

Harry Levin Scholarship 2023

The Instituto Franklin of the Universidad de Alcalá, within the framework of its annual research plan and with the aim of benefiting students from the Master in American Studies, promotes the granting of **2 Harry Levin Scholarships of €300 each**, to participate in seminar "Frontiers and Wastelands: Redefining the Nation in US Popular Culture" in the Center for American Studies, University of Southern Denmark (SDU) on March 28, 2023

The seminar will focus on how the American imagination has shaped—and, in turn, has been shaped by—its frontiers and borderlands, marked by an intrinsic peripheral quality, sociocultural porosity, and a diverse range of experiences and identities. As Lee Bebout (2016) has highlighted discussing the US–Mexico border, representations of frontiers, the "other side," and the people inhabiting these regions have been historically deployed to construct a dominant national identity—often exploiting, invisibilizing, or neglecting local identities in the process.

The proximity of otherness—which dwells in the borderlands themselves—implies an implicit threat to the sovereignty and cultural integrity of the nation eliciting a variety of perceived dangers, as well as exoticism, fetishization, and stereotypes connected to the peripheral regions and their people. Borderlands are at the same time familiar and troubling places, characterized by neo/colonial legacies and where "the fluidity of national borders collapses the otherwise clear distinctions between native and foreigner, domestic and international" (Alemán 2006, 409). Furthermore, the geography of the frontier is rife with threats itself, perceived as either wasteland, impenetrable growth, or impassable orography, overwhelming and foreign.

The seminar invites reflections on the multimodal representations of the US borderlands and frontier experience in popular culture and discourses, focusing on the diversity of identities, liminality, and disenfranchised experiences of Americanness, as well as the construction of borders as means to define the US national imaginary.

To participate with your presentation (which should last about 12–15min), please apply (<https://institutofranklin.net/en/research/scholarships/harry-levin-scholarship>) **sending a tentative title and an abstract (ca. 150 words long)** indicating the topic and how you would like to talk about it. Possible themes could be related to:

- Representations of the borderlands, borders, and borderland communities in US cinema, TV series, and graphic narratives
- Borderland literature and artistic expressions, especially related to immigration, border-crossing, and the life in border communities
- The myth of the frontier: western narratives and Old West imaginaries
- The Mexican American borderland experience
- Representations and narratives about the militarized border fence
- Frontiers and the wilderness: representations of borderland landscapes and the desert

Please, keep in mind that the seminar is open to the representations of the frontier and borderlands in a broad sense, but you might wish to center your proposal on the US–Mexico borderlands as that will be the focus in the first three weeks of the master's Multiculturalism: Ethnic American Cultural Expressions course.

Characteristics

1. The scholarship is aimed at covering accommodation, registration, and transport for academic events. The grant amounts to €300 for participating in the event proposed by the applicant.
2. Any expenditure related to bibliographic and/or fungible materials as well as any other expenses not included in the previous paragraph is excluded from this scholarship.

Terms

1. The applicant shall be enrolled in the Master in American Studies of the University of Alcalá at the moment of application.
2. The field of research shall be American Studies or be related to North America.
3. The applicant undertakes to attend and to participate in the event, and to include in any document resulting from his/her participation a mention to this scholarship from the Instituto Franklin-UAH.

Selection process

The beneficiary will be notified by email and the resolution will be published on this website and on the notice board at the Instituto Franklin-UAH.

The selection will be made by a Committee from the Instituto Franklin-UAH.

The application should be presented followed by_

- Summary of the lecture, presentation, or any other communication the candidate will defend in the seminar, conference, symposium, or congress selected.
- Information related to the seminar, conference, symposium, or congress selected.

Call Form: <https://institutofranklin.net/en/research/scholarships/harry-levin-scholarship>

Deadline for application for Harry Levin Scholarship: Open until 24th February.

Contact: Carlos Herrero Martínez. Research, PhD and Master Coordinator. carlos.herrero@institutofranklin.net

Practical details about the seminar

Venue:

Center for American Studies, University of Southern Denmark (SDU)
Department of Language, Culture, History and Communication
Campusvej 55
Odense, DK

Date: March 28, 2023

Organizers: Anna Marta Marini (anna.marini@edu.uah.es) and Anne Magnussen

How to get there: the closest airports are Billund (105km) and Copenhagen (160km). From both airports you can easily reach Odense by train in ca. one hour and a half. Hamburg airport is also a possibility, but the train ride takes ca. two hours and a half.

The campus is well-served by public bus transport and the distance from the city center is ca. 5km (if you choose to walk or use the free city bikes).