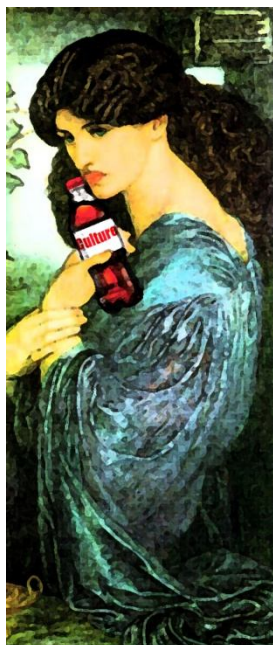


Call for Papers
**Fashioning the Neo-Victorian. Iterations of the Nineteenth Century in
Contemporary Literature and Culture**

(International Conference, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany, 8-10 April 2010)

keynote speakers: Prof Cora Kaplan (Queen Mary University of London), Dr Marie-Luise Kohlke (Swansea University), Prof Sally Shuttleworth (University of Oxford)



The notion of the Neo-Victorian has become an increasingly common denominator for cultural products re-iterating Victorian culture. Sometimes a critical engagement but equally often a pleasurable appropriation marked by a nostalgic world view, Neo-Victorian texts and films shed light on cultural processes of appropriation. Neo-Victorian works feed on a complex temporal relation: they are shaped by the past, but, being part of the literary landscape of the present, they also configure our understanding of the Victorian heritage. This conference will discuss the purposes and effects of appropriating the Victorian past and of reiterating it in the citational environment of present discourses.

Why is it that the Victorians are so very attractive to today's cultural markets? Is it because they provided us with important technological means of reproducing images, voices and writing (photography, cinema, the phonograph, and the typewriter) as well as with theories of the reproduction of life itself and its historical progress? Or does British culture dream its way back to the British Empire in order to find a way to articulate the social insecurities that pertain to an existence in a globalised world? On the way to answering questions such as these, it seems crucial to focus on what exactly Neo-Victorian texts and films appropriate or engage with. The varieties of this engagement are diverse: Neo-Victorian works make use of formal elements (genre, narrative perspective, etc.)

as well as of thematic aspects such as the significance of science, morals, nationhood, gender and identity.

One of the aims of this conference is to critically reflect on the category of the Neo-Victorian and the emergence of 'Neo-Victorian studies' as a new academic subdiscipline: Does the Neo-Victorian describe a specific kind of writing or certain kinds of artefacts? Does it describe a specific cultural symptom? Does it constitute a new academic field? What is the history of the term 'Neo-Victorian' and what is its analytic scope and value?

We welcome contributions from the humanities, the social sciences and the arts. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- exemplary case studies (authors, novels, films, documentaries, etc.)
- various theoretical approaches to the Neo-Victorian, including theoretical concepts such as authenticity, appropriation, iteration, (trans)difference, trace, ideology, symbolic form, fetishism, nostalgia, presence, etc.
- the object or specific focus of appropriation
- the politics of representation
- visual and material culture
- biography and the return of the (Victorian) author
- cultural memory and the ethics of commemoration
- marginalised discourses: transgressive sexuality, 'other' voices
- science and/vs. spiritualism and occultism
- magic and/vs. realism
- the popular appeal of the Neo-Victorian and/vs. the way in which high culture assimilates Victorian artefacts and values

Please send abstracts (no more than 250 words) for proposed 20 minute papers by November 1st 2009 to

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<http://neovictorian-conference.susannegruss.de>