

Call for papers
Anglistentag 2013 (Konstanz)
PD Dr. Kai Merten (Kiel), Dr. Nicola Glaubitz (Siegen)

Sektion

Historical Media Cultures

Was there a Renaissance computer, as Jonathan Sawday and Neil Rhodes (2000) suggest? Was there a 'desire for cinema' since the Romantic period, as e.g. Friedrich Kittler (1985) has argued? Can we talk, like Tom Standage (1999), of a Victorian internet? And is the poetics of modernism a media phenomenon, as Julian Murphet (2009) claims?

Certainly not, in a strict sense. But yet, it makes sense to raise these questions, and it makes sense to use modern concepts of media as heuristic devices to uncover new aspects of earlier periods in cultural history in the context of their own media cultures.

This is a strong impulse in recent Anglo-American literary studies, which draw increasingly on media theories in order to reconsider the historical contexts of literature: Clifford Siskin and William Warner (2010) argue that the Enlightenment must be conceived of as an event in the history of what they call 'mediation' and link to both technical and symbolic media. They have extended this argument to the period of Romanticism in their keynote to the 2010 NASSR Annual Conference *Romantic Mediations*, an event wholly dedicated to exploring 'Romantic' media cultures. In 'New Modernist Studies', one important trend is media archaeology and its focus on the media technologies around 1900 (Armstrong 1998, Trotter 2009). Media ecology is another approach that has been made fruitful for the re-examination of cultural periods of the past: it inquires into the artificially created worlds of perception that affect bodies and fashion subjects.

We welcome contributions that approach literature and other cultural practices from these and other media-related perspectives.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- medial contexts of literature and culture in different periods
- literary genres as historical forms of medial communication
- theatre and literature as complementary, resp. contrasting media in the Elizabethan period, the Regency period, the Fin de Siècle...
- the impact of contemporaneous media cultures on canonical texts of British literary history
- 'When old media were new': media configurations and cultural orders of perception (gas-lit stages, advertisement, photography...)
- media developments as shedding new light on the periodization of British cultural history
- examples for media discourses and media theorizing *avant la lettre*
- hidden historical agendas of modern media theories: the historicity and cultural embeddedness of media concepts. Is there a romanticist, a modernist (...) agenda in media theories?

Please send proposals of approximately 300 words by August 31, 2012 to:

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