



Cultures du témoignage | Testimonial Cultures

**NEWSLETTER**

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**TOPIC OF INTEREST TO SUGGEST?** Contact us at : [info@culturesdutemoignage.ca](mailto:info@culturesdutemoignage.ca)



### Holiday Season's Greetings

The Testimonial Cultures' team wishes you a wonderful holiday season. We hope you all share beautiful moments of love and joy. We will also enjoy the opportunity to connect with family and friends, and recharge for the New Year 2017, that will include our art exhibition.



### Seminar: « Supporting Individuals who Deliver Public Testimonials: What Tools are Needed? »

Marie-Ève Gauvin and Maude Ménard-Dunn will present the results from a mixed-methods study that aimed to evaluate the appreciation of the educational tools developed by Testimonial Cultures since 2009. The Seminar will take place on Thursday, **January 26, 2017** from 2pm to 4pm at UQAM, in room DS8310.



### Seminar : "Body Politics and the Politics of Language: Deafness and Intersexuality in Dialogue"

In **February 2017**, Véro Leduc and Janik Bastien-Charlebois will address the intersectionality between deafness and intersexuality.



Words aren't merely words; they shape our relationship to the world. What are the politics of language in our testimonial cultures? After a presentation of the common issues faced by both deaf and intersexed individuals (surgeries at birth, standardization of bodies), a dialogue on language as a site of power relations will be introduced. Empowerment will be addressed from a critical perspective on gender and audism.

We invite you to stay tuned; more information on the time and place will follow.



## Call for Proposals: Presentation of One's Sexual Self, Self-objectification and Erotic Capital

Organized by **Chiara Piazzesi** and **Julie Lavigne**, this master class will feature exchanges between professors and students on their doctoral research projects. This master class is directed at students who wish to reflect on the broader orientation of their thesis project or who are looking for a space to discuss methodological and epistemological questions. This class aims to help students finalize their research project or support them in their writing process. The deadline for submitting a proposal is **December 15, 2016** to Chiara Piazzesi. The master class will take place on **March 17, 2017** at UQAM.

### Art exhibition « Témoigner pour agir »

The preparation of the art exhibition, *Témoigner pour Agir*, which will take place at the Maison de la Culture Frontenac in Montreal, from **November 29, 2017 to January 21, 2018**, is making good progress. This Fall, the Community Wisdom Committee, consisting of representatives from various sexual and gender communities with experience in delivering public testimonials, met several times. The Committee evaluated the 24 artists' submissions we received, as well as two community art projects. Artworks were selected: they explore the use of public testimonials, sexuality, activism and the media, AND they express a desire to undo prejudices, sharing of unrecognized realities as a means to advocate for human rights.

For more information about the exhibition art project, [visit our website](#)



### News from our Partners

#### GRIS

##### **Unlearning homophobia is possible, thank you!**

For more than 20 years, GRIS-Montreal's 300 volunteers have been visiting Quebec schools to share their stories and experiences as gay, lesbian or bisexual individuals, and to answer questions from students, helping to demystify homosexuality and bisexuality.

In order to be able to continue this mission of great importance that the organization has launched on September 29th it's 13th fundraising campaign under the theme: « Unlearning homophobia is possible! ».

[To support GRIS.](#)

##### **Deconstructing sexual stereotypes in elementary schools!**

GRIS-Montreal is offering, for free, a new guide for primary school professionals to prevent bullying in school : « United in diversity ».

Through adapted games and activities found in this guide, teachers will be able to discuss with their students topics such as homosexuality, bisexuality and sexual stereotypes.

[To download the guide.](#)

##### **GRIS-Montreal at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts**

Every Sunday from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm, GRIS-Montreal volunteers will host an awareness workshop on the sidelines of the exhibition «Focus: Perfection – Robert Mapplethorpe ». They will be answering questions from visitors about homosexuality and bisexuality based on a selection of five works. Until January 22, at the Being/Loving space of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

#### COCQ-SIDA

The second Quebec meeting on HIV/AIDS community-based research was held on September 29 and 30, 2016. The meeting was organized by a committee of representatives from: COCQ-SIDA, MIELS-Québec, PVSQ, MAINS Bsl, Stella, Maison Plein Coeur, ASTTeQ, REZO, UQAM, UQAT, REACH 2.0 and Coalition PLUS. The event was made possible through funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Seventy representatives from community, institutional and academic sectors gathered to discuss current research priorities and the initiatives to address them. Ongoing community-based research projects were the subject of a special session of presentations where Maria Nengeh Mensah, Marie-Eve Gauvin and Maude Ménard-Dunn talked about Testimonial Cultures' projects.

#### Stella

December 17th is the International Day Against Violence Against Sex Workers. Every year, sex workers and their allies around the world come together to honour sex workers in their daily, individual and collective struggles against violence. For more information on events happening this year in Montreal, visit the Stella website (<http://chezstella.org/>).



### Featured Testimonial : Denis-Martin Chabot

Twelve year after learning that he had acquired HIV, journalist and writer Denis-Martin Chabot decided to share the news with the general public in a text published on his blog, on Worlds AIDS Day. [Discover this new featured testimonial.](#)



## In Brief

### [« Autopornography » seminar](#)

As part of the new academic year 2016-2017, Testimonial Cultures organized a seminar on September 9th at UQAM. This seminar was filled with rich discussions, and opened the door to a new phenomenon : autopornography. Three researchers presented the ways in which they understand and work with autopornography. Watch them on video on our website!



### [Book project, an edited collection is on the way](#)

Drawing on the proceedings from our ACFAS conference last May, a book project will be submitted for evaluation by Presses de l'Université du Québec (PUQ). This edited collection of articles mobilizes scientific and field knowledge, as well as excerpts from interviews conducted with members of sexual and gender communities who have given public testimonials in Quebec. The authors, from a variety of backgrounds, will lay out the theoretical and methodological groundwork on the uses of personal and intimate stories as an important lever for social change. The collection is edited by Maria Nengeh Mensah in collaboration with plastics/visual artist AJ Dirtystein, our postdoctoral fellow.



## Team News

**Gabriel Giroux** has completed his research contract on the VIHsibilité project. Thank you for your work on archiving testimonials of people living with HIV. We hope to see you again as part of the team!

**Anne-Julie Ausina**, artist name **AJ Dirtystein**, has joined the Testimonial Cultures team as a postdoctoral fellow in feminist studies. Her research focuses on the testimonial writings of four sex workers (Nelly Arcand, Virginie Despentes, Griselidis Réal and Lydia Lunch) who chose to speak publicly through literary works. This Fall, she collaborated to editing a collection of articles for our book project. Welcome AJ!



## Testimonial Cultures

*Community Voices, Theories and Methodological Approaches to Public Testimonials in Québec*

### Research team

Principal investigator Maria Nengeh Mensah (UQAM)

Julie Lavigne (UQAM)  
Thomas Waugh (Université Concordia)  
Janik Bastien-Charlebois (UQAM)  
Simon Corneau (UQAM)  
Chiara Piazzesi (UQAM)

Co-investigator Marie-Ève Gauvin (Cégep régional de Lanaudière)  
Thomas Haig (UQAM)  
Aurélien Hot (COCQ-SIDA)  
Ken Montieth (COCQ-SIDA)  
Marie Houzeau (GRIS-Montréal)  
Sandra Wesley (Stella)

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Sylvie Jochems (UQAM)  
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Chantal Francoeur (UQAM)  
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**Seminar : “Body Politics and the Politics of Language: Deafness and Intersexuality in Dialogue”**