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Brevformularbok

(_sjanger) En samling eksempel- eller mønsterbrev til hjelp for (uerfarne) brevskrivere. En rådgivingsbok som gir veiledning i brevskrivning og som inneholder eksempelbreve som skal etterlignes. Leseren skal lære seg å skrive gode brev i forskjellige situasjoner, uttrykke seg på en egnet måte til forskjellige personer osv. Eksempelbrevene er ment å tilpasses ulike sammenhenger/kontekster og individuelle behov. På tysk kalles sjangeren “Briefsteller”, på fransk “secrétaire”.

Det har blitt lagd brevformularbøker for bestemte yrkesgrupper, f.eks. for kjøpmenn og statsansatte (Rehm 1991 s. 52). I mange av bøkene var det vanlig med “tiggerbrev” i ulike varianter og til ulike adressater, noen stilt opp som dikt (Neuland 2003 s. 192). Det finnes eksempler på brev på fremmedspråk, dvs. brev som skal sendes til utlandet. I de engelske brevformularbøkene på 1700-tallet var det vanlig med en innledning med (generelle, teoretiske) råd, og deretter både reelle og fiktive brev (Alain Kerhervé i Milon og Perelman 2010 s. 333). Henry Hoggs *The New and Complete Universal Letter-Writer or, whole Art of Polite Correspondence* (1790) inneholdt over 200 brev. Brevene kalles i bøkens titler blant annet “eksempler” og “modeller” (Alain Kerhervé i Milon og Perelman 2010 s. 334).

Tyskeren Kaspar Stieler skrev på 1600-tallet en brevformularbok som skulle hjelpe skrivekyndige til å kontakte per brev både vanlige folk og mektige herskere (Szyrocki 1968 s. 43).

“I engelsk og fransk sytten- og attenhundretall ble både konversasjon og brevskrivning i dannede kretser betraktet som en slags kunst, en “forestilling”, og det var visse likheter mellom dem. I begge sammenhenger opptrådte man på bestemte måter, inntok visse roller. I brevet kunne maskering og parodiering erstatte konversasjonens gester, stemmeleie og fysiske nærhet. Selv om man i Danmark-Norge ikke dyrket konversasjonens og brevskrivningens kunst i samme grad som man gjorde det i det store utland, eksisterte det i alle fall noen forestillinger om hvordan man skulle oppføre seg; det fremgår av bl.a. oppdragsbøker og brevformularbøker fra denne tiden.” (Jorunn Hareide i <http://www.bokselskap.no/boker/brevthoresenbrandes/innledning>; lesedato 28.10.15)

“How did people learn to write letters in the eighteenth century? La Fleur suggests a solution in Laurence Sterne’s *A Sentimental Journey* (1768). When his master, Yorick, is obliged to write a love letter to Madame de L*** in Amiens and cannot find words to express his feelings: “I wrote and blotted and tore off, and burnt, and wrote again – Le Diable l’emporte! – said I to myself...” La Fleur hands out a small pocket book full of letters, out of which he soon extracts a model letter, destined for a corporal’s wife. After reading it, Yorick decides to use it: “I took the cream gently off it, and whipping it up in my own way – I seal’d it up and sent him with it to Madame de L***.” Servants, and occasionally their masters, were thus liable to copy model letters. [...] In a period of economic prosperity from the end of the seventeenth century, the printing of books of all types rose significantly in the 1740s. Like many other books, letter-writing manuals were part of the process, and more than 160 editions can be traced for the eighteenth century, 72 being printed after 1750. The most famous manuals of the period were *The Complete Letter-Writer; Or, Polite English Secretary* (Stanley Crowder, 1755) which was repeatedly plagiarized in later works; *The Young Secretary’s Guide* with 27 editions between 1687 and 1764; and *A New Academy of Compliments; Or, The Lover’s Secretary* which reached its 17th edition in 1784. Others were devised by famous authors: Daniel Defoe attempted to capitalize on his aura with *The Complete English Tradesman* (1726)” (Alain Kerhervé i <http://www.cambridge-scholars.com/download/sample/60928>; lesedato 08.10.15).

På 1700-tallet ble det utgitt minst 40 forskjellige brevformularbøker i England, og noen gikk i store opplag. For eksempel kom Stanley Crowder and Henry Woodgates *The Complete Letter-Writer* (1755) i 38 utgaver fram til 1800 (Alain Kerhervé i Milon og Perelman 2010 s. 333).

A New Academy of Compliments: or, the Lover’s Secretary (1727 og senere opplag) la vekt på hvordan brev kunne bidra til å forføre det annet kjønn (Alain Kerhervé i Milon og Perelman 2010 s. 335). Men boka inneholdt også brev fra en mann til en annen mann, fra kvinne til kvinne og fra en mann til kone og barn (Alain Kerhervé i Milon og Perelman 2010 s. 352). En annen bok ga råd om hvordan en mann kunne “Court a Gentlewoman upon Honourable Terms” (Alain Kerhervé i Milon og Perelman 2010 s. 355). *The Complete Letter-Writer, Containing Familiar Letters, on the Most Common Occasions in Life: Also A Variety of Elegant Letters for the Direction and Embellishment of Style, on Business, Duty, Amusement, Love, Courtship, Marriage, Friendship,* (1781) inneholdt til slutt også “An English Spelling Dictionary” (Alain Kerhervé i Milon og Perelman 2010 s. 353).

“In the seventeenth century, a manual for women was edited by Henry Care, *The Female Secretary; Or, Choice New Letters Wherein Each Degree of Women May Be Accommodated with Variety of Presidents [i.e. Precedents] for the Expressing Themselves Aptly and Handsomly on Any Occasion Proper to their Sex* (London:

Thomas Ratcliffe and Mary Daniel, 1671). [...] Yet, in spite of the publication of a number of conduct books destined for women from the end of the seventeenth century, for example *The Gentlewoman's Companion; Or, A Guide to the Female Sex ... With Letters and Discourses upon All Occasions* (London: printed by T. J. for Edward Thomas, 1682) or *The Polite Lady: Or, A Course of Female Education. In a Series of Letters, from a Mother to her Daughter* (London: Printed for J. Newbery, 1760), the letter-writing manuals were largely intended for men. Their front pages occasionally stipulated that they were designed for “youth of both sexes,” as in *Familiar Letters on Various Subjects of Business and Amusement. Written in a natural easy manner; And published principally for the Service of The Younger Part of Both Sexes* (1754) edited by Charles Hallifax; the frontispiece of *Everyman His Own Letter-Writer* (1782) was revised in order to add a woman; yet James Howell's *Epistolae Ho-Eliaanae* (1705) did not comprise any letter written by a woman, and only 25% of the examples provided by *The Universal Letter-Writer* were ascribed to women in 1800.” (Alain Kerhervé i <http://www.cambridge-scholars.com/download/sample/60928>; lesedato 22.10.15)

The Lady's Complete Letter-Writer; Being a Collection of Letters Written by Ladies, Not Only on the More Important, Religious, Moral, and Facial Duties, But on Subjects of Every Other Kind that Usually Interest the Fair Sex “was initially released in 1763. As stated on its front page, it was printed in London by and for Thomas Lownds. It was printed again in 1765. [...] In all catalogues, *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer* is of unknown authorship. [...] Both editions of *The Ladies* [sic; skrevet i flertallsform] *Complete Letter-Writer* were largely advertised in other books published by Thomas Lownds, the advertisements highlighting that the manual was “dedicated to her majesty Queen Charlotte and adorned with a beautiful frontispiece, engraved by Taylor, 2s 6d, neatly bound in red” in the “books printed for T. Lownds” section of *The Discovery: Or, Memoirs of Miss Marianne Middleton. By Mrs. Woodfin...* (London: printed for T. Lownds, 1764), p. 261, and of *The Convent: Or, The History of Julia* (London: printed for T. Lowndes, 1767), p. 241, *The History of Julia* being exclusively composed of letters, and many of the books advertised in its back section dealing with women or letters, and of Eliza Haywood, *The Fruitless Enquiry. Being a Collection of Several Entertaining Histories and Occurrences, Which Fell under the Observation of a Lady in her Search after Happiness* (London: printed for T. Lowndes, 1767), p. 289.” (Alain Kerhervé i <http://www.cambridgescholars.com/download/sample/60928>; lesedato 08.10.15)

Ladies Complete Letter-Writer gir instruksjoner om ulike typer brev, forskjellige måter å tiltale mottakeren på osv. “Unlike many other manuals, *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer* was organised: It was composed of three parts of unequal length. They define three categories in which the readers were supposed to be finding the necessary models for their own correspondences. “Part 1: letters of advice to young ladies and others, from Parents, Relations, and Guardians, on the most important subjects” defines a degree of priority by its initial position and the

stress put on “the most important subjects.” However, in spite of the announced priority, that part is only composed of 22 letters, that is to say less than 20% of the total; in “Part 2: letters relating to love, courtship, marriage and the conduct of married life” (40 letters, nearly twice as many as the previous one) a specific category devoted to the relationships between the sexes was defined, even though it also contained letters of advice which might have been inserted in part 1; The selection of letters in “Part 3: Letters on various subjects of importance and amusement ... on Death, on the pleasures of the country, and the joys of town, female oeconomy, hiring and management of servants, dress, balls, assemblies etc etc and of Compliment and Civility” (60 letters) seems to have mainly originated in thematic concerns with groups of letters gathered by topic (death, natural catastrophes) or origin (letters from Haywood’s *Epistles*.” (Alain Kerhervé i <http://www.cambridgescholars.com/download/sample/60928>; lesedato 12.10.15) Det sist omtalte verket er Eliza Haywoods *Epistles for the Ladies* (1749-50).

Eksempler på anbefalte tiltaler i *Ladies Complete Letter-Writer*: “While “(my) dear” was never used in front of “Sir,” it was used almost as frequently for “Madam” as nothing. Still, the letters in that category commonly began with just “Sir” or “Madam.” When the writer decided to use the first name of or her family link to the addressee, she would almost systematically have it preceded by “dear” or “my dear,” the former being more frequent with the family link (“Dear cousin,” letters 10 and 48; “Dear daughter,” letters 15, 36, 62), the latter with the first name (“My dear Sally,” letters 16 and 106; “My dear Euphrosine,” letters 89-91, 118). To these can be added a few more exceptional phrases, such as “Cousin Jenny” (letter 33), “Most honoured Madam” (letter 3), “My dear friend” (letter 120), “My dearest” (letter 63), “Dear Miss” (letter 49), “My dear” (letters 52 and 64) which are rather close to the preceding ones. The opening of letter 122, “May it please your Majesty” is exceptional, as highlighted by the preface of the manual, because it is destined to the King of Prussia, and is thus bound to abide by the most refined rules of royal communication. However, the opening formulae do not appear above the initial sentence in fifteen letters. In six cases, no direct allusion is made to the addressee of the letter (letters 66, 70, 76, 81, 82, 96), which may sometimes have been explained by the assumed proximity of the two correspondents, at least in the correspondence from which the letters were extracted. In the other cases, the reference to the addressee is inserted in the first sentence, within the very few words when “Madam” is used, for instance: “Be not in pain, good Madam” (letter 46); “Envy, Madam, has taken the upper Hand...” (75) or “You oblige me extremely, Madam, in naming...” (76).” (Alain Kerhervé i <http://www.cambridgescholars.com/download/sample/60928>; lesedato 12.10.15)

Tyskeren Christian Fürchtegott Gellert ga i 1742 ut en bok kalt *Tanker om et godt tysk brev* og noen år senere brevformularboka *Brev for unge folk, og en praktisk avhandling om den gode smak i brev* (1751). Gellerts brevformularbok ble svært utbredt og skal ha ført til utgivelse av ca. 150 mer eller mindre like etterligninger av andre tyske forfattere i siste halvdel av 1700-tallet. Slike bøker ble også delvis

tatt i bruk i skoleundervisningen. Ifølge Gellert (og hans epigoner) bør et brev være preget av naturlighet, inderlighet, tydelighet, korthet, livskraft, hjertelighet, letthet og individualitet. Brevet bør dessuten være en fri etterligning av den gode samtale (Faulstich 2002 s. 87).

I 1782 ble det i Tyskland utgitt en *Berlinsk brevformularbok for det vanlige liv: Til bruk for tyske skoler, og for enhver som ønsker å lære seg brevskrivning* (8. opplag i 1802) (Fischer, Hickethier og Riha 1976 s. 121).

Noen gode brev ble brukt som eksempler i bok etter bok. Men “Angel Day’s *The English Secretorie* (1586), Nicholas Breton’s *Poste with a Made Packet of Letters* (1602) and Samuel Richardson’s *Familiar Letters* (1741) [...] were composed of original letters written by their authors and not taken from previous works” (Alain Kerhervé i <http://www.cambridgescholars.com/download/sample/60928>; lesedato 22.10.15).

“Charles Hallifax’s *Familiar Letters on Various Subjects of Business and Amusement. Written in a Natural, Easy Manner* (London, 1755). Even though it was not the most famous letter-writer of the period, it was reprinted several times until 1764 and largely plagiarized by many other editors, including Crowder and Dilworth, because it contained original, “genuine” letters, many of which of “his own writing from supposed persons, and upon imaginary occasions.” (Preface, p. viii). Eve Tavor Bannett points to the higher status of those letters intended for the aristocracy and the “upper strata of the mercantile and trading community.” And indeed, the letters reproduced in *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer* mainly concern ladies having to deal with their servants (letters 10, 11, 111, 112), receiving invitations to parties or other leisure activities (letters 105-109) or writing on rather trifling matters, “to dissuade a widow from a second marriage” (letter 48), “for it is impossible for me to speak what I have to say” (letter 64). Even when the writers are of lower social status, being servants or apprentices, their epistolary style remains high (letters 14, 15) and they are raised to marry “a gentleman” (letters 12, 13, 27) or an “officer” (letter 63).” (Alain Kerhervé i <http://www.cambridgescholars.com/download/sample/60928>; lesedato 22.10.15)

En av britten George Browns brevformularbøker hadde en ekstremt lang tittel: *The English Letter-writer: or, the Whole Art of general Correspondence. Consisting of A Series of the most Important, Instructive and Interesting Entire New Letters, On every Occurrence in Life. By which any Person who can use the Pen, may write Letters on every Subject, with Propriety and Elegance of Stile. In these Models for inditing Epistles on the various Occasions of Human Life, Particular Regard has been paid to the following Heads, viz. Trade, Affection, Love, Courtship, Marriage, Friendship, Instruction, History, Commerce, Industry, Prosperity, Prudence, Gratitude, Generosity, Misfortunes, Consolation, Prodigality, Virtue, Vice, Piety, Wit, Mirth, Folly, Pleasure, Humanity, Memory, Morality, Education, Happiness, Business, Sickness, Death, Integrity, Oeconomy, Affluence, Politeness, Fidelity,*

Riches, Duty of Parents, Children, and other Relations, Masters, Mistresses, Illustrious Persons, Officers, Soldiers, Seamen; and to other useful and entertaining Particulars too numerous to mention in this little Page. To which is added, a Course of Cards, or Notes of Compliments, Which will be found exceedingly convenient, on such Occasions as may not require a Letter. Together with the universal petitioner; comprehending The greatest Variety of Petitions, adapted to every Situation, with Directions for presenting them in a proper Manner. Including also a new English grammar, Or, The English Language made perfectly Easy to every Capacity. Likewise General Instructions for carrying on Epistolary Correspondence; And necessary Rules for addressing Persons of all Stations, both in Discourse and Writing. To the Whole are also added, Precedents of Leases, Bonds, Letters of Attorney, Wills, Mortgages, Wills and Powers, &c. &c. agreeable to the Forms in which they are now executed by the most eminent Attorneys (førsteutgaven er antakelig fra 1771).

Brevromanen *Pamela* (1740) ble skrevet da forfatteren Samuel Richardson ble bedt om å lage en brevformularbok for privatbrev. I stedet valgte han å skrive en roman som består av brev (og dagboksnotater). I 1741 ga Richardson ut *Letters Written to and for Particular Friends, on the Most Important Occasions* (denne boka er bedre kjent under tittelen *Familiar Letters*).

I 1793 ga tyskeren Karl Philipp Moritz ut en *Allmenn tysk brevformularbok* (*Allgemeinen deutschen Briefsteller*), en bok som inneholdt en kortfattet grammatikk, stilistiske hovedregler og en samling av alle brevsjangrer, f.eks. takksigelsesbrev, gratulasjonsbrev, trøstebrev, bønneskriv, vennskapsforsikringer, unnskyldninger, invitasjonsskriv og handelsbrev (Faulstich 2002 s. 91). Tyske Amalie Schoppe ga i 1834 ut *Brevformularbok for damer* (*Briefstellerin für Damen*).

På 1800-tallet inneholdt franske brevformularbøker oftest noen berømte brev av kjente forfattere. Det var av og til brev for helt spesielle situasjoner, som hvis en kvinne skulle skrive til kongen for å be om nåde for en dødsdømt ektemann eller sønn (Messerli og Chartier 2000 s. 439 og 444).

Kapitlene i danske og dansk-norske brevformularbøker kunne på 1800-tallet ha overskrifter som “Om Kierligheds-Skrivelser”, “Om Bryllups- og Barsel-Breve”, “Om Lykønskings-Skrivelser”, “Om Undskyldnings-Skrivelser”, “Om Kræve-Breve” osv. Eksempler på svenske bøker er Johan Biurmans *En kort doch tydelig bref-ställare* (1729), Magnus Sellanders *Brefställare* (1787) og Wilhelmina Stålbergs *Brefställare för damer* (1857). Den svenske brevformularboka *Utförlig brefställare och rådgifware i lifwets förhållanden* (1843; 8. opplag i 1862) av Ludvig Westerberg inneholder bl.a. “alla slags bref, uppsatser och juridiska skrifter, som förekomma i det borgerliga och affärlifwet” og dessuten et brev med “en faders warning till sin dotter mot romanläsning”.

Den anonyme boka *Amors-facklan: Nyaste och trefligaste brefställare för älskande af båda könen* (1898) hadde undertittelen “Innehåller äfven bref till Svar på friareannonser, från Herrar och Damer”. Boka har følgende kapitler:

“N:o 1. En ung snickarmästare anhåller om en flickas hand

N:o 2. Bref från Hilda till den unge snickaremästaren Sixten Sjöholm!

N:o 3. Ett annat bref från Hilda som hon skrivit sedan hennes fader gifvit bifall till den äktenskapliga föreningen

N:o 4. En i ekonomiska omständigheter lyckligt lottad man ger i nästföljande bref sitt giftermålsanbud åt en hyddans dotter

N:o 5. Signes bref till Hagberd, deri hon ger honom betänketid

N:o 6. Ett annat bref från Hagberd till Signe

N:o 7. Bref från Signe, der hon ger Hagberd ja

N:o 8. Annas bref till sin bereste fästman; en ung sjöman

N:o 9. En flicka, som ger sin friare korgen

N:o 10. En vän ger Sigfrid Hjalmar uppmärksamhet på att hans fästmö är honom otrogen

N:o 11. Den bedragne fästmannens bref till sin otrogna fästmö

N:o 12. Den otrogna fästmöns svar

N:o 12. Friarebref från Alfred till Maria

N:o 14. Skomakare P. som äfven förstått att hans fästmö är honom otrogen

Flickors svar på friareannonser

Friarebref N:o 15. Friarebref N:o 16. Friarebref N:o 17. Friarebref N:o 18.

Friarebref N:o 19. Friarebref N:o 20. Friarebref N:o 21.”

(<http://runeberg.org/amorsfa/>; lesedato 03.10.11)

I essayet “Reisen til Kjørkelvik” (1954) forteller Aksel Sandemose fra sin ungdom: “Det var i stilen at mellom de tre-fire bøkene vi hadde i huset var en brevformular-bok. Den var nok anskaffet mest for alle tilfelles skyld, jeg vet ikke at andre enn jeg har brukt den. Efter den skrev jeg mitt første kjærlighetsbrev, til ytterste oppspilt, og med den elskedes himmelske trekk svevende for mitt åsyn. Jeg gikk ikke av veien for slutten på den usannsynlig oppstyltede skrivelsen: Deres ydmyge Tilbeder. Eventuelt: ydmyge Slave. Jo, jeg skrev det virkelig: Deres ydmyge Tilbeder. Eventuelt: ydmyge Slave. Så var jeg da også tretten år, og piken het Martha.”

Det svenske postverket har gitt ut bl.a. *Våra brev: En modern brevställare* (1960) og *Företagets brev* (1966).

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