

Constellated Gatekeepers: Distribution as Metaculture and Distributors as a ‘Real’ Audience

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In their focused engagement with the distribution of Latin American cinema in the United States, Toby Miller and others describe distribution as ‘the forgotten element in transnational cinema’ that receives paltry attention from scholars (2011: 197). For Miller and his co-authors, compared to making films, ‘other parts of the [film] cycle – circulating, promoting and showing movies – lack glamour and artistry’ (2011: 197). As I tell my students when they grouse over examining data on box office and tracking the various platforms and geographies through which a film circulates, distribution at first glance may come across as the anti-sexy of film studies.

Yet, distribution merits crucial attention. Sean Cubitt asserts that distribution ‘can be considered as the management of space-time flows of product and money’ (2005: 202) with media corporations possessing the power ‘to direct and delay the flow of mediation’ between producers and consumers (2005: 196). Beyond the bottom line, distributors – both large and small, legal and grey¹ – wield remarkable power over which films abet the prevailing audiovisual conceptions of cultures, including and perhaps most especially, those held by critics and scholars. Film distribution ultimately enables consumption and what audiences *do* with Latin American cinema. Consumption makes culture,² and, in a topic that I will examine more below, Latin American film cultures are dispersed according to transnational circuits of consumption enabled by distribution. Moreover, distribution itself presupposes a crucial singular moment of consumption that potentially diversifies a film’s modes of circulation and/or accelerates that circulation to make available a film to larger swaths of viewers.

Here, I will begin by offering a theoretical conceptualization for film distribution that foregrounds distributors as a prioritized subset of consumers that constitute a constellation of gatekeepers for Latin American cinema. Distributors have long been conceived as gatekeepers within a paradigm of communication research called ‘The Gatekeeper Tradition’ that dates back to at least 1950 (Hirsch 1977: 19). ‘The Gatekeeper Tradition’ examines how particular entities ‘filter out items for which there is not available space or air time’ (Hirsch 1977: 20) and happens with scores of different media, such as magazines and newspapers, music, and cinema. With the advent of new technologies and the rise of social media, a revised gatekeeper theory takes into account contemporary conditions in which ‘networked actions of publics’ acting via social media platforms complicates the notion of an elite media solely framing issues (Meraz and Papacharissi 2016: 97). Networked gatekeeping is a ‘process through which actors are crowdsourced to prominence through the use of conversational social practices that symbiotically connect elite and crowd in the determination of information relevancy’ (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013: 158). Though the gatekeeper theory, both in its original and revised form, appears largely focused on the framing of news events, networked gatekeeping can effectively describe how particular Latin American films emerge as significant to critics and/or a particular public.³ Nevertheless, film distributors still exercise a heightened degree of power in determining which films emerge transnationally from the massive corpus of Latin American films that traverse festival screens, film industry markets, and domestic cinemas.

While distributors within Latin American countries deserve examination, I focus on the distribution of Latin American cinema beyond Latin America in order to impose some geographical parameters here. By doing so, key questions emerge: what are the legal distribution platforms available to films from Latin America, and how do such platforms transform film

consumption and, at times, even the film itself? If select film distributors serve a gatekeeper function for the transnational circulation of Latin American cinema, what are the criteria for those gatekeepers? What counts as cinema from Latin America that is deemed somehow worthy of DVD and digital distribution in a particular market? Through interviews with distributors outside Latin America, one can begin to ascertain how Latin American cinema is received and curated by distributors prior to the consumption by larger national and transnational publics and, as broached above, cinematically define cultures within Latin America. An attention to distributors and their respective criteria helps to demystify the relay that enables a film to become available to larger audiences. In other words, interviews with distributors lifts the curtain on a wizard, so to speak, to understand the mechanisms of film distribution and how and why particular Latin American films become available and enter larger mediatic skeins of circulation. Finally, I will rely on Greg Urban's notion of metaculture as a theoretical lens through which to conceive the crucial work of film distributors.

Distribution as Generic Fragmentation

Latin American cinema often has been described as a fragmented entity composed of a multitude of local, national, and transnational cinemas and genres that can change over time. In the introduction to his recent comprehensive study of Latin American narrative cinema, Paul A. Schroeder Rodríguez stresses the plural nature of Latin American cinema and how 'each successive generation of filmmakers [reinvent] what 'Latin America' means through a succession of cinematic languages as varied as the region itself' (2016: 14). In addition, Jeffrey Middents has examined the pitfalls of employing the term 'Latin American cinema' and the need to scrutinize the transnational so as 'to constantly remind ourselves that cinema from Latin America in its diversity is rarely a homogenous "Latin American Cinema"' (161). Middents

illustrates the fissures within Latin American cinema by pointing to continental, national, urban, and anonymous spaces and how different funding can impinge upon film content.

The distribution companies that I elected to focus on reflect Schroeder's and Middents's disparate and varied conceptions of Latin American cinema. However, here Latin American cinema disperses largely around the question of genre and a distributor's particular niche. While recent developments such as Pantaya point to a distribution that specializes in Latin American cinema irrespective of genre, distribution of select Latin American cinemas happens across multiple companies and platforms according to cinematic genres and/or a distributor's distinct catalogue. The distributors that I interviewed are: 1) Artsploitation, a video-on-demand distributor of art house / science-fiction / horror cinema located in the United States; (2) Kino Lorber, a U.S.-based distributor of contemporary, classic, and documentary films; (3) Filmin, a streaming service in Spain that possesses a catalogue of 10,000 films 'not of the superficial, "popcorn" variety,' in the words of Filmin (Anon. 2017). Each distributor possesses a different range of Latin American films within its respective catalogue. Artsploitation has 5 Latin American films among 47 total films; Kino distributes 72 Latin American film in its World Cinema catalogue that contains a total of approximately 1,768 films; Filmin distributes from 250 to 300 films from Latin American countries in an online inventory of nearly 10,000 films.

Collectively, Artsploitation, Kino Lorber, and Filmin show the varied nature of film distribution and the range of distribution mechanisms. Via Artsploitation's website, one can order a physical DVD from its catalogue or pay to view a film online on several different digital platforms (Vimeo, Google Play, YouTube, Vudu, iTunes, Amazon Instant Video). Likewise, on Kino Lorber's site, one may purchase a DVD or pay to digitally stream a movie distributed by

Kino Lorber through iTunes, Amazon, or Vudu. Filmin exclusively offers streaming through its own website.

The companies' varied modes of distribution partially embody the proliferation of channels of distribution and viewing platforms: video-on-demand, YouTube, digital piracy, informal street markets, film festivals, DVD releases, and theatrical releases. As Ramon Lobato writes in *Shadow Economies of Cinema*, 'Today, film distribution is everywhere, in every city – not just within the infrastructure of multiplexes, arthouses, retail chains and broadcasters that makes up the formal film economy' (2012: vii). The ubiquity of distribution channels via the Internet makes more visible the role of distribution in film consumption that often remains invisible or unacknowledged. In her study of home entertainment systems, Barbara Klinger has written about the new levels of agency and control that accompanied the advent of DVD extras and the remote control. While acknowledging a plurality of ways in which a remote control can be wielded by a home viewer, Klinger observes, 'The remote control alone offers the continuous potential for muscular intervention in the orderly procession of filmic events. It is conceivable that the viewer might use the remote's fast-forward, pause, rewind, scene selection, and other functions to careen willy-nilly through a film – the cinematic equivalent of a joy ride' (2006: 247).

The ecology of online film distribution makes distribution more visible and offers a new means through which consumers exercise agency. With distributors, such as Artsploitation and Kino Lorber, offering their content directly to viewers instead of via a retail store, one can surmise how a distributor constructs its catalogue, according to genre, date of releases, and/or nationalities of its films. In turn, distribution becomes a somewhat more transparent affair than visiting an actual store. Regarding agency, viewers inevitably choose what they view from

catalogues varying in size. Yet, the distribution of Latin American cinema online is not an infinite affair in which any Latin American film can appear seamlessly on one's web browser. Distributors circulate particular films, and this particularity holds out the possibility of coming up short in one's pursuit of film consumption. Failure, however, offers a silver lining. In *The Queer Art of Failure*, Judith Halberstam writes about the benefits of failure in the current age of static notions of success that hinge on heteronormativity and 'wealth accumulation' (2011: 2). Among other yields, failure 'provides the opportunity to use [...] negative affects to poke holes in the toxic positivity of contemporary life' (Halberstam 2011: 3). There is no shortage of celebratory declarations about the possibility of streaming scores of films. But, again, not all films get distributed. If one fails in their pursuit of viewing a film, then one *feels* the limits of film distribution.

The proliferation of channels of film distribution necessitates an attention to and qualitative distinction among those channels. That is, not all channels of distribution achieve the same consequence for the circulation of a film or even the film's content. Lobato, among others, have both advocated for an attention to a film distribution ecology that includes formal and informal modes of distribution as well as what Lobato calls the grey zone, or the Internet, whose legality is not always obvious. While I concur with the need to consider both formal and informal modes of film distribution in specific Latin American cities countries and elsewhere,⁴ legal distribution is an initial foray into questions of distribution of Latin American cinema.

As touched on above, film distribution affects not just a film's circulation. In *Film Distribution in the Digital Age*, Virginia Crisp signals the importance of distribution in very clear terms: 'Various gatekeepers are able to influence how films circulate globally and arguably film distributors are the most powerful of these intermediaries; (2015: 1). Distributors can affect

particular facets of a film, such as its marketing, intellectual property rights, and even edit a film (Crisp 2015: 17-18). To my knowledge, none of the distributors examined here have altered the content of a film that they distribute. However, two films from Latin America distributed by other companies illustrate how a distribution company can profoundly change a film's content and its ideology. For example, Caetlin Benson-Allot has written about how MGM's editing of the R-rated version of Alfonso Cuarón's *Y tu mamá también* (2001) distributed in the United States to alter the film's political and queer allegories. In addition, Venevisión USA distributes the DVD of Víctor Gaviria's *Sumas y restas* (*Addictions and Subtractions*, 2004) in the United States. In the Venevisión USA version of *Sumas y restas*, the film's final shot is a close-up of the protagonist, Santiago (Juan Carlos Uribe), as he climbs into a taxi and gives instructions to the driver. The final shot omits nearly 20 seconds from the film's original cut and essentially modifies the movie's finale and tone.

Film Distribution as Metaculture

Akin to many academic analyses of film festivals, film distribution can be conceptualized according to the cultural capital of distributors. For example, Crisp observes, 'The cultural capital of distributors both online and offline is inextricably linked with the value of the films that they distribute' (2015: 176). If a company distributes art house cinema, its cultural capital within 'serious' film culture will be higher than, say, a company that distributes exploitation films. However, cultural capital operates as a much more fungible term in distinct film subcultures. The cultural capital of a distributor of exploitation cinema, such as Something Weird Video in the United States, will be higher than a distributor of art house cinema among fans who consume of exploitation cinema.

While one can certainly discuss the cultural capital of the three companies that distribute Latin American cinema in question here, I turn to Greg Urban's notion of metaculture to theorize film distribution and its repercussions for thinking about the circulation of cinema from Latin America on a transnational scale. In his book entitled *Metaculture*, Urban defines metaculture succinctly as 'culture about culture' (2001: 3). With culture lodged in material objects or narratives, Urban examines what makes culture *move* and, among other interventions, conceives how different accelerative and decelerative forces act upon an object to make that object circulate differently – both temporally and spatially – from other objects. For Urban, 'Metaculture [...] imparts an accelerative force to culture. It aids culture in its motion through space and time. It gives a boost to the culture that it is about, helping to propel it on its journey' (4). One mechanism that facilitates an object's circulation is 'the interpretation of culture [which] focuses attention on the cultural thing [and] helps to make it an object of interest' (Urban 4). Urban illustrates his point about 'the interpretation of culture' as metaculture by alluding to an interview with actress Gillian Anderson on a local Philadelphia news broadcast in 1998 that followed a Sunday evening episode of *The X-Files*. For Urban, the interview draws attention to *The X-Files* and, though not remarkably probing, nevertheless constitutes a kind of extratextual interpretation that accelerates the circulation of the *The X-Files* as a 'supplement to culture' (4). *The X-Files* is an object that holds culture, and the interview with Gillian Anderson ultimately provides a boost to its circulation.

Another facet of metaculture that proves useful for examining a distributor's role in the circulation of cinema from Latin America is the interrelation between newness and inertia and how a cultural object embodies that interrelation in order to propel its circulation.⁵ As Benjamin Lee writes in the foreword to *Metaculture*, 'a metaculture of newness creates demand for future

circulation' (2001: xiii). Elsewhere in the book, Urban describes how a 'force of accelerative culture is the interest [the object] generates, which stems in part from its novelty' (2001: 16). An object's dynamic of circulation, however, is accompanied by inertia, which is conceived as how a new object gestures at what precedes it. 'New production makes reference to a range of prior and seemingly disparate cultural elements. Without those temporal referents, the new entity would have little prospect of further motion or future circulation. It would simply be incomprehensible' (Urban 2001: 5). In turn, a cultural object that attracts attention and increasingly circulates possesses a degree of continuity with what precedes it, while also projecting sufficient newness to repel any accusations of pure imitation.

As to how metaculture helps conceptualize the distribution of Latin American cinema, distributors possess numerous mechanisms that operate as accelerative forces for *specific* Latin American films which, for better or for worse, cinematically define Latin American cultures or even a single and totalizing culture when Latin America is treated as a homogeneous entity. As noted above, not all cinema from Latin America is distributed and not all films are distributed equally. The metaculture of film distributors of Latin American cinema comes through with an array of extratextual mechanisms – 'supplements to culture' – to draw attention to specific films and underscore a film's newness while positioning that film within one or several inertial film cultures, such as a genre film culture.

Metacultural mechanisms of advertising seek to accelerate a film's circulation. For Urban, 'Demand for the new exists only when there is knowledge that the new object exists' (2001: 187), to which film marketing attends. To fully appreciate the accelerative nature of distributors, I allude to the marketing campaign behind *La memoria del muerto* (*Memory of the Dead*, Diment, 2013), an Argentine horror film. During the first Blood Window Film Market in

Buenos Aires in December of 2013, Artsploitation acquired U.S. and Canadian distribution rights for *La memoria del muerto*, an Argentine horror film, after its founder and president, Raymond Murray, viewed the movie (Murray). As is customary for distributors, Artsploitation sent acquisition announcements to its nearly 1,800 media contacts in the United States and Canada (Murray). Websites that cover U.S. horror film releases such as Screen Anarchy and Daily Dead covered the distribution deal. Subsequently, additional announcements for the release of *La memoria del muerto* were sent out to the same 1,800 media contacts. Many of the same websites that covered Artsploitation's distribution deal covered the film's DVD actual release in February of 2014. With the film's DVD release, select consumers of Diment's film posted their reviews of the film on sites, such as amazon.com and imdb.com.

Filmin and Kino Lorber possess their own mechanisms to attempt to accelerate the circulation of a Latin American film in their respective catalogue. Filmin uses email listservs and posts information on its blogs and, in order to attract more viewers, relies on innovative marketing, including creating online cycles of films devoted to particular themes (e.g., 'Vengeance Collection' and 'Dance Collection') and creating a film festival, El Átlantida Film Fest in Mallorca, whose screenings are simultaneously streamed online. For Kino Lorber, the marketing plan is dependent on the film. As its Digital and Video Direct Marketing Manager, Jameson Oyer, explained, 'Each film is different and we employ a diverse range of strategies for every release, but it is usually a blend of grassroots social media campaigns, paid online advertisements, and print ads.'

The proliferation of film distributors and different channels of film circulation, legal or otherwise, create a deluge of filmic circulation. With the Internet, any film potentially can circulate. The charge of a distributor of Latin American films with marketing and contacting

reviewers becomes less a question of limiting films and more a question of singling out particular films with metacultural supplements, or materials about the film, such as press kits, tweets, and Facebook and Instagram posts. Urban devotes a chapter to film reviews of *Fail Safe* (Lumet 1964) and *Dr. Strangelove* (Kubrick 1964) and characterizes reviews in general as ‘creating a secondary layer of circulation, laid on top of and loosely coordinated with the circulation of films as cultural objects [...]’ (2001: 182). Film reviews by critics, reviews by non-professional critics, and the plethora of online marketing create a multitude of layers that can accompany the actual circulation of a film. With metacultural supplements, distributors thicken the circulation of particular films with additional planes of circulation in the form of metacultural expressions about that film.

If marketing operates as an accelerative force for a film, the distributors’ catalogues serve as an inertial force for a Latin American film. In other words, the way in which a distributor conceives its catalogue and how it positions a Latin American film within that catalogue enables a Latin American film to possess continuity with other films that precede it within that particular catalogue. The three distributors’ responses to questions about their respective catalogues and the criteria for distributing a film from Latin America both are revealing and not. Filmin’s representative explained there is no criteria for that distribution and no particular preconception of Latin American cinema (Anon. 2017). Glossing Filmin’s catalogue, one notices art house films, documentaries, and genre fare. Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile boast the most number of titles. In the case of Kino Lorber, the company selects films that ‘it with its collection’ (Oyer), which presumably means documentaries or art house cinema. There is no preference necessarily for a particular country’s films, although its marketing director stated that the company is currently acquiring mostly Mexican films, such as *Güeros*

(Ruizpalacios, 2014) and *Somos lengua* (Terrazas, 2017), in an attempt to appeal to Mexican communities in the United States.

As for Artsploitation, the comments of its president, Raymond Murray, signal something distinct. When asked about whether it was important to have horror cinema from Latin America in Artsploitation's catalogue, he alluded to the safety of genre cinema, specifically horror and exploitation cinema. When asked about the appeal of the horror and exploitation genres, Murray stated: 'Latin American cinema in general and indie horror is exciting at this time – [the movies have] innovative ways of presenting stories.' Moreover, genre cinema in general provides a safe choice for small scale distributors such as Artsploitation. For Murray, 'The horror genre market is strong – gay, Jewish and genre [films] are the three subsets where people collect and are loyal.' In turn, no matter the geographic origin of a film the categories of gay, Jewish, and genre cinema will provide distributors with an automatic set of consumers. However, horror provides a particularly intriguing case. When asked about if a non-English language horror film could overcome U.S. audiences' general antipathy for subtitles, Murray responded, 'A typical horror fan would usually not be caught dead watching a foreign language film, unless someone is being chased, killed, and dismembered. [...] The genre crowd does not seem to mind subtitles as long as blood, violence, terror and sex are in it.' Murray's comments on horror cinema are not out of place in genre film studies; horror fans often prove to be voracious and geographically diverse in their consumption of horror films (Cherry 2012: 26-29).

The centrality of genre cinema in Artsploitation's catalogue provides a level of inertia for Latin American horror and exploitation films. Genre cinema, by definition, possesses a degree of inertia. As Steve Neale has written, 'Most aesthetic theories of genre take as their starting point the issues of repetition and variation, similarity and difference, and the extent to which the

elements repeated and varied are simple or complex' (2000: 195). Artsploitation's website signals this repetition in explicit ways. On its website, *O Diabo Mora Aqui* (*The Devil Lives Here*, Gasparini and Vescio, 2015), a Brazilian horror film, is likened to *The Evil Dead* (Raimi, 1981) and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (Hooper, 1974), among other films, in excerpts from reviews praising *O Diabo Mora Aqui*. Latin American genre cinema provides a newness by virtue of its origins as well as its content and possibly overcomes the antipathy of monolingual audiences, especially those in the United States, for subtitles.

Genre aside, the distributors' catalogues in and of themselves provides an inertial force by incorporating a film from Latin America within that catalogue. Among other markers and categories, a film becomes an Artsploitation, Kino Lorber, or Filmin film with its inclusion in the distributor's respective catalogue and reflects that catalogue's criteria. 'The film fits,' to recall Jameson Oyer's characterization of how Kino Lorber decides to acquire a film's distribution rights. Whether a genre film, art house film, or a film 'not of the superficial, "popcorn" variety,' à la Filmin, a film settles in with the other selection distributed by that company while still holding out the possibility of something novel.

Conclusion

I want to conclude with two points about what an attention to distributors potentially provides. First, while Kino Lorber, Filmin, and Artsploitation are only three distributors of films from Latin America, the possibility of interacting with those distributors speaks to a foundational tension in spectatorship studies. On one hand, an audience is a hypothetical entity in which a critic is charged with a near impossible task of conceiving an audience's tastes, interpretations, affective receptions, etc. In contrast, attention to a 'real' audience is often deemed more substantial. Through interviews with actual spectators, the idea is that a researcher ascertains the

actual interpretations of an audience rather than entertaining the hypothetical receptions of an audience characterized by race, class, gender, sexuality, age, and/or any other criteria. A focus on transnational distributors as a gatekeeper audience prioritizes a focus on a limited subgroup of spectators who exercises a particular importance in what Gregory Lukow and Steven Ricci call a film's intertextual relay, or the 'ensemble of textualities' beyond a film – trailers, advertising, posters – that get people to watch a particular film (29). Distributors can be seen as both an audience and as part of a film's intertextual relay, since distributors can employ metacultural tools to attract additional audiences to see a film from a Latin American country. That relay can take the form, first, of distribution, and, second, through the textualities of contacting critics, Facebook posts, and Tweets. Absent surveys of mass audiences, a focus on distributors makes more feasible an examination of a particular audience's spectatorship. While not discounting networked gatekeeping, distributors can serve as a prioritized and circumscribed group of consumers who exercise particular metacultural power over films.

Second, I want to propose a category of film: a distributor's film. The term foregrounds a distributor's aim to position a film within its catalogue and within a particular market to appeal to consumers of a particular film genre. The phrase 'distributor's film' is a play on the notion of a 'festival film.' Though the proliferation of different kinds of film festivals potentially renders the question of a festival film moot (Falicov 2016: 213), the term nevertheless aligns with the notion of an art house film: a slow pace, normal characters, and the absence of spectacle (Falicov 2016: 213-214). A number of the films in Kino Lorber's and Filmin's respective catalogues adhere to the criteria for a festival film.

Festival films and distributor's films, however, are not oppositional terms. Film festivals, of course, can be a crucial part of film distribution, and the growing body of scholarship on

festivals has demonstrated the relationship between film festivals and distribution. For instance, Diana Iordanova observes, 'Film festivals are places for transnational encounters and exchanges, both cultural and commercial' (2016: xiv) in which a distribution deal can be negotiated. Many of the Latin American films distributed by the three companies examined here have acquired some degree of notoriety at film festivals and/or achieved some measure of prominence at national box offices or among domestic and international critics. The DVD covers and online information about specific films distributed by the Kino Lorber, Filmin, and Artsploitation signal a keen awareness of the symbolic capital that accompanies a film's inclusion at a film festival.

Yet, the imprimatur of a festival is not so important to the circulation and consumption of a distributor's film. Raymond Murray's comments about gay, Jewish and genre films are instructive. The metacultural novelty-inertia of a genre film, or other categorization within a distributor's catalogue, can be enough for a distributor to pick up that film since it belongs to a genre that already is in demand and ostensibly fits within a catalogue. The distributor's film stands in contrast to the festival film for its adherence to the criteria that reflects not the preferences of a single or multiple film festival, but rather a distributor's preferences. The distributor's film does not necessarily aspire to a theatrical or even festival release, but rather to be distributed and thus join the ranks of thousands of movies that are released directly to DVD and/or the panoply of retail streaming sites, such as Netflix, Amazon, or Google. A distributor's film thus takes its place among the scores of genre films, or what Lobato calls, in an appropriation of Franco Moretti's characterization of uncanonized literature, 'the slaughterhouse of cinema' (2012: 32). Thousands of straight-to-DVD films are released each year, and many fill the catalogues of distribution companies. Raymond Murray's comments about 'blood, violence, terror and sex' as being sufficient ingredients to draw in a U.S. audience underscores the draw of

the horror film genre in the United States and elsewhere. However, horror is only one of many film genre communities that is consumed transnationally. Science-fiction, comedies, detective films, erotic films, art house films, documentaries are genres that enjoy transnational popularity and are distributed by Filmin, Kino Lorber, and Artsploitation.

Besides the three distributors discussed here, there are scores of other small companies throughout the world that physically and digitally distribute films made in Latin America, a kind of scenario that appears to uphold Chris Anderson's theory of the Long Tail. In Chris Anderson eponymous book, the Long Tail refers to that extended and relatively flat part of a statistical curve that follows the curve's apex. Anderson describes how he studied online entertainment distribution. Somewhat counterintuitively, he noticed that songs and films that were distributed online and were not wildly popular nevertheless remained in demand and were profitable for a company. While many of the films distributed by the likes of Artsploitation and Kino Lorber, and Filmin might not be considered popular hits, the films nevertheless intimate an interest among transnational consumers. Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma have written about cultural circulation in general terms and argue that 'circulation always presupposes the existence of their respective interpretative communities, with their own forms of interpretation and evaluation' (192). Distributors intuit the existence of interpretative communities and, with metacultural supplements, provide the accelerative forces to particular Latin American films to reach those communities.

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¹ In *Shadow Economies*, Lobato describes the Internet and a film's circulation on the Internet as a 'grey zone,' a term that encapsulates online distribution's 'grey-zone of semi-legality' with 'viewing platforms that integrate legal and black markets' (95).

² This characterization of the relationship between the creation of culture and consumption is a staple of cultural studies. For example, in *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture*, John Storey writes, 'Culture is not something already made which we consume; culture is what we make in the varied practices of everyday life, including consumption. Consumption involves the making of culture' (2003: 132).

³ For example, the Chilean film *Qué pena tu vida* (*Fuck My Life*, López, 2010) was almost universally panned by domestic critics. Nevertheless, the film was the second national film at the box office during the year of its release and relied on marketing campaigns on social medium platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube (Hugo Ortega 2012).

⁴ For studies of informal film distribution in Latin America, see Lobato (2012) and Ross (2010).

⁵ A fundamental premise to Urban's arguments in *Metaculture* is the following: 'What makes culture move? Part of the answer, or so I am arguing in this book, is that it is already in motion. And whatever is in motion tends to remain in motion unless something else stops it' (2001: 15). Accelerative and inertial cultures are ways of conceiving how a cultural object's motion quickens, widens, and/or is impeded.