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States of Emergency: The Object of American Studies

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The contributors to this volume argue that for too long, inclusiveness has substituted for methodology in American studies scholarship. The ten original essays collected here call for a robust comparativism that is attuned theoretically to questions of both space and time.

States of Emergency asks readers to engage in a thought experiment: imagine that you have an object you want to study. Which methodologies will contextualize and explain your selection? What political goals are embedded in your inquiry? This thought experiment is taken up by contributors who consider an array of objects--the weather, cigarettes, archival material, AIDS, the enemy, extinct species, and torture. The essayists recalibrate the metrics of time and space usually used to measure these questions. In the process, each contributes to a project that redefines the object of American studies, reading its history as well as its future across, against, even outside the established grain of interdisciplinary practice.

Contributors:
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Faye Pearson:

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