

ORAL HISTORY

TAPE RECORDED INTERVIEW RELEASE

I, Barbara Hanna MD, agree to release
the tape recording of (date) September 21, 1993
to SUZANNE MARSHALL for use in research
and publishing.

SIGNATURE Barbara J. Hanna MD
INTERVIEWEE Barbara J. Hanna MD
ADDRESS 105 Woodcrest Dr.
DATE 9-21-93

INTERVIEWER James Arnold

INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name: Barbara Hanna M/F female

Address: 105 Woodcrest Drive

Phone number(s): 237-4225

Approximate age or date of birth: 6-10-46

Mother's Name: Virginia James

Father's Name: Clyde James

Places lived and when: New Orleans, Alabama since 1990

Education: extensive

Religion: None

Business, political and social memberships (past and present) Democratic party,
Am. Soc for Microbiology

Present occupation: Physician

Former occupations: —

Special Skills: —

Major Accomplishments: survival

National Events in which interviewee has participated: —

Local Events in which interviewee has participated: Alabama AIDS
Symposium

National born U.S. citizen? Yes No

Naturalized Citizen: Yes/No Date: N/A

Country from which he/she emigrated: N/A

Documents, photographs, and artifacts which are in the possession of the interviewee:
N/A

Individuals recommended by the interviewee who might be candidates for an oral history interview: N/A

Additional information: N/A

TAPED QUESTIONS FOR DR. BARBARA HANNA

1. What is your 1st memory of hearing about AIDS ?
2. Was death occurring very rapidly in the beginning ?
3. Was death common in the early days of AIDS ?
4. Did you ever experience any difficulty in reaching your position ?
5. Have you been the victim of sexual discrimination in Alabama?
6. Discuss the controversy surrounding the opening of the clinic in Oxford.
7. Is there widespread homophobia in Alabama?
8. Please give an estimate of the number of clients you have seen.
9. Was your pregnancies ever a big deal when dealing with HIV positive patients?
10. Is it possible to separate yourself from your patients?
11. Has ignorance been a cause in the spread of the disease?
12. How do you educate your children about AIDS?
13. Do you feel that education will ultimately be a major source of prevention in the fight against this disease?
14. Do you feel that there is a possibility of a cure? a Vaccine?
15. Final thoughts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS OF TAPE

- I. Interviewee's Background
- II. Interviewee's Experience with AIDS
- III. Interviewee's Experience with discrimination as a woman
- IV. Conclusion

CHRONOLOGY SHEET

- 1946 Dr. Hanna is born in St. Petersburg, Fl. Truman is President.
- 1953 Deborah is born in Lexington, Ky. Korean War comes to a conclusion. Eisenhower is in office.
- 1963 Kennedy is assassinated; Dr. Hanna is attending private boarding school; Deborah is 10 yrs old.
- 1965 Barbara graduates from high school; Civil Right's Law of 1965 is passed; Vietnam is becoming a major issue.
- 1969 Barbara graduates from Vassar; Vietnam officially begins; Johnson decides not to run for reelection.
- 1970 Barbara marries Dr. Michael Hanna;
- 1971 Deborah graduates form high school;
- 1972 Nixon is reelected.
- 1973 Both Hanna's graduate form the UNiversity of Virginia Medical School.
- 1975 Deborah graduates from the University of Kentucky; Ford is in office.
- 1976 Barbara's residency ends and she accepts a fellowship at Charity Hospital; America turns 200.
- 1977 Jaime is born to the Hanna's; Deborah is living in New York with her husband Dee.(they were married in 1976)
- 1979 Rachel is born to the Hanna's. Carter is in office;
- 1980 Reagan is elected; Deborah moves back to Kentucky; Rebecca is born.
- 1982 Deborah starts for child protection services; AIDS is becoming more and more widespread; Dr. Hanna starts to see more patients with GRID, and she has a daughter, Alex.
- 1987 Dr. Hanna has her last child, Pepper; Reagan says the word AIDS for the first time; Deborah is Assistant Director of Child Protection Services.
- 1988 Bush is elected President; Dr. Hanna adopts a son, Johnny.

- 1989 Deborah adopts a son Seth; AIDS awareness begins to take it's position as a top killer among women.
- 1990 The Hanna's move to Alabama, Dr. Hanna starts to volunteer at ASK.
- 1991 Deborah relocates to Alabama; the gulf war has occured.
- 1992 The Ryan White title III grant is awarded for the first time to the clinic.
- 1993 ASK becomes AIDS Services Center; the number of AIDS cases as grown to 14 million world wide.

BACKGROUND

DR. BARBARA HANNA

Vassar College
B.A. Chemistry
1969

Medical College of Virginia
Medical Degree
1973

Charity Hospital of New Orleans
Medical Residency
1973-1976

Charity Hospital of New Orleans
Clinical Fellow in Medicine (Infectious Diseases)

Tulane School of Medicine
Assistant Professor of Medicine
(Infectious Diseases Section)

PERSONAL

born in June 1946, in St. Petersburg, Florida

Married Michael I. Hanna, M.D. in September 1970
Jaime 1977
Rachel 1979
Rebecca 1980
Alex 1982
Pepper 1987
Johnny 1988

Moved to Alabama in 1990

Became Medical Director of AIDS Services Center in 1990

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BACKGROUND

DEBORAH N. WADE

University of Kentucky
B.S. Social Work
1975

University of Kentucky
M.S. Social Work
1989

Worked for Child Protection Services

Worked for Rape Crisis Center

PERSONAL

born in Lexington Kentucky in August 1953

Married the Reverend Dee H. Wade in 1976
Seth 1989

Moved to Alabama in 1991

Became Executive Director in November 1991

AIDS clinic

Organizers facing fear, disgust from residents in Alabama town

By MARK MAYFIELD
Gannett News Service

OXFORD, Ala. — Inside the old house at 314 Choccolocco St., the public service effort is obvious: a basket of condoms, a stack of posters and T-shirts emblazoned, "Fight AIDS, not People with AIDS."

Two blocks down the street at City Hall, Mayor Leon Smith's disdain for the effort is equally obvious.

Smith, sitting in an office adorned with mementos of the University of Alabama football team, makes no attempt to hide his disgust with AIDS victims who are homosexuals, and with plans for a clinic set to open in the old house Dec. 4.

Smith says he has "compassion for people who got AIDS through blood transfusions, for babies born with AIDS." But the mayor says: "I have concern over" a disease spread by the homosexual lifestyle.

It's an attitude all but swept aside in urban areas by the on-rushing AIDS epidemic — a crisis now welling up in rural America. The National AIDS Commission says the number of AIDS cases was up 3.4 percent from 1988 to 1989 in rural areas, compared with a 4.6 percent increase in cities of 100,000 or more for the same time period.

Here in Oxford, tensions have skyrocketed since a Nov. 5 public meeting, when one woman said she feared children would be snatched by homosexual patients at the clinic. Others, including

“We are genuinely concerned for our safety.”

— Bob Axelton,
Oxford resident

some police officers, voiced similar fears.

Clinic organizers say they have received threats on their lives as well as threats to burn down the clinic.

"We are genuinely concerned for our safety," said Bob Axelton, 30, an Oxford resident who has tested positive for the AIDS virus and is president of ASK Inc., the agency opening the clinic. "But we have no intention of leaving."

Axelton says his group has 95 patients — including two pregnant women, grandparents and infants — who tested positive for the AIDS virus.

Of the nearly 900 AIDS cases reported in Alabama, 45 percent involve people living in rural areas, says the state Department of Public Health.

"I just never anticipated the negative reaction," said Dr. Barbara Hanna, 44, an infectious-disease specialist who will treat AIDS patients at the clinic for free. "The mayor told us they are usually friendly to people in Oxford, but they were not going to be very friendly to us."

THE SOUTHEAST

Everglades plane crash kills 3

A twin-engine plane exploded at 4,000 feet over the Everglades, apparently killing the three people on board, the U.S. Coast Guard said Saturday.

The pilot, a 70-year-old man, was traveling with his wife and a friend, who were both in their 60s, said Petty Officer Carl Vitevitch. Debris from the Cessna 421 aircraft was spotted in a mangrove swamp in southwestern Florida on Saturday.

The victims' names were being withheld until search crews could reach the wreckage, probably today, officials said.

JACKSON SAYS BLACK LEADERS UNDER ATTACK:

The Rev. Jesse Jackson denounced what he called hysterical attacks by the government against black elected leaders nationwide. The Rev. Jackson, visiting his hometown of Greenville, S.C., on Friday to celebrate his mother's birthday, said he sees a nationwide pattern of attacks from the government on black leaders.

EX-COACH WINS SETTLEMENT FOR 'HUMILIATION':

After a six-year legal battle, a former Hicko-

male students got a \$117,500 check from the school that fired him. A North Carolina Court of Appeals judge last week ordered the school system to pay Eddie Crump \$78,000 plus interest for his "humiliation and suffering" at the hands of the Hickory school board. Judge Claude Sitton agreed with Mr. Crump's claim that the board did not give the former basketball coach a fair hearing before firing him in June 1984.

AIDS CLINIC FACES OPPOSITION: A man carrying the HIV virus said his efforts to open an AIDS clinic in Oxford, Ala., have been met with hostility, threats, and fears that homosexuals will kidnap children. Bob Axelton plans to begin providing free medical services to AIDS victims Dec. 3. His clinic will be the fourth in the nation designed to serve a rural population, according to the National AIDS Information Clearinghouse, in Rockville, Md. At a public meeting Thursday attended by about 50 people, Mr. Axelton and Dr. Barbara Hanna tried to talk about the disease and the clinic. Mayor Leon Smith said he had "seen no proof" anyone in the town of 9,000 has AIDS and wishes the clinic would open elsewhere.

COMING MONDAY

The Emmy Award

LIFE/STY

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 1991

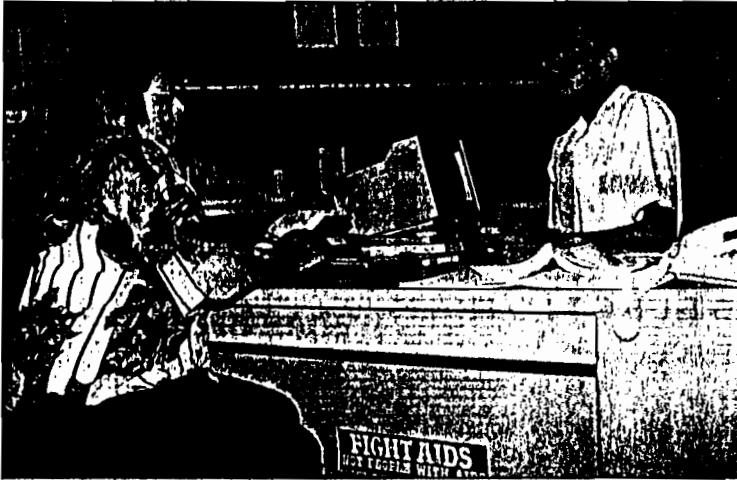
The clinic nobody wanted

Furor over Oxford's AIDS center fueled supporters' determination

■ A patient's perspective, Page 6E

By Tom Gordon
News staff writer

OXFORD — The public controversy that greeted the opening of an AIDS clinic here nearly 10 months ago has died down. But the disease that brought the clinic into being has not, and neither has the



NEWS STAFF PHOTO/STEVE BARNETTE

facility's need for money to serve its growing clientele. Bertha and Bob Axelton work at the AIDS clinic in Oxford.

"We won't always be accepted by everyone in this community," said Wanda Morgan, a member of the largely volunteer staff which works at the ASK (AIDS Support Through Knowledge) Inc. clinic near downtown Oxford. "But we came and we're still here and somehow or other we will always be here."

"We have a money problem..." Mrs. Morgan added. "But this place will survive. I can promise you that, because there are too many people who are counting on it."

The non-profit clinic, which is open only on Tuesdays for free testing, counseling and follow-up care, expected in its first year to treat 50 persons with AIDS.

But clinic executive director Bob Axelton said that figure was reached after five months, and that the clinic has treated 70 persons with the disease. These people have ranged in age from 19 to 64. About 40 percent of them have been black and 3 percent female, and 10 of them have died, he said.

"There are more out there than are being seen here," Axelton said.

"Out there" refers to Public Health Area IV, a block of 11 Northeast Alabama counties served by ASK. The area's health care facilities are largely rural. Area IV has only 42 AIDS cases reported since 1982, but health officials and physicians say those numbers alone and ASK Inc.'s current caseload more than justify the clinic's existence.

Dr. Barbara Hanna, an infectious diseases specialist who treats those who visit ASK Inc., says most of them cannot pay for their care, and the clinic, where the volunteer staff includes a social worker and psychotherapist, saves the community a large part of what it would otherwise cost to treat persons with AIDS.

"It encourages the patients to keep up with their treatment and

that hopefully benefits the community at large by keeping the patients healthy and keeping them out of the hospital," Dr. Hanna said. "Going to a hospital is more expensive than going to a clinic."

In many of the counties, people with AIDS lack access to the specialists and other care providers they might have in urban areas, Mrs. Morgan says. They also tend to feel isolated and long for a place where other people not only treat them, but relate to the emotional and physical ordeals that are the byproducts of AIDS.

ASK Inc. has tried to provide such a setting, and Mrs. Morgan thinks it has largely succeeded.

"These clients walk in the door and it's like 'Hallelujah, safe place!'" she said. "And (their) parents and care-givers have the same feeling. It does something to your heart to see all that."

In answers to a confidential questionnaire furnished by the clinic, one client, a 31-year-old man, spoke of the psychological benefits he had gained from going to the clinic.

"It has helped me to turn myself around and quit thinking so much about dying and start living again," the man wrote.

Dr. Williamson, the state Department of Public Health's director of preventive health services, says ASK Inc. is a "good example of a community effort to meet a need which was not felt to be met."

But community sentiment was rather cool 10 months ago, and it doesn't seem to have warmed up much since.

The clinic building had been a doctor's office in years past, but late last year, when an AIDS clinic was going in there, seemed like a bolt from the blue. Some living near the clinic site preferred that it not be in their midst, but closer to a hospital.

See Oxford, Page 6E

