This seminar examines how the divide between the human and the animal was negotiated in the early modern period, before the emergence of the Cartesian animal-machine. Early modern animals share qualities with human beings (they have a soul, for example), but their closeness, their resemblances (to use Montaigne’s word) with human beings can only provoke tensions with the emerging notion of the human. We will examine well-known literary and poetic works (Shakespeare, Montaigne, and Cervantes) side by side with the zoological, classificatory, cosmographical, and medical literature of the period, as well as their classical and medieval antecedents.

Professor Antónia Szabari
szabari@usc.edu, THH 155A, x03174