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**“The last new novel”: Strategies of Reader-Navigation in Reviews of Fiction Published in the *Athenaeum*, the *Saturday Review* and *Household Words,* 1850-59.**

This article argues that the strategies of navigation that are part of a periodical’s the house style are important indicators of the unspoken “protocol”, to use Nicholas Dames’s term, which crafts the relationship between author, reviewer, and reader, and which, in the period under investigation, determined the status both of the novel as a genre wavering between triviality and respectability, and that of the more general practice of reading fiction.[[1]](#footnote-1) Literary criticism published in periodicals, I thus posit, should be seen as a form of everyday rhetorical epistemology in which the reader was given an active role.

**Biography**

I am an Assistant Professor in English Studies at the University of Luxembourg with a special interest in life-writing and the genres associated with the press, having published on diaries, literary historiography in the *Athenaeum*, newspaper poetry, and the feuilleton press in Britain and Luxembourg. I am currently working on a project proposal about intercultural networks and the idea of Europe in Dickens’s periodicals.

1. Dames, “On Not Close Reading”, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)