Lecture by

Professor Adrienne Martín, University of California, Davis

"QUIXOTIC ANIMALS"

5:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 17, 2013

Ballantine Hall 005

Abstract: The novel Don Quixote contains a surprising number of real (as opposed to fantastic) animals: horses and mares, donkeys and mules, oxen, a fortune-telling monkey, sheep and goats, pigs, bulls, boar, dogs, cats and lions. Indeed, as Abel Alves has written recently, “Don Quixote’s animals are the animals of Spain in literary microcosm.” My presentation focuses on three Quixotic animals (cats, lions and Sancho’s donkey) as case studies of the contributions the multidisciplinary field of Animals Studies can make to a broader understanding of the novel and of the lives of animals at the time. I evaluate the degree to which Cervantes presents these animals as experiencing individuals and as a species-typical way of living in the world. His novel showcases the interactions that bind humans to other animals, providing thoughtful examples of how they were perceived, utilized, represented and valued. His Quixotic animal characters allow readers to scrutinize our complex, paradoxical, morally shifting, and ambivalent relationship with other species across our interrelated histories and times.

About the speaker: Prof. Martín is the author of many articles and volumes, including the monographs An Erotic Philology of Golden Age Spain (Vanderbilt UP, 2008) and Cervantes and the Burlesque Sonnet (U California P, 1991), as well as co-editor of Venus venerada: tradiciones eróticas de la literatura española (2006) and Venus venerada II: literatura erótica y modernidad en España (2007), both published by the Universidad Complutense. She is currently working on a book on animals in early modern literature and art.