



Revisionary Interventions into the Americanist Canon (New Americanists)

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Throughout the era of the Cold War a consensus reigned as to what constituted the great works of American literature. Yet as scholars have increasingly shown, and as this volume unmistakably demonstrates, that consensus was built upon the repression of the voices and historical contexts of subordinated social groups as well as literary works themselves, works both outside and within the traditional canon. This book is an effort to recover those lost voices. Engaging New Historicist, neo-Marxist, poststructuralist, and other literary practices, this volume marks important shifts in the organizing principles and self-understanding of the field of American Studies.

Originally published as a special issue of *boundary 2*, the essays gathered here discuss writers as diverse as Kate Chopin, Frederick Douglass, Emerson, Melville, W. D. Howells, Henry James, W. E. B. DuBois, and Mark Twain, plus the historical figure John Brown. Two major sections devoted to the theory of romance and to cultural-historical analyses emphasize the political perspective of "New Americanist" literary and cultural study.

Contributors. William E. Cain, Wai-chee Dimock, Howard Horwitz, Gregory S. Jay, Steven Mailloux, John McWilliams, Susan Mizruchi, Donald E. Pease, Ivy Schweitzer, Priscilla Wald, Michael Warner, Robert Weimann

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Born in Trinidad in 1901, C. L. R. James moved to England in 1932 where he was a leading Marxist theorist, a founder of the Pan-African movement, cricket correspondent for the Manchester Guardian, and author of numerous books, including the influential history of the Haitian slave rebellion, *The Black Jacobins* (1938). From 1938 to 1953 he lived in the United States, where he wrote, lectured, and organized for the Socialist Worker's Party and was a leader of the Trotskyite sect the "Johnson-Forest Tendency." Arrested for "passport violations," James was confined on Ellis Island, where he wrote *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways* (1953). Deported from the United States, James spent the rest of his life in England and in Trinidad. His last great book, *Beyond a Boundary* (1963), combined cricket with cultural and political criticism.

Donald E. Pease, Avalon Professor of Humanities, Dartmouth College, author of *Visionary Compacts: American Renaissance Writings in Cultural Context* (1987), editor (with Amy Kaplan) of *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (1993), and editor of the Duke University Press series *The New Americanists*, provides a lengthy introduction to this book and its history.

Michael Warner is Professor of English at Rutgers University. He is the author of *"The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life"* and *"The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America"*.

John McWilliams is Abernethy Professor of American Literature at Middlebury College in Vermont. He is the author of *Political Justice in a Republic: James Fenimore Cooper's America* (1972), *Hawthorne, Melville and the American Character* (Cambridge, 1984) and *The American Epic* (Cambridge, 1989).

Wai Chee Dimock is Professor of English and American Studies at Yale University. She is the author of *"Empire for Liberty: Melville and the Poetics of Individualism"* (1989) and coeditor of *"Rethinking Class: Literary Studies and Social Formations"* (1994).

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