

NCSD Engage 2017

# Putting Stories to Work in Sexual Health and Social Justice

Pro Tips from an Ethnographer

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# Ethnography



# Stories are:

- tools for advocacy
- data
- fuel



# Stories



# Telling Sexual Stories: Power, Change, and Social Worlds

*Kenneth Plummer (1995)*

**“...the world of stories is much larger than a mere focus on narrative—overflowing to the social and political conditions that generate some stories and note others, enabling some to be heard and not others. A sociology of stories seeks to understand the role of stories in social life” [Plummer 1995, 31]**



“We’re here, we’re queer”

- Queer Nation, 1990



**Alyssa Milano** ✓

@Alyssa\_Milano

Follow

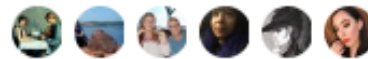
If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet.

Me too.

Suggested by a friend: "If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote 'Me too.' as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem."

4:21 PM - 15 Oct 2017

25,183 Retweets 53,480 Likes



69K 25K 53K

#MeToo



# Uses of Stories in Public Health

**Tony L. Whitehead (1997)**

**“Urban Low-Income African American Men, HIV/AIDS, and Gender Identity” *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 11(4): 411-447.**

**John J. Potterat, Stephen Q. Muth, and R. Perry Bethea (2000)**

**“Chronical of a Gang STD Outbreak Foretold” *Free Inquiry* 28(1)**

**Wendy Hussey (2006)**

**“Slivers of the journey: the use of Photovoice and storytelling to examine female to male transsexuals' experience of health care access.” *Journal of homosexuality* 51(1): 129-158.**





# Stories and...

- the context in which they circulate
- reactions
- their interpretations
- the ideological *work* they do

## About The STD Project – Our Website



### The STD Project

Established in April of 2012 during STD Awareness Month, The STD Project is a multi-award-winning independent website and progressive movement eradicating STD stigma by facilitating and encouraging awareness, education, and acceptance through story-telling and [resource recommendations](#). We are taking steps toward modern-day sexual health and prevention by advocating for conscientious and informed decisions.



Usher  
Raymond



# “NEW \$10 MIL LAWSUIT FOR EXPOSING WOMAN TO STD” TMZ 7/21/17

**Usher had sex with a woman earlier this year who had no idea he was exposing her to Herpes...** according to a new lawsuit she's filed for millions of dollars.

According to the suit, filed by a Jane Doe, she and Usher hooked up in Atlanta on April 16 at her home. She says there was some heavy petting, some kissing, and she performed oral sex on him.

They eventually had intercourse, and **she says he wore a condom.**

However, in the docs, obtained by TMZ, she says they had sex again 12 days later -- this time in a New Orleans hotel room -- **and they did not use a condom.**

Cut to this month ... when Jane Doe says she read news reports about Usher admitting in docs, connected to an earlier legal case, that **he has Herpes Simplex 2.**

In this new suit, **the woman does not say she's infected. She is concerned because she was "exposed" and says she wouldn't have had sex with Usher if he'd disclosed he has the virus.**



NEWS

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CELEBS

TOURS

*USHER*

*MUSIC*

*CELEBRITY JUSTICE™*

*TMZ URBAN*

*EXCLUSIVE*

**1308 COMMENTS**

**[CLICK TO VIEW](#)**



**Robertaflake** · 4 months ago

First of all, you can have the herpes virus and not even KNOW it for years later. I had it for a long time (I guess since I was not sexually active for ten years) and then once I got active again, about a year into it, I got the sores down in the genital area. I was tested and yep, I now have Herpes. It's not going to kill you. And I've met people married where one person has the virus and the other one has YET to be tested positive (it's not like HIV)!! I eventually ended up giving it to my current husband of 15 years but he did not care. He has had two outbreaks in six years while I have not had an outbreak in almost 11 years. Yes you SHOULD tell your a new sex partner about having Herpes and give them the choice to have protected or unprotected sex but again, it won't KILL you!! And there are meds to keep the outbreaks in check. Duh!!

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**NightowlPT** → Robertaflake · 4 months ago

It won't kill you but there are potential issues for a woman if she has an outbreak during childbirth and it is truly a life sentence, You always have it. If you are monogamous forever, I suppose it doesn't matter but it is still not something anyone would chose to have as I am sure you didn't. I have a friend who has it, given to her by her ex who knew but didn't tell her. It literally has ruined her life because no one wants to get close to her when she discloses that she has herpes even though it is well controlled.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Robertaflake** → NightowlPT · 4 months ago

I understand but there are also specialized dating sites for people with Herpes. And don't laugh; it's better to KNOW isn't it?

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**NightowlPT** → Robertaflake · 4 months ago

Absolutely. My friend has tried those sites. I hope one day she will meet someone and fall in love. She deserves happiness and she is by no means a bad person just because she contracted a virus from an a\$\$ of an ex boyfriend.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**King Love** → Robertaflake · 4 months ago

That's nasty. Stop trying to downplay it. You got herpes. 🤔🤔

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Robertaflake** → King Love · 4 months ago

Not downplaying anything. My husband did not DUMP me because I gave it to him - if anything, it brought us closer because he knows I was not with anyone else and to be frank many people do NOT know who gave them Herpes unless they screw around a lot. I did not.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Hamper** → Robertaflake · 3 months ago

You're nasty and so is your husband.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›





# Stories Matter

*Who tells it, how they tell it, what those stories do...*



Bring *flesh* to the  
numbers.