

## ABSTRACT

**THESIS:** Serialized Killing: Usability and User Experience in the True Crime Genre

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**DATE:** July 2019

**PAGES:** 31

True crime, a genre that has piqued the interest of individuals for decades, has taken on a new form in the age of digital media. Through television shows, podcasts, books, and community-driven online forums, investigations of the coldest of cases are met with newfound enthusiasm and determination from professional storytellers and armchair detectives alike. This study uses a multi-method approach that includes surveys, focus groups, and design thinking sessions to explore the varied elements of storytelling across four platforms. It also identifies the preferred method of consumption by audiences. Respondents expressed a desire to engage with a detailed story on a convenient platform with visuals to aid in the retelling of the crime. This research connects the true crime genre to audience entertainment preferences by exploring the media platforms used in popular true crime documentaries, and how those forms affect immersion and engagement in the genre.

*Keywords:* true crime, women, storytelling, gender, media preference, engagement, immersion, podcast