



## Dickens, Victorian Mental Sciences and Mnemonic Errancy

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While Dickens's alertness to debates about the physiology of the mind has been the subject of a number of critical investigations in the past two decades (especially with respect to Dickens's interest in mesmerism), this article investigates the relationship between Dickens's fiction and theories of memory within Victorian mental science. By focusing on a fantasy of 'memory extirpation' that was circulating in Victorian culture, this article reflects on the ways in which Dickens's writing engaged with (and perhaps even contributed to) Victorian philosophical and psychological discourses on self and memory. Through an analysis of an emerging psychology of memory, this article shows how Dickens's fiction comes to terms with the risks that memory poses as well as its creative possibilities.

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