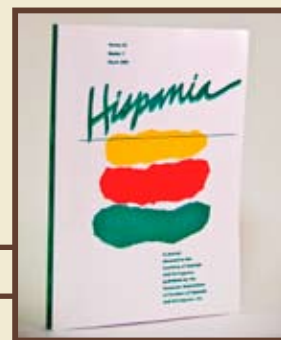


# Hispania

WRITTEN BY SHANNON KIRKLAND

## EXPLORING SPANISH LITERATURE BEYOND TEXAS TECH



**D**r. Janet Pérez has spent a lifetime learning and teaching the Spanish language and literatures. It is one of her passions. Her contributions to this area of academic study go beyond the walls of Texas Tech.

Pérez has served for nine years (the term limit) as the editor for *Hispania*, the academic journal of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. *Hispania* was founded in 1917 and has had 11 editors in its history. *Hispania* is the largest academic journal in the world published by a professional language organization. The journal is unusual because of the broad scope of its audience: K-12 educators, as well as educators at both small colleges and large research universities.

“The journal includes articles on pedagogy, language, literature from the middle ages through the 21st century, Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian world

news, as well as applied and theoretical linguistics,” Pérez says.

*Hispania* is published four times a year, with approximately 1,000 pages of content to serve educators of Spanish and Portuguese language studies.

After nine years as editor, Pérez wraps up her work with a last volume to be published in December. She adds, “I’ll be glad to turn the reins over to the next editor. I’m looking forward to returning to my full-time teaching responsibilities and exploring new areas of research.”

After 32 years as a professor at Texas Tech, that statement alone explains why Pérez is such an asset to the University. She came to Texas Tech in 1977 as a Distinguished Visiting Professor from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and recalls, “I was only supposed to be here for a year.”

At Chapel Hill, she had already forged new roads. Pérez was the first female to be hired full-time in Romance Languages at the university—quite a feat, since it had been all male for 200 years. She had a great position and a bright future at North Carolina. But the people of Lubbock and West Texas were too friendly, and she decided to stay.

And she has excelled in her academic pursuits here, in research, teaching and service.

At Texas Tech, she is a Paul Whitfield Horn Professor of Romance Languages and the Qualia Chair of Spanish. Besides more than 200 conference papers and invited lectures, she has hundreds of entries in reference works and

over 200 reviews. Pérez has won numerous research awards, including being named the first female faculty member in Arts & Sciences to receive the Bernie E. Rushing Research Award. Earlier this year, Dr. Pérez was elected to full membership in the Academia Norteamericana de la Lengua Española (ANLE), which is the highest honor available in Spanish Language & Literatures.

Dr. Pérez is particularly proud of a second academic journal, which she co-edits with her husband, Dr. Genaro Pérez, also a professor of Spanish at Texas Tech. Together, they founded and have sustained the journal, *Monographic Review*, for 25 years.

“We established the *Monographic Review* because traditional scholarly journals tended to focus only on established genres of literature, and there was a wide gap of neglected areas of Spanish literature about which very little was studied or known. We wanted to bring these areas to light and expand the academic study to include genres like the fantastic, Spanish detective stories, children’s literature, and women’s experimental fiction.”

The *Monographic Review* is published once a year, and each issue has a single theme for exploration. The journal is now primarily supported by library subscriptions, with subscribers as far away as Israel and Japan.

After 25 years, the Pérezes have seen topics move from neglect to more mainstream study.

“We wanted to be pioneers with our concept, and I think we’ve succeeded. It has been exciting to see the pursuit of studies in Spanish literature expand and grow to accept new areas,” Pérez explains, “For us, the *Review* has been the best of academics: expanding our knowledge and understanding through research and sharing that with others.”



DR. JANET PEREZ  
EDITOR OF HISPANIA

PHOTO BY NEAL HINKLE