

[CFP: True Crime \(Special Topic 2023\) at the Popular Culture Association Annual Conference](#)

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Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

April 5, 2023 to April 8, 2023

Location:

United States

Subject Fields:

Cultural History / Studies, Journalism and Media Studies, Popular Culture Studies, Social History / Studies, Women's & Gender History / Studies

Submission deadline extended through January 10th, 2023!

True Crime typically focuses on investigative journalism used to present a mystery or attempt to understand the psychology of a crime/perpetrator. It may include narratives of a case, victimology, forensics, or analysis of evidence, although each case is different. Much of True Crime focuses on serial killers/killings, although subsets of the genre may delve into topics such as kidnappings, cults, wrongful convictions, advocacy, white-collar crimes, trial proceedings, prevention of crime, survivor stories, or sensationalism/entertainment.

Covering a vast expanse of time and an array of potential topics, True Crime offers countless opportunities for academic study and debate. While opponents of the genre often critique crime stories as being exploitative and potentially traumatic for victims, society's perennial fascination with stories of crime, murder, and mayhem also provide insight into our collective interests, motivations, and prejudices. Significantly, the presentation of crime stories provides insight into our changing perspectives on criminality, deviant behavior, and the treatment of victims over time. In his Introduction to *True Crime: An American Anthology*, Harold Schechter writes: "What differs strikingly from era to era is the way such transgressions are interpreted. Acts otherwise analogous have been seen at different times as arising from sin, or irrational thinking, or mental disease, or inarticulate protest against abuse or oppression" (xix). In other words, the study of True Crime is also the study of our culture and its behaviors and beliefs.

The True Crime area co-chairs invite papers and presentations on all aspects of True

Crime, including but not limited to analysis and interpretations across a range of media such as podcasts, film/documentaries, and television. Papers may deal with particular case narratives, psychology of a crime, or investigative journalism.

We recognize the interdisciplinary nature of the True Crime genre, and also welcome submissions that explore topics such as gender/demographics of audiences, perpetrators, or victims; sensationalizing high profile cases; criminology, victimology, and forensics; wrongful convictions and advocacy; prevention of crime and survivor stories; crimes against POC, indigenous groups, or marginalized peoples; and more. Presentations should be aware of and respectful to victims and their families as applicable to the specific topic being explored.

Submission Requirements: Proposals for single papers and panels should be 150 to 300 words and must include the following:

- 1) a title reflecting your argument (or framing concept in case of a panel or roundtable)
- 2) a clear statement of your argument/thesis and/or key research questions
- 3) an identification of the corpus that will be the focus of your study

All paper proposals should be submitted directly through the PCA website: <https://pcaaca.org/area/true-crime-special-topic-2023>

If you are organizing a panel of 3-4 speakers, or a roundtable discussion panel of 4-6 participants, please have your panelists submit proposals directly to the PCA website and contact the True Crime co-chairs with a panel proposal identifying your presenters. Otherwise, proposals will be arranged into panel sessions based on critical, disciplinary, or thematic connectivity.

Co-chairs for True Crime: Dr. Lauren Kuryloski, (lkurylos@buffalo.edu) and Dr. Samantha Przybyłowicz Axtell, (samantha.przybylowicz@gmail.com).

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