



PALGRAVE SPANISH AND LATIN AMERICAN MEDIA STUDIES

Latin American Digital Poetics

Edited by
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Palgrave Spanish and Latin American Media Studies

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Situating the Digital in Latin American Technopoetics

Scott Weintraub

Abstract In this chapter, we explore definitions and typologies of digital poetry, drawing from studies on the topic from Anglophone and Latin American academic disciplines. It sets up the larger, pedagogically-focused, generational schematic employed in the book, drawing on a chronologically-organized model developed by Leo Flores. At the same time, a strength of this book is the emphasis placed on the specific cultural cartography of these poets, which is marked and transected by “the Latin American” in a very geo-techno-political and literary sense. This is the way that our book seeks to bridge the cultural and techno-poetic divides that exist between accounts of digital poetry in the Anglophone and European scenes of writing and those that explore the Spanish- (and Portuguese-) speaking one(s).

Keywords Digital poetry and poetics • Latin America

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VIRTUAL BODIES AND CULTURAL ARTIFACTS: DEFINITIONS AND APPROACHES

In *Bodies in Code: Interfaces with Digital Media*, Mark Hansen writes that “With the convergence of physical and virtual spaces informing today’s corporate and entertainment environments, researchers and artists have come to recognize that motor activity—not representationalist verisimilitude—holds the key to fluid and functional crossings between virtual and physical realms.” He goes on to refer to (and quote) Fleischmann and Strauss, who “speak of ‘turning the theory on its head that man is losing his body to technology’; as they see it, ‘the interactive media are supporting the multisensory mechanisms of the body and are thus extending man’s space for play and action’” (cited in Grau, 219; Hansen 2–3). These insightful claims made for integrated virtual reality spaces—sketching a phenomenology in which “the new mixed reality paradigm foregrounds the constitutive or ontological role of the body in giving birth to the world (5)” —might at first seem out of place in a volume that seeks to map the coordinates of digital poetry in Latin America. Yet, Hansen argues that “two corollaries—the primacy of the body as ontological access to the world and the role of tactility in the actualization of such access—effect a passage from the axiom that has been my focus thus far (all virtual reality is mixed reality) to the more general axiom that all reality is mixed reality” (5). And from the standpoint of the institution(alization) of literature and culture, perhaps there is no more salient example of the corporal enmeshed with verbal and visual (even verbicovisual) artifice than contemporary (and in some respects) historical digital poetics.

Latin American Digital Poetics seeks to take the pulse of emergent poetic forms whose history is more entangled with the computational than has often been recognized. As critic Loss Pequeño Glazier argues, “[p]oetry is a field of writing/programming whose alliance to digital practices seems to be generally unacknowledged. For one not to see the connection between poetic practices and new technology seems to undervalue a literary genre that has seen its innovative practice consistently at the forefront of artistic investigations of the twentieth century” (153). With this link between experimental form and cultural practices in mind, the present volume carefully and thoroughly probes the intersection between the literary, the cultural, and the technological in order to reflect on the ways that digital technology has radically reshaped and reconfigured nearly all aspects of contemporary culture. The justification for our book, then,