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Globalization in American Studies – Abstract

This paper provides a brief history and overview of the topic of globalization within the field of American Studies, and the current debate that has occurred during the past few years regarding America's role in the world. The paper will explore the historic role of globalization in the thinking and writing of American Studies scholars. This history reveals that early in the discipline globalization was part of an active research agenda that was being pursued by American scholars. Over time, however, this topic fell out of favor, and it is only recently that there has been an effort by some American Studies intellectuals to revive globalization as a prominent topic in their research, publications and classrooms in the United States. The view of American Studies by non-American scholars will also be addressed, which should provide a valuable corollary to the debate. While globalization has always been an important topic for many of these scholars, debate has existed about the role and impact of the American influence on culture, media, governmental structures, etc. The paper closes with a current view of the thinking of American scholars on how globalization is being addressed within the discipline.