

## Preface

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*Revisionary Interventions into the Americanist Canon* had a complex genealogy. The book initially appeared as a special issue, the first of the *boundary 2* volumes published at Duke University Press, and as a rejoinder to Frederick Crews's excoriating critique in the *New York Review of Books* of a group of books (including two of my own) by younger Americanists in violation of what Crews understood to be the presuppositions constituting the field of American studies. Because the purpose of gathering together these essays was to bring into existence an alternative to the field of American studies—one able to include matters that Crews had eliminated—I had intended the volume to be the founding text for a New Americanists book series. After its publication, however, I became aware of the volume's limitations as the inaugural event for an emergent field of new American studies. The *boundary 2* volume had provided a forum for the return of sociopolitical questions, counter-national discourses, and minoritarian perspectives to American studies, but it also threatened to renew preconstituted categories and master narratives of an earlier American studies. To call attention to the need for a global rather than national analytic framework for this emergent field, I have placed this text in the New Americanist series after *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, a collection of essays I coedited with Amy Kaplan that is interdisciplinary in scope and international in its perspective. This placement indicates the inevitably retrospective standpoint of any

founding gesture in a series that aspires to advance the understanding of the formation of local and oppositional identities positioned across multiple coordinates of race, class, ethnicity, and gender as well as across locales and nationalities.

Because the *boundary 2* collective has enabled my renewed understanding of the revisionism inherent in every founding act, I extend my gratitude to its entire editorial collective. I am particularly indebted to Paul Bové, its present editor, and Meg Sachse, its managing editor, for seeing this volume into print as a *boundary 2* volume, and to Reynolds Smith for his enthusiastic and loyal support for the New Americanists series.