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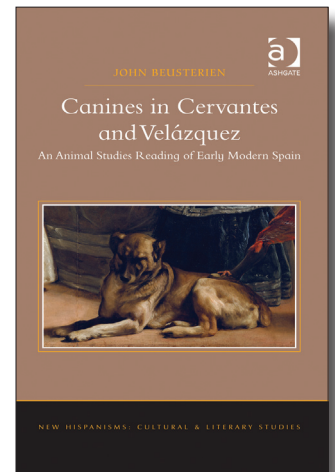


# Canines in Cervantes and Velázquez

An Animal Studies Reading of Early Modern Spain

John Beusterien, Texas Tech University

*New Hispanisms: Cultural and Literary Studies*



The study of the creation of canine breeds in early modern Europe, especially Spain, illustrates the different constructs against which notions of human identity were forged. This book is the first comprehensive history of early modern Spanish dogs and it evaluates how two of Spain's most celebrated and canonical cultural figures of this period, the artist Diego Velázquez and the author Miguel de Cervantes, radically question humankind's sixteenth-century anthropocentric self-fashioning. In general, this study illuminates how Animal Studies can offer new perspectives to understanding Hispanism, giving readers a fresh approach to the historical, literary and artistic complexity of early modern Spain.

**Contents:** Introduction; The hidden dog; A Cervantine animal exemplum: animal studies and 'The Dialogue of the Dogs'; When the dog is a book: a post-human ethics in Cervantes; As death approaches: the dog in *Las meninas*; Afterword: Amores perros; Appendix: the animal in identity categories; Works cited; Index.

Includes 10 b&w illustrations

April 2013	162 pages	
Hardback	978-1-4094-5713-8	\$89.95
ebook PDF	978-1-4094-5714-5	
ebook ePUB	978-1-4724-0515-9	

[www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781409457138](http://www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781409457138)

*"John Beusterien's Canines in Cervantes and Velázquez views the history of early modern Spain through the lens of species difference, providing a dog's-eye view of the period's rich literary, visual and dramatic achievements. A learned and intriguing study."*

—Bruce Boehrer, Florida State University

*"John Beusterien's book demonstrates that the compassion and empathy of Cervantes and Velázquez was not limited to members of their own species. In a world filled with cruelty toward human and nonhuman animals alike, Cervantes and Mateo Alemán could disapprove of Rabelaisian humor in which a madman smashes rocks on a dog's head. Early modern Spain was not just one prolonged bullfight, and, by applying an animal studies approach, Canines in Cervantes and Velázquez shows us just how human hierarchy and abusive use of other animals might be challenged through humane reflections on dogs..."*

—Abel Alves, Ball State University and author of *The Animals of Spain*

## About the Author:

**John Beusterien** is Associate Professor of Spanish and Director of the Comparative Literature Program in the Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures at Texas Tech University.

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