

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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Om leksikonet: [https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om\\_leksikonet.pdf](https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om_leksikonet.pdf)

## Eskapisme

Fra engelsk “escape”: “rømme”, “flykte”, “unngå”. Flukt fra virkeligheten gjennom å lese, se film eller på andre måter. Forbindes ofte med bestemte sjangrer, som krim, fantasy og kjærlighetsromaner. Ordet “eskapisme” har for de fleste en negativ klang, og verk som fremmer eskapisme har blitt anklaget for fremmedgjøring, for å skape en uheldig avstand til det dagligdage. Eskapistiske verk oppfyller ønsket om å komme i en feel-good-stemning eller oppleve intens spenning (og gir ønskeoppfyllelse i fantasien også for annet som vi lengter etter). Litteraturen får en kompensatorisk funksjon. Fiksjonen kompenserer for mangler som finnes i den virkelige verden, den gir oss et pusterom og en pause i trivialitetene og luller oss inn i. Fiksjonen skaper en balanse med det som må forsakes, et surrogat for de ønskene som ikke blir oppfylt i virkeligheten, en avkobling og lindring fra hverdagens frustrasjoner, bekymringer og plager.

“[I]n their spare time they [mediebrukere] want relief from both boredom and effort simultaneously” (Christine Evans i <http://cinophile.ca/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/evans-serialkillers.pdf>; lesedato 28.08.19). “[E]scapism implies something intolerable or displeasing about the reality of one’s everyday life, we do not wish to escape from that which we enjoy” (Steve Brie og William Rossiter i <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/5f41/002f8bdf74f64295e782e22f7ab8ff21486a.pdf>; lesedato 13.02.20). Vi bruker litteratur, filmer osv. til å rømme fra frustrasjoner. Frustrasjon krever kompensasjon. “The less people can handle day to day, the more they look for escapism.” (Lawrence O’Toole i Mathijs og Mendik 2008 s. 260)

“In fact most of us do not watch movies to simply ‘escape’ or ‘bliss out’, as though we were taking some powerful drug or entering a dark flotation chamber. What we enjoy is the play of elements. On the one hand, these belong to the recognisably real world, whether the problems of how to conduct intimate relationships, or the perils of street fighting, or the rights and wrongs of war. On the other hand, there are elements that we savour from the media world created for us with its own rules and pleasures.” (Gill Branston i Gillespie og Toynbee 2006 s. 65)

“Vi ønsker oss en enklere hverdag, og vi forsvinner gjerne inn i en verden som tilsynelatende er mindre vanskelig og stressende.” (Øvern 2011 s. 47) “Sometimes the relationship between reading and living may be obvious. You have had a

stressful day at work so you want to relax with escapism. Life seems flat so you look for challenges and excitement in your reading.” (Riel og Fowler 1996 s. 21)  
“The public wants stories because it wants to escape. We talk about escape literature, yet we don’t stop to think of how we escape by the use of escape literature, what we escape from, and why there is this yearning for escape.” (Erle Stanley Gardner sitert fra *Fugate og Fugate* 1980 s. 93)

“Escapism is often seen negatively, but the emphasis here rests on the perceived therapeutic nature of the escape, which progresses beyond relaxation and relates to some participants’ inability to engage with emotionally challenging texts when depressed. “When I have been in a very severe depressive state, I read children’s books. Sometimes I just go [to the library] and look at the pictures” (Amelia).” (Liz Brewster i Rothbauer, *Skjerdingsstad m.fl.* 2016 s. 176)

“Many pejorative judgments have been made about reading and literature; in particular, the concept of escapism, with its connections to fantasy and avoiding responsibility, has been seen in a negative light (Nell 1988). Escapism is connected to other qualities ascribed to literature, including absorption in or entrancement by a story – the idea of being *wrapped up* in what you are reading.” (Liz Brewster i Rothbauer, *Skjerdingsstad m.fl.* 2016 s. 169-170)

Litteratur og annen kunst kan fungere som “the last bastion against the demands of the outside world [...] to escape the unreasonable demands of society.” (Wittmann 1999 s. 311). Lesere kan “escape our own muddled lives for a bit and find the clarity that only the best fiction can provide” (Wells 2011 s. 71). Leserne kan bruke “fantasireiser som avspenningsmetode” (Putzer-Maier 2018 s. 55).

Richard Dyer hevder i artikkelen “Entertainment and Utopia” (1981) at noen verk “offer the image of “something better” to escape into, or something we want deeply that our day-to-day lives don’t provide” (her sitert fra Smith 2005 s. 13). Som et motstykke til kaos byr fiksjonen på livsmening, varme og trygghet (<http://www.datum.at/artikel/dreigroschenheros/>; lesedato 18.03.15). Litteratur og andre medier kan brukes til “wish-fulfilment” (Schroer 2007 s. 313) og “opplevelseskonsum, indre emigrasjon og eskapisme” (Peinhardt, Sparschuh m.fl. 1983 s. 31). Bak behovet for denne litteraturen kan det ligge et behov for omveltninger i hverdagen: kjærlighet, penger, lykke, spenning, skjønnhet. Lesere kan “indulge in common fantasies like becoming suddenly wealthy” (Gross 2008). “Common desires include beauty, fame, money, and power. These specific desires can be found in the premise of a particular work; for instance, *Harry Potter* fulfills the desire of having magical powers.” (<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Analysis/Escapism>; lesedato 12.06.18)

“The Cinderella story has been told and retold many, many thousands of times. It is a common denominator which has the greatest public appeal. It is a soothing syrup to the unfortunate. It leads people to believe that there is somewhere a magic

power, a fairy godmother, which will make their dreams come true – therefore it isn't simply a waste of time to have dreams. People love to dream, people love to yearn. If they can be convinced that the yearning and the dreaming have some solid foundation in fact they are going to love the media by which that belief is inculcated in their minds.” (Erle Stanley Gardner sitert fra *Fugate og Fugate* 1980 s. 98-99)

Mange ønsker en form for “forløsning” og søker det i fiksjon. Fiksjonen kan tilby en bedre, alternativ verden (Geimer 2010 s. 24). Kunsten blir et motstykke til hverdagsvirkeligheten; den første framstår som helhetlig og meningsfull, den andre derimot som disharmonisk eller splintret. Sigmund Freud hevdet at kunst setter oss i en “lett narkose” (“milde Narkose”; Freud 1954 s. 111). Dette gjelder ifølge Freud all kunst. Kunsten kan være både en kilde til lyst og en trøster ved at man henses i en mild narkose, bort fra livets besvær (Freud gjengitt fra Kohtes 1994 s. 177). En tekst kan fungere som et tilfluktssted, et sted som er fullt av mening, bortenfor det reelle livets forvirring (Raimond 2002 s. 24).

“Freud sees popular literature as making an unambiguous appeal to universal human needs and desires. In the same way as daydreams, popular literature can offer the reader a place where secret and forbidden desires and dreams can be lived out and freely put into words. As for the difference between daydreams and popular literature, Freud later on points out that the literary techniques serve to generalise and deprivatise the daydream, making it seem fascinating by reason of its forbidden character instead of personal and embarrassing.” (Naper 1999 s. 130)

I Nini Roll Ankers roman *Den som henger i en tråd* (1935) blir mange unge kvinner for en tid oppsagt fra konfeksjonsfabrikken, og noen benytter tiden til å lese. Kvinnene er vant til lav lønn og kummerlige forhold. Om personen Rakel står det at hun helst ville lese “om fine folk og rike, om grevinner med diamanter og revolvermenn som stjal dem; om hushjelpere som var damer og sjåførere som var herrer. Fattige stakkarer, nød og arbeidsløshet og sørgelighet var det nok av utenfor bøkene.” (i kapitlet som begynner med setningen “Det følger fritid med arbeidsløshet.”)

Folks drømmer og lengsler kan i noen typer litteratur bli ikledd fiksjonsdrakt. Fortellingene gir oss da språk og bilder for det som er ønskeopplyllende, det som tilfredstiller vårt spenningsbehov og gir næring til dagdrømmer. Både barn, ungdom og voksne identifiserer seg ofte med hovedpersonen og leser for å finne helte-forbilder som kan leve videre i deres imaginære verden av dagdrømmer. I likhet med i drømmer og dagdrømmer det være sterk ønskeopplyllelse (hovedpersonen blir rik, berømt og lykkelig). Ønskene blir “symbolsk oppfylt” (Letourneux 2010 s. 206).

“Fengslende! Det vil si at det fanger, som i et fengsel! Fange av sine drømmer, av sine falske forhåpninger ... Man må drømme. Mens folk drømmer, tenker de ikke

på å forbedre sin eksistens. Det holder at historien har en lykkelig slutt for at de kan tro at deres liv også kan forandre seg, som ved et trylleslag.” (Claude Duneton sitert fra <https://books.openedition.org/pul/40502>; lesedato 17.08.23)

“You are your favorite character. One of the reasons a person enjoys their favorite fictional character is because they unconsciously or consciously want to be that character. People can fulfill their needs and desires through a fictional character or through an anonymous persona. This includes desires that are repressed or things our normal selves would never do. These Escapist Characters are never what we are, but a combination of what we are and what we wish we were. This is called psychological projection.” (<http://vtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Analysis/Escapism>; lesedato 12.06.18)

Populær, underholdende litteratur har blitt kalt “surrogatlitteratur” fordi den forfører oss inn i eventyrlige fantasiverdener (Gelfert 2010 s. 109).

Den danske forfatteren Morten Korch har solgt millioner av bøker i Danmark. I 1972 skrev han: “Der er jo ikke i vor tid særlig meget lyst og godt i tilværelsen, men så længe jeg kan skrive, skal man altid kunne finde det i mine bøger.” (sitert fra Andersen, Harsløf m.fl. 1977 s. 20)

Verket er samfunnsnyttig ved å gi leseren eller seeren avveksling og hvile (Nøjgaard 1993 s. 135). Fiktive verk kan ha en “avlastende funksjon” (Glaser og Luserke 1996 s. 78). Leseren glemmer sine bekymringer, glemmer hverdagens utfordringer og problemer. Det kan også få tiden til å gå fort for en som kjeder seg. Og mange populære bokserier speiler lesernes behov for eller ønske om harmoni, lykke og suksess (*Presse & Buch* nr. 3 i 1995 s. 20). Målet er å drømme seg bort på en måte som har blitt kalt “narkotisering” (fransk “narcotisation”) (Esquenazi 2007 s. 35). Samfunnet “behersker mennesker ved at give deres fantasier friløb i en fastlagt social form.” (Skyum-Nielsen 1982 s. 325)

“Growing numbers of observers contend that the dominant public role of our time has shifted from citizen to consumer. Indeed, respondents in polls typically cite entertainment, shopping, and other consumer activities as their top free time preferences. Commercial media and public entertainment venues offer environments carefully constructed to avoid politics and real world problems that might disturb these consumer impulses.” (<https://depts.washington.edu/ccce/polcommcampaigs/CultureJamming.htm>; lesedato 21.03.18)

Den tysk-østerrikske teater- og filmregissøren Max Reinhardt sa om en Shakespeare-filminnspilling i USA: “Amerikaneren elsker spesielt sensasjonsstykker eller sentimentale kitsch-kjærlighetsromaner, for han vil etter dagens slit glemme slitet [...] Og han forestiller seg “livet” enten som sensasjonelt eller søtt, uansett alltid slik som han ikke selv opplever det.” (her sitert fra Friedrich 2003)

Etter det store børskrakket i oktober 1929 gikk den vestlige verden inn i en langvarig økonomisk nedgangsperiode. Det var den største finansielle krisen i den industrialiserte verden inntil da, og kom til å prege hele 1930-tallet. De vanskelige tidene ble en oppgangstid for kinoene, og filmer som f.eks. *King Kong* (1933; regissert av Ernest B. Schoedsack og Merian C. Cooper) ble sett av millioner, fordi folk i kinosetene for en kort stund kunne unnsnippe sin nød. Nettopp *King Kong* appellerte dessuten ved at “uhyret” til slutt blir overvunnet av moderne teknologi – som dermed viste at det finnes midler mot farer og elendighet (Jan Welding i [https://monami.hs-mittweida.de/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/8798/file/BA\\_JAN\\_WELDING\\_2016.pdf](https://monami.hs-mittweida.de/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/8798/file/BA_JAN_WELDING_2016.pdf); lesedato 13.01.22).

“In the 1930s, during the Great Depression, people went to the movies to escape the harsh realities of poverty. Movies were one of the few, and possibly the only business, that showed a profit during the Depression, because people had such a strong desire to escape their lives for a while. So the theme in the 1930s could be emotional optimism – no matter how unrealistic it was.” (John Reich i <https://openlibrary-repo.ecampusontario.ca>; lesedato 03.09.24)

“[F]ilm audiences are to earn in the workaday world then retreat to spend their earnings at the motion picture palaces, where they play vicariously at motion picture palace princess and prince, caught in an endless cycle of spending to dream and dreaming of spending.” (Kamilla Elliott i Ryan 2004 s. 227-228)

Den tyske filosofen Walter Benjamin skrev: “Jo mindre den samfunnsmessige betydning av en kunstart blir, desto mer faller [...] den kritiske og den nytende innstillingen hos publikum fra hverandre” (her sitert fra Glaser og Luserke 1996 s. 184).

Robert T. Eberwein hevder i boka *Film and the Dream Screen: A Sleep and a Forgetting* (1984) at film ofte gjør oss til små babyer igjen, uten evne til å skille mellom oss selv og de andre (en reversering av modningen i retning “ego differentiation”). For den tyske filosofen Herbert Marcuse representerte eskapismen i det rike Vesten en “repressiv avsublimering”, dvs. at potensielle opprørske ønsker formildes og avledes i retning hedonisme i konsumsamfunnet (Hager 1992 s. 162). Kunst/litteratur blir en alternativ virkelighet uten de problemene vi sliter med i våre egne liv.

Ifølge Marcuse bygger de fleste mennesker opp en “lykkelig bevissthet” og aksepterer samfunnets undertrykkelse slik at de ikke lar sin frykt og følelse av å være ulykkelig få slippe til med full kraft (Palmier 1968 s. 129). De virkelighetsfjerne verkene gjør det lettere å akseptere den virkeligheten som leseren eller seeren faktisk befinner seg i.

De tyske filosofene Adorno og Horkheimer skrev i *Opplysningens dialektikk* (1947): “Arbeidsprosessen i fabrikk og på kontor kan bare unnviks gjennom

utjevningen i fritiden.” (sitert fra Winter 2010 s. 39) Den verdenen vi flykter inn i, blir en “motvirkelighet”. Men Horkheimer og Adorno hevder at leseren ikke primært flykter fra en vanskelig virkelighet, men fra tanken på å yte motstand mot det hun eller han er misfornøyd med (gjengitt fra Arnold og Sinemus 1983 s. 443).

“Theodor Adorno explained: People want to have fun. A fully concentrated and conscious experience of art is possible only to those whose lives do not put such a strain on them that in their spare time they want relief from both boredom and effort simultaneously. The whole sphere of cheap commercial entertainment reflects this dual desire. It induces relaxation because it is patterned and pre-digested.” (Whitney Rugg i <http://humstatic.uchicago.edu/faculty/wjtm/glossary/2004/kitsch.htm>; lesedato 03.10.16)

“We might understand the experience [of escaping] better if we ask what readers are escaping *from*? The most general answer seems to be the boredom and frustration that accompany the intractable problems of everyday adult life” (Appleyard 1990 s. 165). “Denne formen for fortelling fjerner angsten som finnes i et samfunn som blir mer og mer komplisert, der virvelen av teknikker, forandringer, informasjoner ... utøver et traumatiserende press på leserne.” (Saint-Michel 1979 s. 164) De fiktive verdenene blir trøstende alternativer ved å gi behagelig spenning og ønskeoppfyllelse. Verkene gir kompensasjon for det som mangler, de har ventilfunksjon for frustrasjon og aggresjon (Greiner 1974 s. 153). Spenningen skapes f.eks. ved underholdningsvold (voldsskildringer som underholdning, avkobling og virkelighetsflukt).

“[W]hat the French call *divertissement*, to take our minds off reality, to enjoy a moment of calm estrangement or titillation, to appreciate the extraordinary in the ordinary [...] We do not need fantasy to compensate for dull lives, but, I want to suggest, we need it for spiritual regeneration and to contemplate alternatives to our harsh realities. More than titillation, we need the fantastic for resistance.” (Jack Zipes i <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1392&context=clcweb>; lesedato 15.03.24)

Filmforskeren Andrew Britton skrev i essayet “Blissing Out: The Politics of Reaganite Entertainment” (1986) at “entertainment” møter oss “off duty” og ikke krever annet enn at vi lener oss tilbake, slapper av og koser oss. Underholdning signaliserer dermed at det øvrige i tilværelsen er mindre tilfredsstillende. “Entertainment tells us to forget our troubles and to get happy, but it also tells us that in order to do so we must agree deliberately to switch life off.” Virkeligheten framtrer som urokkelig, uforanderlig, derfor trenger vi flukt fra den inn i noe som ikke er virkelighet. “The ideology of entertainment is one of the many means by which late capitalism renders the idea of transforming the real unavailable for serious consideration.” Nyttelsen i virkelighetsflukten er ifølge Britton koblet sammen med det overflatiske, trivielle, uviktige. Vi skal nyte dette uviktige samtidig som selve flukten er viktig ved å underholde oss.

“[D]et å leve seg inn i noe som er totalt annerledes, tilfredsstillende et fundamentalt behov, også om det skjer innenfor reint eskapistisk morskapslesing. Også eskapismen kan på et vis åpne grensene rundt normalvirkeligheten, sjøl om det ikke viser veg fram til holdbare alternative verdier. Det kan holde i live en følelse av livets og universets mangfold og utstrekning å lese om fremmede og merkelige verdener [...] Det har noe å gjøre med at vi for en stakkert stund kjenner en frihet fra tyngdeloven i både egentlig og metaforisk forstand, en frihet fra trykket av alle de nødvendighetens lover vi presses ned av til daglig.” (Åsfrid Svensen i Birkeland og Risa 1993 s. 101)

Litteraturen tilfredsstillende ønsket om en bedre og mindre “kjedelig” verden (Arnold og Sinemus 1983 s. 437). Verkene rommer ifølge en fransk forsker ofte en slags utopi: Kjærligheten seirer og de gode overvinne alle de hindringene som finnes i virkelighetens verden (Esquenazi 2007 s. 34-35). “The fundamental general appeal of the romance novel, like that of all genre fiction, is to our basic human desire and need for escape from the routine and anxiety of everyday life into a fantasy where things are new, different, or exciting, and where everything will usually turn out “right.” ” (Ramsdell 1999 s. 19) “Perhaps romance novels allow women to escape boring routines, and present a guideline for “ideal” romantic behavior.” (Helen Leedy i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40968918>; lesedato 14.03.24)

En amerikansk lesesirkel for kvinner valgte kjærlighetsromaner til å lese sammen og snakke om i gruppa. De ville ha “books that speak to the emotions, not the intellect. [...] Group members also support each other in reading for escape, a mode of reading that is one reason romances are so stigmatized. Members in the suburban group recognize that they are seeking escape and feel entirely justified in this wish because of the difficulties that they face in everyday life. As one member says: “I don’t want to read a book that has a painful ending. That is escape. You know, all of us live our lives in very real, I do, in very realistic ways. I recognize there are things I’m never going to do. There are things I look back on with wonder and joy. But to read something to escape and be kind of rewarded – to read something that is going to end with people getting together, I mean that is important to me.” (Griffin 1999, 296)” (Long 2003 s. 160)

Lesere av kjærlighetsromaner, i en leserundersøkelse, “readily admit in fact that the characters and events discovered in the pages of the typical romance do not resemble the people and occurrences they must deal with in their daily lives. On the basis of the following comments, made in response to a question about what romances “do” better than other novels available today, one can conclude that it is precisely the unreal, fantastic shape of the story that makes their literal escape even more complete and gratifying. Although these are only a few of the remarks given in response to the undirected question, they are representative of the group’s general sentiment.

Romances hold my interest and do not leave me depressed or up in the air at the end like many modern day books tend to do. Romances also just make me feel good reading them as I identify with the heroines.

The kind of books I mainly read are very different from everyday living. That's why I read them. Newspapers, etc., I find boring because all you read is sad news. I can get enough of that on TV news. I like stories that take your mind off everyday matters.

Different than everyday life.

Everyone is always under so much pressure. They like books that let them escape.

Because it is an escape, and we can dream. And pretend that it is our life.

I'm able to escape the harsh world a few hours a day.

It is a way of escaping from everyday living.

They always seem an escape and they usually turn out the way you wish life really was.

I enjoy reading because it offers me a small vacation from everyday life and an interesting and amusing way to pass the time." (Radway 1983)

"[R]omance reading as an escape [...] implies flight from some situation in the real world which is either stifling or overwhelming, as well as a metaphoric transfer to another, more desirable universe where events are happily resolved. Unashamed to admit that they like to indulge in temporary escape, the Smithton women are also surprisingly candid about the circumstances that necessitate their desire. When asked to specify what they are fleeing from, they invariably mention the "pressures" and "tensions" they experience as wives and mothers. Although none of the women can cite the voluminous feminist literature about the psychological toll exacted by the constant demand to physically and emotionally nurture others, they are nonetheless eloquent about how draining and unrewarding their duties can be. [...] many of the women explained in the interviews that despite their disappointments, they feel refreshed and strengthened by their vicarious participation in a fantasy relationship where the heroine is frequently treated as they themselves would most like to be loved. [...] [the reader] may well turn to romance reading in an effort to construct a fantasy-world where she is attended, as the heroine is, by a man who reassures her of her special status and unique identity." (Radway 1983)

"The romance reader in effect is permitted the experience of feeling cared for, the sense of having been affectively reconstituted, even if both are lived only



vicariously. [...] the ideal romance may thus enable a woman to satisfy vicariously those psychological needs created in her by a patriarchal culture unable to fulfill them” (Radway 1983).

“We must begin to recognize that romance reading is fueled by dissatisfaction and disaffection, not by perfect contentment with woman’s lot. Moreover, we must also understand that some romance readers’ experiences are not strictly congruent with the set of ideological propositions that typically legitimate patriarchal marriage. They are characterized, rather, by a sense of longing caused by patriarchal marriage’s failure to address all their needs. In recognizing both the yearning and the fact that its resolution is only a vicarious one not so easily achieved in a real situation, we may find it possible to identify more precisely the very limits of patriarchal ideology’s success. Endowed thus with a better understanding of what women want, but often fail to get from the traditional arrangements they consciously support” (Radway 1983).

En gruppe amerikanske kvinner som var hyppige lesere av kjærlighetsromaner “express their discontent with their restricted social world by indulging in a fantasy that vicariously supplies the pleasure and attention they need, and thereby effectively staves off the necessity of presenting those needs as demands in the real world. Simultaneously, the romance short-circuits the impulse to connect the desire to escape with the institution of marriage or with male intolerance precisely because it demonstrates that a woman like the heroine can admit the truth of the feminist discovery that women *are* intelligent and independent and yet continue to be protected paternally by a man.” (Radway 1983)

“Since we are dull and lead dull, stupid lives, we seek, in fiction, dare-devil, nonchalant, keen-witted fellows, who have interesting things happen to them. [...] Now if a reader can identify himself with a character, say to himself, perhaps not knowingly: “That’s the sort of fellow I am, or would be, if I were in his shoes, and – that’s what I’d try to do, and that’s what will get him out of his difficulty!” the author has caught and held the reader’s attention. And that’s an author’s job – to rouse the reader’s curiosity, interest, attention, whatever you want to call it, and – in the case of a serial or series – to make the reader want to read more of that serial or about the central character in the series.” (den amerikanske forleggeren George Briggs Jenkins sitert fra *Fugate og Fugate* 1980 s. 82-83)

Verket gir en idyllisk visjon som beroliger oss i stedet for å problematisere (Nøjgaard 1993 s. 133-134). Det er en utopisk dimensjon i slik populærkultur: “its appeal to the consumer is linked to its ability to offer symbolic solutions to real world problems and felt needs. [...] mass-culture texts must evoke and manage social and political anxieties and fantasies. [...] Richard Dyer has similarly argued that entertainment offers an “image of something better” than the realm of everyday experience; entertainment gratifies because it holds open the imagined possibility of satisfying spectators’ actual lacks and desires. Entertainment, Dyer asserts,

teaches us “what utopia would feel like” (Dyer 1985, 222). In a discussion of the American musical, Dyer contrasts popular entertainment with real-world problems: popular entertainment promises abundance instead of scarcity, energy instead of exhaustion, intensity instead of dreariness, transparency instead of manipulation, community instead of fragmentation.” (Jenkins 1992 s. 281)

Kvinner som leser mange kjærlighetsromaner og “dameromaner”, kan oppfattes som frustrerte i forhold til sin reelle samlivssituasjon. “[W]hen viewed from the vantage point of a feminism that would like to see the women’s oppositional impulse lead to a real social change, romance reading can also be seen as an activity that could potentially disarm that impulse [av protest, motstand, behov for reelle forandringer]. It might do so because it supplies vicariously those needs and requirements that might otherwise be formulated as demands in the real world and lead to the potential restructuring of sexual relations.” (Radway 1991 s. 213). Fiksjon kan sløve og avvæpne opprørstrang.

“A housewife regularly buys romance novels and find some pleasure in her husband’s disapproval – buying a romance is both spending money on herself instead of on the family (an indulgent evasion of the ideology of the housewife) and buying a cultural place of her own. The act of reading is evasive: she “loses” herself in the book in an evasion of the ideology of femininity which disciplines women to find themselves only in relation to other people, particularly within the family. This loss is characteristic of *jouissance* and enables her to avoid the forces that subjugate her, which in turn produces a sense of empowerment and an energy otherwise repressed. These evasive pleasures are not text-specific: any book will produce them provided it can take her out of the social self.” (Fiske 2010 s. 44; basert på Radway 1984)

Amerikaneren Rudolph Bold skrev i en artikkel i tidsskriftet *Library Journal* i 1980 om den typiske leser av dameromaner: “She’s a 200-pound lady with a bad complexion, a husband who philanders, and kids who never shut up. She didn’t graduate from high school, had to get married and can’t afford a psychiatrist, and so she must continue to live in a world she never made and doesn’t much like. For her there is the escape of reading, not best sellers or popular biographies, but those paper-backed romantic nirvanas that sell themselves in supermarkets and bus terminals. And along with other house-bound housewives, maiden aunts, retired telephone operators . . . she escapes for an hour or two each day into a delicate world where romance warms the heart and perversion dare not enter.” (siteret fra <http://www.allbusiness.com/humanities-social-science/>; lesedato 07.06.11) Den kanadiske litteraturprofessoren Catherine Ross innvender: “Who is this 200-pound high school dropout and where did she come from? Not, certainly from actual data on romance readers. Readership surveys have consistently found that romance readers resemble a normal cross-section of the female population, apart from having attained, on average, a higher level of education.” (samme nettside)

“When our circumstances improve our use of escape through romance ceases. In my own case, I began reading Harlequins when I was writing my Ph.D. thesis – a time of great pressure when I could not justify taking any time for myself. I got no relief, for instance, from going for a walk or to a movie with friends because I felt that I shouldn’t be there. I would, on occasion, find myself longing for a Harlequin because I could count on more sure and total escape from pressure with Harlequins than any other form of leisure and could provide. After I completed my thesis I no longer felt that longing to escape into a Harlequin, no longer felt the immense pleasure/relief when reading them, and gradually stopped. Many women have told me that they, too, have had a “Harlequin period” which gradually came to an end. On hindsight it was a time of particular pressure – for instance, when they were mothering young children, under pressure as an adolescent or in the final year of university. Other women who are intensely pressured and starved for nurture all their lives remain dependent on Harlequins all their lives. The lack of resources, time, and money for leisure away from home; the lack of social and personal acceptance of women’s visibly leisure; the nature of many women’s lives in which work and responsibility are a constant 24 hour reality, where there is no private place away from these; and the emotional deprivation almost all women suffer in a heterosexually structure society where women are care providers, rarely receivers, and where most women can expect no mothering or nurture after early adolescence, all combine to explain why the fantasy of mothering in the guise of a romantic hero is the predominant form of escape for women.” (Miles 1988)

“The fantasy is available free in our own heads, or very cheaply in Harlequins, and it can be indulged at home, even by women with no time and no power, if they are prepared to read after working a 16 hour day when everyone is out or in bed – which many do. More important for women whose pressures are never ending and who cannot even justify to themselves (let alone others) taking time away, Harlequins provide certain and total escape for the two hours it takes to read them. When asked why they read Harlequins some readers answer quite simply, “It beats tranquilizers or alcohol” – an eloquent testimony to the desperation of their lives and to their self-knowledge. [...] a catapult into another world that is as reliable as drugs. This more than anything else is the reason that Harlequins are such a standby for women who desperately need escape.” (Miles 1988)

“[W]omen brutalized by men often read romances or even begin to read them when things get bad. They are under no illusion that real life or real men in any way resemble the Harlequin world or the Harlequin hero. The comfort from escape is nevertheless enormous because it does not depend on any expectations of a male saviour or male comfort” i virkelighetens verden (Miles 1988).

Tyskeren Hans Deppe regisserte blant andre filmene *Schwarzwald-jenta* (1950) og *Grønn er lyngmoen* (1951) som begge ble sett av ca. 15 millioner tyskere det samme tiåret (Schenk, Tröhler og Zimmermann 2010 s. 254). Den grunnleggende harmoniske virkeligheten i disse filmene (i likhet med i andre, lignende

“heimatfilmer”) stod i en klar, men fortrøstningsfull kontrast til hverdagen for de fleste i den tidlige etterkrigstidens Vest- og Øst-Tyskland. Disse filmene var et “erklært motstykke til den aktuelle samtiden, en utopi, og ble også forstått som en sådan. Forsoning i omfattende betydning av ordet er deres grunnleggende budskap, og forsoning var også det publikum søkte.” (Schenk, Tröhler og Zimmermann 2010 s. 254).

“The unreal, over-the-top fantasy world of Hollywood provided them [publikum] with an escape from the real world.” (Schenk, Tröhler og Zimmermann 2010 s. 326) Den italienske regissøren Roberto Rossellini hevdet at film ofte fungerer som virkelighetsflukt og som beskyttelse mot virkeligheten (gjengitt fra Bessières 2011 s. 236).

En tysk kvinne vokste opp i en konfliktfylt familie. Hennes strategi var ofte å lukke seg inn på sitt rom og lese for å komme til en alternativ verden, med boka som en slags “beskyttelse” (Öxle 2014 s. 57-58).

I en bok om den britiske krimforfatteren Edgar Wallace skriver Margaret Lane: “[L]äsaren av thrillers har i allmänhet ingen särskild önskan att behöva bry sin hjärna. Han vill ha upphetsning utan oro, spänning utan fruktan, våldsamhet utan smärta och skräck utan avsmak. Och i Wallaces fantasivärld finner han denna trygga upphetsning och flykt från verkligheten som är grunden för all populär underhållning.” (Lane 1940 s. 250)

“Mysteries and thrillers are often dismissed as “escape literature,” but this only begs the question: escape from what? The answer, already implied, would seem to be, escape from ambiguity. Both the detective story and the spy story depend upon explicit moral and political standards. There is always action, but more importantly there is always unequivocal judgment of action. The reader’s interest lies as much in escaping the uncertainties of daily life as its banalities. Obviously, exotic scenes and extravagant actions are a factor in the appeal of the genre. But reassurance is its primary function.” (Van Dover 1984 s. 9)

“Detective fiction owes its success to the fact that it teaches nothing.” (Moretti 2005 s. 138) J. R. R. Tolkien hevdet at hans fantasy-litteratur ikke oppfordret til eskapisme (bl.a. i foredraget “On Fairy-Stories”).

En tysk 39 år gammel mannlig skrekkfilm-entusiast sa i et intervju med en forsker: “Jeg ser gjerne på skrekkfilmer. Da kan jeg på en vidunderlig måte drive avspenning og av og til glemme hverdagsstresset. Man har jo ellers på jobben ergrelser nok og tv-programmene er kjedelige, alltid med gjentakelser” (Winter 2010 s. 223).

“Mary Sue” er en betegnelse på en idealisert versjon av en selv, og oppstår vanligvis gjennom dagdrømming. Det er en bedre versjon av meg selv, en helt/

heltinne som alle må beundre. Mary Sue er godhjertet, klok osv., og løser problemene som oppstår. “Mary Sues are a specific form of Escapist Character. Despite the lack of a concrete definition, there is one trait that all Mary Sues have in common: all of them are a form of Wish Fulfillment. A Mary Sue is a cry of help from our subconscious and one of the most pure expressions of repressed desire. Mary Sues are reflections of the person’s innermost aspects of their personality. They are made only to fill the mold of the person that created them. That’s exactly why what a person needs and desires in Real Life is going to be expressed through them. While a balanced escapist character represents both what we are (our flaws) and what we wish we were, a Mary Sue is defined by only the latter. They only represent what we wish we were. That perfection has the price of the humanity of that character. Most Mary Sues are created because their creators have dreams and desires that they are unable to fulfill. They are often created by people that have repressed desires or have experienced many frustrations in their lives. They are used to express suffering and/or frustration. They are a complete or near complete denial of reality. For this reason they can be considered a mechanism of defense and a reflection of who the person really is and what they desperately need in Real Life.” (<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Analysis/Escapism>; lesedato 12.06.18)

“Esteem and valor is the need of having good self-esteem and a positive concept of ourselves. We often feel that we are not special or have no worth, and sometimes we see ourselves as average or below average and without anything special in us. For this reason, we like to imagine ourselves as being special all along in our fantasies. Often, the hero starts his or her journey as being someone who seems to be average. However, the hero discovers that he is special somehow. They may be a person who is chosen by destiny to have a great future, a Chosen One, the son of a god, of a magical race, or the destined savior of mankind. It is also not uncommon for our fantasy avatar to be portrayed as beautiful. This is for us to feel more secure about ourselves and to feel safe and valued in social interactions.” (<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Analysis/Escapism>; lesedato 12.06.18)

“Escapism isn’t always about making an idealized version of ourselves. We can also “escape” through the problems of others. Humor and Tragedy frequently rely on this. People often rely on the suffering of others to forget their own troubles or simply to see their own in a more positive perspective. Humor and tragedy are ways to escape reality without Escapist Characters. In them, we see not what we wish to be but what is, what we are (in a positive aspect), or what we wouldn’t want to be. This is the reason most humor relies on the suffering of someone or highlighting the defects of a person like stupidity. Escapism makes you feel better in two ways. It makes you what you wish you were through Escapist Characters. It also makes you feel better by looking at others that are in a situation worse than your own, and we can ultimately identify our own suffering in them.” (<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Analysis/Escapism>; lesedato 12.06.18)

“Contrary to popular belief, dystopic, Crapsack World settings – such as a Zombie Apocalypse or a horror movie – are forms of escapism, too. Despite the fact that they are less pleasant than average everyday life, they give something everyday life doesn’t: a higher purpose. They break the monotony and make you forget your everyday problems. For instance, the thrill of fighting for survival is not only a perfect excuse to break the rules, but it also implies you are special somehow. You are important enough that something or someone wants to hurt you. Your life becomes so vulnerable that just trying to keep it is exciting. Like riding a roller-coaster, your life isn’t really in danger but the illusion of it is thrilling. You are no longer an average person living an average life. You are a normal person living an extraordinary life.” (<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Analysis/Escapism>; lesedato 12.06.18)

I noen tilfeller brukes betegnelsen eskapisme for å lokke lesere til å kjøpe en bok. I en annonse for den britiske forfatteren K. M. Peytons roman *No turning back* (2008) ble boka omtalt som “this escapist novel” (i magasinet *Booktime*, redigert av Ruth Hunter, juni 2008 s. 23).

De britiske myndighetene anbefalte traumatiserte soldater etter 1. verdenskrig å lese Jane Austens romaner (Hudelet 2006 s. 122). Det har blitt sagt om hennes bøker at “It is the very unreality of her stories that gives them their power, and provokes in their readers a strong desire to enter the world they describe, to live in it, to build extensions, add personal touches” (Hudelet 2006 s. 125). Den britiske konservative politikeren Harold Macmillan, som var statsminister i årene 1957-63, opplevde “stress ved sitt embete, men han hadde en fin løsning på problemene: “Sometimes the stress is awful, you have to resort to Jane Austen”.” (*Bokvennen* nr. 1 i 2002 s. 45)

“In an interview with *Jane Austen’s Regency World* magazine, British actress Angela Barlow comments that “one element to enjoy and pass on in Jane Austen, it seems to me, is her sane orderliness and balance. I love to read her when I’m confused, angry, tired, or ill.” ” (Wells 2011 s. 72) “In Jane Austen’s books, in particular *Pride and Prejudice*, I could escape from reality and life. It was a place where I felt safe, and where I didn’t carry my fears or worries with me. They all seemed to just fade away, and I felt as if I was really alive, happy, intrigued, and excited all at the same time when reading her books.” (Elizabeth Shek sitert fra Wells 2011 s. 74)

Den nazistiske propagandaministeren Joseph Goebbels vektla kunsten som trøst: “Jo tyngre en tid er, desto mer lysende må kunsten som trøsterinne for menneskesjelen heve seg over den.” (sitert fra Reichel 1991 s. 180) Menneskene bruker kunsten som en deodorant, til å fjerne hverdagens vonde lukt. Ifølge Albert Speer skal Hitler ha lest den tyske forfatteren Karl Mays indianer-romaner som trøst når det begynte å gå dårlig for Tyskland under krigen.

Under 2. verdenskrig i Storbritannia “reading was an important form of escape from tension, fear and boredom. In 1944, a Mass Observation survey of 10,000 readers found that their strongest desire was for ‘relaxation’ and that most readers described their tastes as ‘escapist’ (McAleer, 1992, 94, 95). Readers frequently turned to historical fiction because it offered escape to another time. A 24-year-old woman war worker described her tastes as follows: “I like Daphne du Maurier’s books, especially *Frenchman’s Creek* and also Baroness Orczy’s. Books dealing with some costume period when smugglers had the rule of the seas. I like books to take me into another world far from the realities of this.” (McAleer, 1992, 96) [...] [den engelske forfatteren Georgette] Heyer, herself by now a safe bet as a bestseller, recognised the function of her own novels fulfilled, writing in 1943: “I think myself I should be shot for writing such nonsense, but [*Friday’s Child*] is unquestionably good escapist literature, and I think I should like it if I were sitting in an air-raid shelter, or recovering from flu.” (Hodge, 1985, 11) The key concept used here is ‘escapism’, a term which, Alison Light reminds us, only came into common currency after 1933, and therefore ‘like the cinema and the best-seller it belongs to modernity’ (1991, 256).” (Diana Wallace i [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230505940\\_4](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230505940_4); lesedato 15.09.22)

“Nettopp fordi utviklingen av de nye mediene og computerteknologien blir til uten å ta hensyn til menneskets bearbeidelsesevner, trenger mennesket avlastningsteknikker: den trøstende oversiktligheten i en romanhandling, klarteksten i en personlig samtale midt i datastrømmen, museets ordnete verden.” (Kuhlmann 1994 s. 139-140).

I forordet til den 3. utgaven av romanen *Amtmandens Døtre*, i 1879, skrev Camilla Collett: “Folks Beholdning af smukke, ømme Følelser var næsten ganske flygtet over i Digtningen, særlig derunderforstået hin Tids importerede, sterkt tårepersende Romaner, dem man i slidte Bind og i en forfærdelig Oversættelse kunde finde på næsten ethvert Familiebord. I denne Lektüre søgte man da Forfriskelsen efter Dagliglivets Tryk og Prosa; det var den unge Piges Hjertetrøst at drømme sig ind i den, ligesom det fornemmelig var den, der måtte levere Stoffet til den selskabelige Underholdning. Man skulde næsten sige, at i samme Grad som den æsthetiske Følsomhed bevægede Gemytterne, i samme Mon afstumpedes den for de virkelige Tilstande, man havde lige for Øine.” (her sitert fra <https://www.bokselskap.no/boker/ad3utg/collettsforord>; lesedato 04.09.19)

“The daughter (b. 1924) of an unemployed Rainton miner [i det nordlige Yorkshire i England] borrowed novels of social realism from the Carnegie Library, but her mother objected: “There’s enough misery in the world without dwelling on it. Next time fetch a nice historical novel back.”” (Towheed, Crone og Halsey 2011 s. 287) Historiske romaner og andre verk med handling fra fortiden gir mulighet for flukt inn i en annen tidsperiode, som ofte oppleves som “bedre” enn nåtiden, eller i hvert fall mer spennende.

En kvinne fortalte intervjueren om at i hennes barndom var lesing en måte å flykte på: “I could get away from what was normal and mundane [...] I could be the characters I, I always wanted to be what they were, do what they were doing, go where they’ve been, erm ... I was always keen to go exploring and I wanted something well, exciting ... it showed me how dull it was where I lived [laughs] which I suppose isn’t a good thing ... My most favourite type of reading was things like the Malory Towers or the secret Seven, Famous Five, all the escape type things that got you away from normal real life.” (“Amanda” intervjuet av Gabrielle C. Hodges; i Rothbauer, Skjerdingsstad m.fl. 2016 s. 67)

Den 9. desember 2010 skrev museumspedagogen Heidi Arild på e-postlista biblioteknorge@nb.no: “I går hørte jeg en indignert bibliotekar uttale i radioen at forfattere måtte ta seg sammen og skrive mer for gutter. Budskapet var, slik jeg oppfatta det, noe i retning av “hvis de er interessert i fotball, så skriv om fotball, og hvis de liker skating, så skriv om skatermiljøet”. Det er sikkert ikke noe galt med å få litt nye impulser inn i barne- og ungdomslitteraturen, og absolutt prisverdig å forsøke å få gutta til å lese mer, men jeg må innrømme at jeg stusset litt over de tilsynelatende enkle løsningene. Er gutter virkelig SÅ enkle i hodet at utfordringen med leselyst er løst hvis man bare får produsert noen bøker som har deres eget hverdagsliv som tema?? [...] For meg er skjønnlitteraturens fortrinn nettopp det at den tilbyr tilfluktsrom, alternative virkeligheter, fantasiflukt, glimt inn i fortid og framtid – kort sagt alt det som egen hverdag IKKE tilbyr (og slik sett er litteraturens funksjon mer lik dataspillenes enn mange synes å tro...). Sjøl var jeg et barn med skilte foreldre, og jeg danset folkedans på fritida. Men jeg ville da slett ikke gidde å låne en eneste bok som handlet om det! Mine egne barn (gutter) har heller ikke vist synderlig interesse for å lese om egne fritidsaktiviteter. Dinosaurer, underlige dyr, sære rekorder, store biler, underjordiske, hobbitter, Harry Potter, kraker, draker, unge detektiver og greske guder har hatt betydelig større appell enn hverdagsskildringer av bygdeliv og fotball. Det enkle faktum at “alle” – også de som ellers ikke leser bøker – har lest Harry Potter, skulle vel også være en indikasjon på at bibliotekarens oppskrift kanskje ikke er den eneste saliggjørende?”

Den svenske krimforfatteren Camilla Läckberg har sagt i et intervju: “Jeg har ingen ambisjoner om å forandre verden eller ta opp samfunnsspørsmål. Jeg vil gi folk et pusterom i en stressende hverdag – å underholde er fantastisk.” (*Dagbladet* 2. april 2009 s. 41)

Helt sentralt i Bollywood-filmer er “boy meets girl”, men “direkte fysisk berøring er tabu. Ikke misforstå: Dansen berører selvsagt det fysiske på en indirekte måte og vil alltid være hovedattraksjonen i enhver Bollywood-film. På den måten blir dansen selve handlingen. [...] all indisk film er forbundet med Bollywood-filmens bunnløse eskapisme. [...] Bollywood er og blir den enorme underklassens eskapisme, og spør du en selvbevisst indisk IT-ingeniør om hvilken Bollywood-film han liker best, får du svar på tiltale. [...] Bollywood-filmen ses av en milliard mennesker over hele Asia, men har vært helt avhengig av piratkopiering for sin



utbredelse. Derfor er Bollywood foreløpig ikke den pengemaskinen Hollywood er.” (Kjetil Lismoen i *Morgenbladet* 8.–14. august 2003 s. 9)

Bollywood-filmer har ofte blitt kritisert for deres “uforbeholdne flukt fra hverdagen [...] Slik de fleste nordboere vanligvis blir slått av kontrastene mellom rik og fattig i India, blir man slått av den groteske kontrasten mellom Bollywood-filmenes kroniske virkelighetsflukt og det grusomme drama som ofte utspiller seg på gatene i India. [...] Bollywoods totale og uforbeholdne eskapisme.” (Kjetil Lismoen i <https://morgenbladet.no/2002/06/bollywood-kommer>; lesedato 17.07.20)

Såpeserier innbyr ofte til eskapisme, bl.a. med “Glamour [...]: locations were often exotic and the costumes of the main actresses were often extravagant; viewers were invited into a world of abundance.” (Zdrengeha 2007)

“Part of the delight of the romance is that we know we are not required to live full-time in its ideal worlds. It amplifies our experience; it does not press home upon us our immediate everyday concerns.” (Beer 1970 s. 9)

“[E]scapism can be considered harmful when the audience is caught in what is called the “vicious circle of escapism.” Unfortunately, when some people are inside a fantasy, they are unable to actually solve their own problems in Real Life. So, an individual’s problems aren’t solved or become worse. At the same time, new problems can arise, and they return to their fantasy even more obsessed. This is made worse by the fact that fictional media are designed to make us addicted. The only way to break the circle is by facing reality instead of escaping it. It is important to remember that unlike fantasy, Real Life is not fair – nor easy. When we realize that we don’t need to be “the Chosen One” or be chosen by destiny to have worth, we can accomplish our dreams and find the love we seek in fantasy.” (<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Analysis/Escapism>; lesedato 12.06.18)

Litteratur som egner seg som eskapistisk lesestoff ender ofte med såkalt poetisk rettferdighet, der de slemmes straffes og de gode belønnes med lykke og/eller rikdom.

I en tysk undersøkelse fra begynnelsen av 2000-tallet svarte 81 % av de spurte at lesing kan brukes til å slappe av, 73 % at det er en fin avveksling etter en stressende dag, 68 % at lesing er spennende, 51 % at hverdagsbekymringer blir glemt mens man leser, og 46 % ble roligere av å lese når de hadde problemer (Dörner og Vogt 2013 s. 94).

“Det 20. århundre har vist at mennesker som har en åndelig føde bestående av Hegel, Marx og Nietzsche, kan være langt farligere for menneskeheten enn de som nøyer seg med Mickey Mouse og Disneyland.” (Gelfert 2010 s. 73) Eskapisme kan fungere som et alternativ til ideologisk dogmatisme eller fanatisme.

“I en tid der det britiske sosialdemokratiet er under angrep fra både høyresiden og det ekstreme sentrum, ligger det en viss logikk i at øyrikets mest populære og hyppigst eksporterte tv-serier skildrer overklassens glansdager (*Downton Abbey*) og kongehusets tumultuøse uforanderlighet (*The Crown*). Etter brexit tilbyr slike serier sårt tiltrengt eskapisme for alle med behov for å fortrenge en virkelighet preget av matkøer, streiker og ideologisk motivert innstrammingspolitikk” (Aksel Kielland i *Morgenbladet* 3.–9. mars 2023 s. 33).

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