**American Crime Historiographies**

This paper intends to explore how the FX anthology series American Crime Stories stirs up renowned criminal affairs of the recent past and in doing so, sheds new light and offers new perspectives to read and apprehend them. Whether through its original production system, its recognizable aesthetic choices or admitted biases, each series serves a similar layered purpose. First, to make its audience follow each case in great details, mostly in order to understand better the different sides to a story that many were confronted to in the news, or at least heard about. Second, to expose the course of events in a sometimes disruptive serialized narrative that structures each case in a singular manner, which can be understood as serving both the entertainment and production value of the cultural object thus created, but also as triggering new perceptions of the matter at hand. The viewers thus follow a path in which they simultaneously reconstruct and deconstruct a story they thought they knew, and in the midst of this process, in the disorientation it sets off, the medium becomes apparent and exposes the one question central to all American Crime Story series: are these cases truly historic or only the products of American media frenzy? It thus questions the historiographic processes at play and the meaning of the term historic itself, pondering the idea that the media outlets have now become the editors of History, advocates for raw factual accounts that intend to write themselves as historical.

Associate professor at the University of Le Mans (France), Charles Joseph completed a Ph.D. in American Studies. His dissertation, entitled *Being and Writing (from) Los Angeles: Wanda Coleman*, examines the complex and evolving relationship between the work of the African-American author and the city that harbored her birth, life and death through the prism of cultural studies. He has simultaneously developed an interest in the implications and practices of the entertainment industry based in Los Angeles on the city’s history and the shaping of its socio-cultural identity, as well as its influential role on the worldwide transmedia strategies that have led to the globalization of pop culture. He has published articles in *Les Chantiers de la Création*, *ORDA*, *Conserveries Mémorielles*, *ANGLES* and *Transatlantica*.