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# Abstracts

**Terry Mulcaire, Public Credit; or, The Feminization of Virtue in the Marketplace** 1029

The feminine figure of "Public Credit," which appears prominently and frequently in early-eighteenth-century Whig texts, is a rich and complex symbolization of early liberal political and economic ideology. In readings of Joseph Addison, Daniel Defoe, and the Whig libertarians John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon (the collective authors of *Cato's Letters*, a polemic that had a major influence on American revolutionary ideology), I show that their representations of Credit speak not to the empirical truth of economic value but *openly* to its imaginary desirability. Credit thus represents a manifest political and cultural strategy of these Whig writers for articulating and defending the values of a liberal market society by representing them as desirable—or, in other words, as aesthetic values. (TM)

**Michael Gamer, Genres for the Prosecution: Pornography and the Gothic** 1043

Recent accounts of genre have asserted that all texts participate in multiple genres and that genre works as a kind of contract between writers and readers. In the legal history of eighteenth-century British prosecutions for obscene libel and the reception history of gothic fiction at the turn of the nineteenth century, however, the model of genre as contract breaks down. At the end of the eighteenth century, several texts we now call gothic faced threatened prosecution under existing obscene libel laws. The reception histories of the fiction of Matthew Lewis, Charlotte Dacre, and Charles Robert Maturin demonstrate that public denouncements and threatened prosecution forced gothic texts, even as they theoretically participated in at least one genre, to belong to a legal category (obscenity) for which their writers never intended them. (MG)

**Michael C. Onwuemene, Limits of Transliteration: Nigerian Writers' Endeavors toward a National Literary Language** 1055

The multiethnic and multilingual character of Nigeria compelled the country's writers to use some form of English, but standard imperial English was not long acceptable to patriotic Nigerians. So Nigeria must develop for its literature an English whose norms were created by Nigerians in response to the special circumstances in their country. Such an English (Nigerian Pidgin) existed at the time of independence, but because it was maligned, the first generation of Nigerian writers sought a more respectable English literary medium. Hence they devised the strategy of "transliteration"—introducing ethnic-language tropes and idioms into the English text. But transliteration was a flawed approach, and its literary output, in a language only marginally different from imperial English, remained inappropriate in Nigeria. Even so, the strategy served the desired goal by demystifying standard English. As a result, Nigerian Pidgin is coming into its own as a literary medium, and Nigerian writers are taking greater liberties in their reconstitution of English. (MCO)