



Cultures du témoignage | Testimonial Cultures

**NEWSLETTER**

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**TOPIC OF INTEREST TO SUGGEST?** [Contact us at: testimonialcultures@gmail.com](mailto:testimonialcultures@gmail.com)



### Now online!

Our brand new website has been designed to serve as a showcase and online hub for the activities of the *Testimonial Cultures* research group. We would like to thank project partners for their generous support during development of the site. Check it out!

[testimonialcultures.ca](http://testimonialcultures.ca)

### Now hiring! Research assistant, summer 2014

Testimonial Cultures is looking for a student from l'Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) or Concordia University to fill a research assistant position and help us with our web communications over the summer.

See the job description (available in French only)



### "Speak Up! "A workshop on sex work and media relations

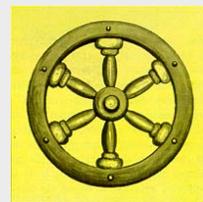
In February 2014, a workshop was held to train sex workers on how to speak to the media. The workshop aimed to meet specific needs in the context the invalidation of three key laws related to sex work by the Supreme Court of Canada.

[Read more...](#)

## "Story Wheel" study day

Based on a reflective method for sharing knowledge, this activity for project members and partners is aimed at fostering exchange among groups that use testimonials in varying ways as an intervention strategy. Thursday, May 8, 8:30 am – 3 pm at UQAM.

[Read more...](#)



## Panel on reflexivity in the form and content of testimonials

Members of the *Testimonial Cultures* research group participated in a panel on testimonials by sex workers and by LGBTQI people at the annual congress of the Sexuality Studies Association (SSA) on May 29 at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario.

[Read more...](#)



## Screening of the film *Orchids: My Intersex Adventure*

Using the "road movie" formula, this documentary features testimonials by intersex people throughout Australia. *Testimonial Cultures* in collaboration with l'Institut de recherche et d'études féministes, the Sexualités, Vulnérabilités et Résilience study group, and the Chaire de recherche sur l'homophobie presented a screening of the film on May 22 at UQAM. The screening was preceded by an introductory lecture by sociology professor Janik Bastien-Charlebois, "From medical discourse to self-narrative: becoming an intersex subject."

[Read more...](#)



## *Queers, testimonials and media representation – things newspapers don't say about us: discussion and production workshop*

Organized by PolitiQ on April 26 as part of the Radical Queer Semaine, this workshop aimed to discuss media representations of LGBTQ\* people and reflect on the use of testimonials as a strategy for making our voices heard.

[Read more...](#)

## Toronto screening of the *VIHsibilité* compilation of video testimonials by people living with HIV

In collaboration with AIDS Action Now! (AAN!) and the Global Network of People Living with HIV Canada (GNP + CA), *Testimonial Cultures* organized a screening of the *VIHsibilité (2000-2012)* compilation on April 25 at the Glad Day Bookshop in Toronto as part of an effort to foster collaboration and dialogue across Canada.

[Read more...](#)

## Featured testimonial: Ellen Page comes out at conference, reaches Internet audience

This past February, actress Ellen Page publicly announced that she is gay while giving a speech at a conference. A video of the speech, in which Page emphasized her wish to "make a difference," was then widely circulated on the Internet. Check our most recent "featured testimonial."

[Read more...](#)



## IN BRIEF

### Funding the focus for public exhibition project

At the most recent general assembly (January 27, 2014), *Testimonial Cultures* project partners gave the green light to initial plans for a public exhibition (revised project proposal,

draft mandate for a working committee). Research undertaken thus far has been compiled into a report to assist with funding applications, a number of which have already been submitted or are currently being prepared (CANFAR; Faculté des sciences humaines de l'UQAM; Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQSC); Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)). Preparations for the exhibition project will continue this fall when we have the responses to these grant applications.



### **jesuisseropo.org: two new spokespersons add their stories**

Meet Ken and Donald, who have recently joined the community of spokespersons participating in COCQ-SIDA's [jesuisseropo.org](http://jesuisseropo.org) campaign. You are encouraged to share your comments on the campaign web site, which gives a portrait of seven people living with HIV/AIDS from different regions of Quebec. Testimonials by the spokespersons offer perspectives on the theme of the campaign, "*C'est le VIH qu'il faut exclure pas les séropositifs*" ("Let's keep AIDS away, not people living with HIV/AIDS"). If you are living with HIV and might be interested in participating in the campaign, please feel welcome to join the [community](#).

*Illustration: screen capture from campaign video, COCQ-SIDA*

### **Videoqueer clips highlight queer resistance, resilience**

A new set of six video clips has just been released on [videoqueer.org](http://videoqueer.org). The vignettes explore the resilience and resistance of queer people in Montreal as they face the challenges and joys of collective organizing. Videoqueer is an initiative of Project 10 and *Radical Queer Semaine* with the goal of offering ways for young people of all sexual orientations and gender identities to organize and make their voices heard. Testimonials to the questions and issues being faced in communities, these video clips aim to promote collective action.

### **Scandal ! Sin, crime and morality in Montreal, 1940-1960: testimonials a key feature in new exhibition**

Drawing from archival records and dozens of testimonials, this exhibition takes visitors through twenty years of history that made their mark on Montreal's political culture. Testimonials from the Chaire de recherche sur l'homophobie and the community organization Stella are among those included in the exhibition. With its culture of bars and cabarets, its "Red Light" district, and its many brothels and gambling halls, Montreal acquired the reputation of "sin city" during a period that was also particularly important for both sexual minorities and sex workers. The exhibition *Scandale! Vice, crime et moralité à Montréal, 1940-1960* continues until October 2015 at the Centre d'histoire de Montréal.

## **Staff news**

**Maryka Henry**, a research assistant since September 2012, has recently left the *Testimonial Cultures* project to devote time to her young family. We thank Maryka for her many contributions and hope it will be possible for her to rejoin the team in the future.

**Florence Marchand** will continue to work as a research assistant over the spring and summer of 2014. In addition to providing administrative support, her responsibilities include transcribing research interviews.

**Alexandra Uhrig** has completed the internship she started in the fall of 2013 as a student in *HIV/AIDS: cultural, social, and scientific aspects of pandemic*, an undergraduate course she took at Concordia. In addition to her work as an intern, Alexandra has also been assisting with the transcription of research interviews.

**Thomas Haig** left his position as research coordinator at the end of April 2014 but continues to be actively involved in the project as a co-investigator.

## **Testimonial Cultures**

*A cultural study of testimonials as a social intervention strategy for sexual and gender minorities: applications, challenges, issues, and impact of a renewed practice*

### **Partners**

Coalition des organismes communautaires québécois de lutte contre le sida (COCQ-SIDA)  
Groupe de recherche et d'intervention sociale (GRIS-MONTREAL)  
PolitiQ – Queer solidaires de Montréal  
Stella, l'amie de Maimie  
Centre d'histoire orale et de récits numérisés de l'Université Concordia  
Institut de recherches et d'études féministes de l'UQAM

### **Research team**

Maria Nengeh Mensah (UQAM)      Janik Bastien-Charlebois (UQAM),  
Chris Bruckert (Université d'Ottawa)      Thomas Waugh (Université Concordia)

**Research staff**

Alain Ayotte, Thomas Haig, Florence Marchand, Véro Leduc

**Newsletter editorial team**

Thomas Haig, Florence Marchand, Maria Nengeh Mensah

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