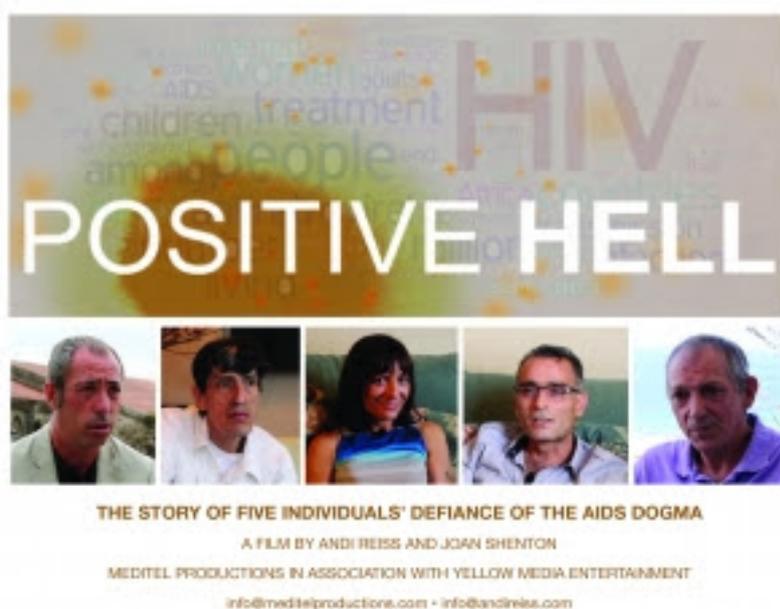


# Controversial HIV/AIDS film screens at London Independent Film Festival

2016-04-08

- **2016 festival selects contentious HIV/AIDS documentary, risking stormy debate**
- **Positive Hell shows lives of five people diagnosed as HIV-positive, questioning global orthodoxy on diagnosis and treatment**
- **Screening on April 17, 2016**



April 08, 2016, London, UK. Press Dispensary. The 2016 London International Film Festival (LIFF) is to screen a controversial 30 minute documentary that questions the world's orthodox views of HIV and AIDS. *Positive Hell*, written and narrated by journalist Joan Shenton and directed by Andi Reiss of Yellow Entertainment, will be shown on Sunday April 17 at the Shortwave Cinema, Bermondsey, in a double bill with *Silhouette Secrets*, also directed by Andi Reiss.

*Positive Hell* - made to complement last year's re-publication of Shenton's equally controversial 1998 HIV and AIDS book, *Positively False* - tells the personal stories of five people who lived their lives in fear of their HIV-positive diagnoses but who did not receive the standard HIV treatments. All went on to live entirely normally for decades, not least having children - the outcome of unprotected sex which has always been the ultimate taboo - who themselves are now healthy adults and HIV negative.



**Joan Shenton said:** *"Positively False and Positive Hell together present a damning indictment of the orthodox approach to HIV and AIDS, in which a relatively quick, questionable diagnosis can lead to a lifetime of mental and physical anguish. Had people not taken that test, so many would have gone on to live utterly normal lives.*

*"We have been saying this for 18 years and science has still not produced any vaccine or other cure, nor proven that a retrovirus called HIV is the cause of the various old, known diseases lumped together under the name AIDS."*

Shenton's book has attracted much criticism - from polite challenge to vilification - not least among those who act as community spokespeople for people affected by HIV and AIDS. To some, Shenton is an "AIDS denier". Shenton calls herself an AIDS dissident.

The film *Positive Hell* is exposed to the same backlash.

Shenton continues: *"As our film now shows, many who were diagnosed and who rejected the orthodoxy and the treatment, went on to experience decades of normal life. An HIV-positive test result can be caused by many factors, from recreational drugs to pregnancy, leading to so much inappropriate treatment.*

*"Billions of dollars and millions of lives have been wasted. And who has benefitted?"*

*Positive Hell* and *Silhouette Secrets* will be screened at 9pm on Sunday April 17, at the Shortwave Cinema, 10 Bermondsey Square, London SE1 3UN. Screening tickets must be pre-booked. A small number of press tickets are reserved for accredited journalists, and film or arts reviewers. To request a ticket please promptly email [joanshenton@clara.co.uk](mailto:joanshenton@clara.co.uk) or call [07957 585515](tel:07957585515).

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## Notes for editors

**Joan Shenton** has extensive experience of producing and presenting television and radio programmes, including many peak time network documentaries for the BBC, Channel 4, Central TV, and Thames TV.

Shenton's independent production company **Meditel Productions** has won seven television awards and was the first independent company ever to win a Royal Television Society Award for an episode of Channel 4's *Dispatches*. It has produced eight network documentaries for Channel 4, Sky News and M-Net, South Africa on the AIDS debate. *AIDS - The Unheard Voices* won the Royal Television Society Award for Current Affairs.

Her book ***Positively False - Exposing the Myths around HIV and AIDS*** was originally published by I.B. Tauris in 1998 and was revised and republished in 2015, updated to include contributions from 20 leading dissident scientists and journalists, plus Peter Duesberg et al's withdrawn 2009 paper for *Medical Hypothesis* and the script of the film *Positively False*. It is available in soft back, Kindle or EPUB formats.

***Positively False - Birth of a Heresy*** was a 90 minute documentary co-produced with director Andi Reiss. It was nominated for best documentary at Lucerne and Marbella international film festivals.

***Positive Hell*** is a 30 minute documentary written and narrated by Joan Shenton and co-produced in 2015 with director Andi Reiss of Yellow Entertainment.

- Nominated for best documentary at Marbella International Film Festival
- Selected for Los Angeles CineFest
- Selected for 2016 London International Film Festival

## For further information, please contact:

Joan Shenton

Tel: [+44 \(0\)7957 585 515](tel:+4407957585515)

Email: [joanshenton@clara.co.uk](mailto:joanshenton@clara.co.uk)

Site: [www.positivehell.com](http://www.positivehell.com)