

Abstracts

- 62 **Paul Giles**, *Transnationalism and Classic American Literature*
Taking issue with associations between American literature and identity politics, this essay argues that to remap the culture of the United States in global terms is to problematize its exemplary and exceptionalist qualities and recognize inherent transnational frictions. As an example of this, the writings of Emerson and Thoreau in the 1840s are situated in relation to conflicts over the Oregon Territory, so that their textual designs come to seem less abstract or Neoplatonic than aggressively nationalistic. To restore a sense of the spatial problematic to American literature is to interrogate its more traditional integration within a temporal dimension of prophetic destiny. The essay concludes by suggesting that reexamining American allegories of interiority through pre-Romantic theories of spatial formation effectively produces a different perspective on texts that have become naturalized as examples of liberal self-reliance and institutionalized as types of classic American literature. (PG)
- 103 **Michael Bérubé**, *American Studies without Exceptions*
Scholars in American studies are generally skeptical of the notion of working within or for the nation-state, for three primary reasons: the alleged eclipse of the nation-state by multinational capitalism, the undesirability of limiting American studies parochially to the study of the United States, and the history of collusion between United States intellectuals and the Central Intelligence Agency during the cold war. This essay argues that although contemporary American studies has done well to reject the American exceptionalism that once defined the field and is rightly averse to engaging in covert international propaganda operations, scholars in American studies need to ask whether the field's rejection of the nation-state might not coincide with rather than resist the movements of global capital and thus to reconsider the importance of the state (in the United States and elsewhere) as a site of intellectual engagement and activism. (MB)