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# Abstracts

**Andrea Henderson**, Passion and Fashion in Joanna Baillie's "Introductory Discourse" 198

In the preface to her first volume of plays, the Romantic playwright Joanna Baillie claims that one is naturally driven to classify persons into character types, and she argues that this classification should be based on the passions individuals express rather than the fashions they wear. Despite this anticonsumerist stance, however, Baillie's project is shaped by the logic of late-eighteenth-century consumerism: Baillie conceives of passions as items susceptible to inventory, display, and sale. Her interest in establishing a human taxonomy grounded in ostensibly natural and subtle discriminations of character allies her works with other popular consumer goods of the period, from clothing fashions to studies of physiognomy. Moreover, like the aesthetic of the picturesque, Baillie's aesthetic encodes a peculiarly consumerist form of desire, a desire that can never be satisfied because it aims at acquisition rather than possession. In Baillie, the feelings and desires on which modern subjectivity is founded do not spring from deep within but are formed by, and find their meaning in, the public world of the marketplace. (AH)

**Susan C. Greenfield**, "Abroad and at Home": Sexual Ambiguity, Miscegenation, and Colonial Boundaries in Edgeworth's *Belinda* 214

A number of critics suggest that in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English literature femininity is portrayed as both similar to and different from colonial otherness in ways that destabilize the English woman's relation to empire. Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801) presents an opportunity to enrich this discussion because of the novel's synchronization of domestic and colonial authority, sustained attention to the sexual, national, and racial ambiguities posed by transvestites and Creoles, and chaotic variety of events that prohibits political fixity. Following the multiple allusions to "home" and "abroad" in *Belinda*, I argue that female homoeroticism and miscegenation become analogous dangers and reflect eighteenth-century concerns about the mutability of bodily and colonial boundaries. (SCG)

**Ruth Larson**, Ethnography, Thievery, and Cultural Identity: A Rereading of Michel Leiris's *L'Afrique fantôme* 229

During 1931–33 Michel Leiris took part in an ethnographic expedition across Africa, the highly publicized Dakar-Djibouti mission. This essay examines three documents related to the mission. The first, remarks that Leiris wrote before the trip, reveals his understanding, either conscious or unconscious, that theft would be an essential part of the mission's ethnographic strategy. In the second, a journal kept during the expedition, Leiris recorded specific incidents of theft. I argue that the ethnographers' thieving, portrayed as spontaneous acts, is in fact a political one that allows them to collect objects of great cultural significance while ensuring a European identity distinct from the identity of the colonized. The third document is the published version of the journal, which Leiris titled *L'Afrique fantôme*. Variants in this version and a photographic illustration prefigure Leiris's rethinking of ethnography's role in decolonization. (RL)