

Friday PhD Talks 2022-2023

#13

María Abizanda Cardona

14th April 2023



At square one: Challenges of a first-year PhD student.

Abstract:

For the rookie PhD student, writing a thesis can (and does) feel like a Herculean task, with no visible end nor roadmap in sight. In this talk, I want to share my experience as a first-year PhD candidate. My research project focuses on the representation of posthumanity in an emerging cluster of literary works that hybridize the conventions of speculative and crime fiction. In this presentation, I will discuss the first steps of my PhD journey, such as the motivation behind my choice of topic, the process of narrowing down my corpus, or the struggles of grappling with a multidisciplinary theoretical framework. Together with this overview of my project, I will also reflect on some of the challenges I have encountered adjusting to the academic environment, such as time management, self-doubt, or striking a healthy work-life balance. I will devote particular attention to issues related to the field of literary studies. By sharing my perspective, I hope to initiate a useful discussion on the shared experiences and anxieties of PhD students that can help us navigate our journeys more effectively.

Bionote:

Maria Abizanda Cardona is a PhD student at the University of Zaragoza. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in English Studies and a Master's Degree in Literary and Cultural Studies in Anglophone Countries. In 2023 she was granted a FPU research fellowship to carry out her doctoral research under the supervision of Dr. Sonia Baelo Allué in the research group "Contemporary North American Fiction and the 4th Industrial Revolution". Her research tackles the representation of the posthuman in 21st-century U.S. fiction, with a focus on works that combine generic elements of speculative fiction and crime fiction across different media.