

# 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)

## Kontrafaktisk historie

(\_sjanger) En alternativ framstilling basert på at noe i historien skjedde annerledes enn det faktisk gjorde (Hva ville skjedd hvis Hitler vant 2. verdenskrig?). Både historikere, forfattere, filmregissører og andre kan lage kontrafaktiske historier på grunnlag av kunnskaper og fantasi. Slike historier er en slags tankeeksperimenter.

Det er som om tiden forgrener seg og historien følger en annen gren (utviklingslinje) enn den faktiske og historisk dokumenterte, men som “kunne ha skjedd” og dermed til en viss grad virker sannsynlig/plausibel. De veiene som historien ikke tok, minner oss om at alt som kunne vært annerledes, “de lærer beskjedenhet overfor historiens tilfeldigheter” (Maar, Obrist og Pöppel 2000 s. 95). De alternative historieverisjonene er interessante også for historikere ved å få fram de mange perspektivene det går an å ha på historien, med den reelle historiens blanding av åpenhet og nødvendighet (Korte og Paletschek 2009).

Innen skjønnlitteratur brukes ofte betegnelsen “alternate history”: “Alternate history or alternative history is a subgenre of speculative fiction (or science fiction) and historical fiction that is set in a world in which history has diverged from the actual history of the world. Alternate history literature asks the question, “What if history had developed differently?” Most works in this genre are based on real historical events, yet feature social, geopolitical, or industrial circumstances that developed differently than our own.” (<http://www.goodreads.com/genres/alternate-history>; lesedato 10.06.13)

Hva ville vært følgene hvis historien på et avgjørende tidspunkt tok en annen retning enn i virkeligheten (dvs. enn i realhistorien, det historisk sikre som faktisk skjedde)? For eksempel hvis perserne i år 480 f.Kr. hadde vunnet over grekerne, eller hvis Aleksander den store hadde dødd som barn, eller hvis keiser Augustus hadde nektet å samarbeide med senatet i Roma, eller den russiske revolusjon i 1917 ikke hadde lyktes for kommunistene. Noen ganger er det små tilfeldigheter som har endret historien, f.eks. at Hitler i 1944 overlevde Claus von Stauffenbergs attentat. Hadde bomben drept Hitler, kunne hele ettertiden vært svært annerledes.

“What if the Persians had won at Salamis? What if Christ had not been crucified? What if the Chinese had harnessed steam power before the West? Disparaged by

some as a mere parlor game, counterfactual history is seen by others as indispensable historical tool. Taking as their point of inquiry the debate over the inevitability of the rise of the West, the eminent scholars in “Unmaking the West” argue that there is no escaping counterfactual history. Whenever we make claims of cause and effect, we commit ourselves to the assumption that if key links in the causal chain were broken, history would have unfolded otherwise. Likewise, without counterfactual history, we all too easily slip into the habit of hindsight bias, forgetting, as soon as we learn what happened, how unpredictable the world looked beforehand, and closing our minds to all the ways the course might have changed.” (Philip E. Tetlock i <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Unmaking-the-West>; lesedato 09.09.22)

“An alternate history describes a “what if” of history and the consequences that ensue from a different result. Other names that may apply to the genre include alternative history, allohistory, counterfactuals, if-worlds, uchronia and uchronie, parallel worlds, what-if stories, abwegige geschichten, etc. Whatever it is called, alternate history somehow involves one or more past events that “happened otherwise” and usually includes some amount of description of the subsequent effects on history. [...] Alternate history may appear in novels, short stories, scholarly essays, comic books, movies, television shows, plays and elsewhere. [...] The extent to which an alternate history may be developed varies radically and might comprise the entire plotline of a novel (e.g., Robert Sobel’s *For Want of a Nail...* or Peter G. Tsouras’s *Gettysburg: An Alternate History*) or perhaps just provide a single paragraph background to a short story or essay. How much attention is given to the what-if and how much to the ensuing consequences varies greatly. Some authors may describe the what-if in detail and provide little follow-up and other authors may present a scenario set some years after the what-if and leave it to the reader to guess what happened. Many opt for an in-between option, providing an introduction that describes the divergence but in which the bulk of the story is set some years later. The majority of alternate history is written as deliberate fiction. As such, it is most often classified as science fiction, or at least that is where you are most likely to find it at your local bookstore.” (Robert B. Schmunk i <http://www.uchronia.net/intro.html>; lesedato 21.08.24)

En historisk hendelse “coming out differently will in turn result in a number of other changes that cascade, culminating in worlds dramatically discontinuous with reality” (Karen Hellekson i <https://go.gale.com/ps/>; lesedato 11.08.22).

Kontrafaktiske historier blir mest verdsatt av de som kjenner det faktiske historiske forløpet, slik at de kan sammenligne og vurdere hva som er sannsynlig og troverdig eller ikke overbevisende ved alternativet til det faktiske. En leser/seer som ikke kjenner den faktiske historien, vil ikke oppdage avvikene og dermed blir erkjennelsesverdien mindre.

“For some, alternative history is entertaining. For others, it represents a challenge to conventional notions about causality. Some users believe that they can test theories with counterfactuals. Still others find their utility in probing future possibilities. [...] It would be highly desirable if we could put historical scripts to empirical test just as we do rival theories. But we cannot. However, there may be at least one approach to indirect testing. If a historical script has a definite starting point and important possible turning points along the way, one way to assess the value of such a story is to impose counterfactuals on the important milestones in the chronology. If the counterfactuals stay within the rules of minimal revisions and they suggest that vastly different realities could have emerged with small twists, it does not confirm the significance of the historical script. But it should be regarded as at least reinforcing the script. If counterfactuals lead to alternative realities that do not differ all that much, one would have to be a bit suspicious that the chosen turning points were all that significant in the first place.” (William R. Thompson i <https://www.sociostudies.org/journal/articles/140629/>; lesedato 06.09.22)

Den amerikanske historikeren Gavriel Rosenfeld mente at kontrafaktiske historier er populære fordi en postmoderne historiebevissthet har blitt dominerende: “other cultural and political trends have promoted alternate history’s departure from the margins to the mainstream. The rise of postmodernism, with its blurring of boundaries between fact and fiction, its privileging of ‘other’ or alternate voices, and its playfully ironic reconfiguring of established historical verities, has encouraged the rise of alternate history. The gradual discrediting of political ideologies in the postwar world, culminating with the death of socialism and the end of the cold war, has eroded the power of deterministic world-views and thus further boosted the central allohistorical [dvs. alternativ-historiske] principle that everything could have been different. Recent trends in the world of science, such as chaos theory, have also worked to reduce the power of deterministic thinking and have thus encouraged alternate history. Lastly, the information revolution, by liberating human beings from the constraints of real space and time through cyberspace and virtual reality, has given us the confidence to break free of the constraints of real history as well” (sitert fra Korte og Paletschek 2009).

En gruppe historikere skriver om “hva hvis ...”-scenarier i Niall Ferguson (ed.): *Virtual history: Alternatives and counterfactuals* (1998). En tilsvarende bok er Andrew Roberts (ed.): *What might have been: Imaginary history from twelve leading historians* (2005). Historikeren Alexander Demandt fra Tyskland, en ekspert på den romerske antikkens historie, interesserte seg for kontrafaktisk historie og skrev *Historie som aldri hendte: En traktat om spørsmålet Hva hadde skjedd hvis ...?* (1984) og *Det kunne ha gått annerledes: Vendepunkter i tysk historie* (2010). Det dreier seg altså om hypotetiske hendelser i fortiden som så påvirker hvordan ettertiden blir. Både fortiden og framtiden er dermed langt på vei imaginær. Samtidig er alle historikere klar over at det som faktisk skjedde i fortiden, ofte var uventet, forbløffende, usannsynlig, urealistisk.

Kontrafaktisk litteratur er en blanding av spekulasjon og sannsynliggjøring. Det er den litterære parallellen til kontrafaktisk historieskriving. Det har blitt brukt en rekke betegnelser på denne litteraturen, bl.a. “alternate history”, “alternate time stream novel”, “counterfeit world novel”, “counterfactual fiction”, “parallel-verdenroman”, “parahistorisk roman” og “uchronie” (Alexander Batzke i <https://www.grin.com/document/231578>; lesedato 04.08.22). Også “what-if novels” har blitt brukt (Michael Butter i <http://www.jltonline.de/index.php/reviews/article/view/206/586>; lesedato 11.08.22). Alexander Batzke mener at disse bøkene befinner seg i et grenseland mellom historiske romaner, science fiction, utopier og dystopier. Andre begreper for (omtrent) samme sjanger er “Quasi-historical Novel”, “Historical Might-Have-Been” og “Political Fantasy” (Hermann Ritter i [https://www.hermannritter.de/index.php?title=Die\\_Tschechen\\_gewinnen\\_den\\_2.\\_Weltkrieg\\_oder\\_alternative\\_Geschichtsentwicklungen\\_in\\_der\\_phantastischen\\_Literatur](https://www.hermannritter.de/index.php?title=Die_Tschechen_gewinnen_den_2._Weltkrieg_oder_alternative_Geschichtsentwicklungen_in_der_phantastischen_Literatur); lesedato 04.08.22).

“The alternate history as a genre speculates about such topics as the nature of time and linearity, the past’s link to the present, the present’s link to the future, and the role of individuals in the history-making process. Alternate histories question the nature of history and of causality; they question accepted notions of time and space; they rupture linear movement; and they make readers rethink their world and how it has become what it has. They are a critique of the metaphors we use to discuss history. And they foreground the “constructedness” of history and the role narrative plays in this construction. The psychological effects of reading the alternate history are important: it could have happened otherwise, save for a personal choice. The personal thus becomes the universal, and individuals find themselves making a difference in the context of historical movement. The alternate history is a genre unique in literature: it playfully subverts reality while discussing the underpinnings of how we construct reality, foregrounding history’s (and reality’s) arbitrariness. [...] The alternate history posits a universe in which we are capable of acting and in which our actions have significance.” (Karen Hellekson i <https://go.gale.com/ps/>; lesedato 11.08.22)

“There are three common elements in all alternative history stories:

- Background history the same as the real world.
- A change at one critical point (the Point of Departure).
- A story that explores the consequences of that change.

[...] To create a point of departure we start with an actual historical event, such the Battle of Waterloo. Then we give it a different outcome. So, instead of Napoleon losing the Battle of Waterloo, he wins. That’s the starting point for building a different world. Because of that one alteration, more and more things change, creating the alternative history. [...] Some academic historians research and make cautious speculations on the possibilities of ‘what might have happened’. The historians who write counterfactual history books write them as non-fiction:

articles, essays or chapters in history books. Despite their caution, these 'counterfactual histories' are dismissed as frivolous by many historians. Others see value in them, as considering alternative outcomes helps to illuminate the consequences of real decisions and events. Counterfactual history and plausible alternative history can easily be confused, as some alternative history writers use the 'history book' format as a conceit. Counterfactual history though is fundamentally interested in examining the point of departure itself and its historical importance. In contrast, alternate history writers are more interested in developing the hypothetical events that flow from the point of departure. One counterfactual history book is: *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals*, edited by Niall Ferguson. It includes essays on a still-born American Revolution, Home Rule for Ireland in 1912, Kennedy surviving his assassination, etc. [...]

Plausible alternative history takes as a point of departure:

- A likely outcome from a real event.
- Altering a strategic military or political choice to another that was considered at the time.
- Small events with big repercussions.

Likely outcomes include things like close fought battles being won instead of lost or assassination attempts on important figures succeeding. [...] The small events can be things like messages going astray, or being intercepted, weather being different, lucky breaks and accidents." (Graeme Shimmin i <http://graemeshimmin.com/what-is-alternative-history/>; lesedato 16.10.17)

Innvendingene fra tradisjonelle, akademiske historikere mot denne typen bøker har vært at de består av spekulasjon. Og hvis en enorm andel av det som faktisk skjedde i historien, ikke fikk vidtrekkende konsekvenser for ettertiden, hvorfor skal det da være viktig å undersøke det som ikke engang skjedde? Men den britiske historikeren Hugh Trevor-Roper skrev: "How can we 'explain what happened and why' if we only look at what happened and never consider the alternatives, the total pattern of forces whose pressure created the event?" (her sitert fra <https://www.grin.com/document/231578>; lesedato 04.08.22).

Romanen *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) av militærhistorikeren George Chesney handler om en tenkt og vellykket invasjon av England. Invasjonsstyrken kommer fra et land som ikke er navngitt, men som minner om Tyskland. Da boka ble utgitt, hadde Tyskland nylig vunnet militært over Frankrike.

Amerikaneren Frank Williams i *Hallie Marshall: A True Daughter of the South* (1899) lar sørstatene vinne den amerikanske borgerkrigen. Samme år kom Edmund Lawrences roman *It May Happen Yet: A Tale of Bonaparte's Invasion of England*.

“An alternate history [...] is an account of Earth (sometimes extending to exploration of solar-system space) as it might have become in consequence of some hypothetical alteration in history [...] The first unequivocal alternate history is almost certainly Louis Geoffroy’s *Napoléon et la conquête du monde, 1812-1832: Histoire de la monarchie universelle* (1836; trans as *Napoléon and the Conquest of the World 1812-1832: A Fictional History* 1994), in which Napoleon escapes intact from his 1812 Russian adventure and conquers the known world. Other early examples include Castello N. Holford’s Utopian re-imagining of American settlement’s early years in *Aristopia: A Romance-History of the New World* (1895), Edmund Lawrence’s *It May Happen Yet: A Tale of Bonaparte’s Invasion of England* (1899), Charles Felton Pidgin’s *The Climax: Or, What Might Have Been: A Romance of the Great Republic* (1902) and Ernest Bramah’s *What Might Have Been: The Story of a Social War* (1907). Many sf stories exploit the concept of Parallel Worlds to provide a framework in which multiple alternate histories can coexist, sometimes interacting with one another, while some authors have posited timelines which diverge through a series of incremental changes over time” ([https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate\\_history](https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate_history); lesedato 04.08.22).

Romaner kan ha handling knyttet til en kontrafaktisk historisk begivenhet. “Historien om den profesjonelle morderen Sjakalen, engelskmannen Frederic Forsyths debutroman, kan virke absurd. Vi vet at de Gaulle ikke ble myrdet av en snikskytter. Men dette merkværdige, uhistoriske “tenk om” fanger oss inn.” (Dahl og Nordberg 1982 s. 269) Den britiske dikteren Owen Sheers’ *Motstand* (på norsk 2008) foregår i Wales i 1944 etter en mislykket D-dag og der halve Storbritannia er okkupert av tyskerne.

“The nexus story is an alternate history that focuses on a crucial point in history, such as a battle or assassination, in which something happens that changes the outcome from the one we know today. [...] this crucial point or happening [is] a “nexus event.” [...] As a character notes in [Poul] Anderson’s *The Shield of Time* (1990), “A radical change is only possible at certain critical points in history. Elsewhen, compensations occur” [...] “critical points,” often a battle” (Karen Hellekson i <https://dokumen.pub/the-alternate-history-refiguring-historical-time-9780873386838.html>; lesedato 11.08.22).

Amerikaneren Philip K. Dicks *The Man in the High Castle* (1962) er en dystopi som foregår i et USA som etter 2. verdenskrig er delt mellom de seirende maktene Tyskland og Japan. I romanen skildrer Dick blant annet hvordan den gamle amerikanske kulturen delvis overlever fordi den utgjør “samleobjekt” for rike amerikanere.

Dick “prolifically filled the pages of science-fiction magazines, gaining more positive than negative reaction but no special recognition. That was the way it continued through 1962, when his novel *The Man in the High Castle* was issued by Putnam. It hypothesized a world in which the Berlin-Tokyo axis had won World

War II, partitioned the United States and the world between them. The idea had been done before by no less distinguished an author than William L. Shirer; LOOK (December 19, 1961) devoted 13 illustrated pages to his feature, *If Hitler Had Won World War II*. Shirer's effort was the framework upon which *The Man in the High Castle* was built, and Dick did a great deal with what he borrowed. Most of the story is set in the western United States, dominated by the Japanese through a white puppet government. The Japanese are humane, decent, and to a degree democratic. The Japanese craze for collecting such Americana as old comic books, election posters, and bottle caps lends a note of originality and authenticity to the work. The "Man" in the High Castle is an author who has written a book telling what would have happened if the United States had won the war. All these elements gave the novel a difference which helped win the Hugo as the best novel of 1962 and lifted Dick a substantial notch upward in general regard. The "Worlds of If" theme had long been a popular one in science fiction and Dick's novel proved that it could produce fiction good enough to outrank the entire year's production. Working on what would have happened if the South had won the Civil War, an all-but-unknown author, Ward Moore, sprang to prominence with a single short novel, *Bring the Jubilee* (THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION, November, 1952)." (Moskowitz 1967 s. 420-421)

*The Alteration* (1976) av den britiske forfatteren Kingsley Amis er en roman der Luthers reformasjon aldri fant sted. "In Kingsley Amis's virtuoso foray into virtual history it is 1976 but the modern world is a medieval relic, frozen in intellectual and spiritual time ever since Martin Luther was promoted to pope back in the sixteenth century. Stephen the Third, the king of England, has just died, and Mass (Mozart's second requiem) is about to be sung to lay him to rest. In the choir is our hero, Hubert Anvil, an extremely ordinary ten-year-old boy with a faultless voice. In the audience is a select group of experts whose job is to determine whether that faultless voice should be preserved by performing a certain operation. Art, after all, is worth any sacrifice. How Hubert realizes what lies in store for him and how he deals with the whirlpool of piety, menace, terror, and passion that he soon finds himself in are the subject of a classic piece of counterfactual fiction equal to Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*." (<https://www.nyrb.com/products/the-alteration?variant=1094931573>; lesedato 11.08.22)

Antologien *If it had Happened Otherwise: Lapses into Imaginary History* (1931) ble redigert av J. C. Squire, og inneholder Hillaire Belloc's "If Drouet's Cart had Stuck", G. K. Chesterton's "If Don John of Austria had Married Mary Queen of Scots", Winston S. Churchill's "If Lee had not Won the Battle of Gettysburg", H.A.L. Fishers "If Napoleon had Escaped to America", Philip Guedallas "If the Moors in Spain had Won", Ronald Knox' "If the General Strike had Succeeded", Emil Ludwigs "If the Emperor Frederick had not had Cancer", André Maurois' "If Louis XVI had an Atom of Firmness", Harold Nicolson's "If Byron had Become King of Greece", J. C. Squires "If It Had Been Discovered in 1930 that Bacon

Really Did Write Shakespeare” og Milton Waldmans “If Booth had Missed Lincoln” (<http://www.uchronia.net/label/squiiifitha.html>; lesedato 06.09.22).

Antologien *Alternate Presidents* (1992), redigert av Mike Resnick, har historier om personer som kunne ha vært presidenter i USA, fra Benjamin Franklin til Michael Dukakis. “There are 28 stories in the anthology, including Resnick’s own “The Bull Moose at Bay”. The other remaining stories are by different authors, and present scenarios where an individual becomes President of the United States in a way that did not occur in real life.” ([https://dbpedia.org/page/Alternate\\_Presidents](https://dbpedia.org/page/Alternate_Presidents); lesedato 14.09.22) En lignende antologi, men med smalere fokus, også redigert av Resnick, er *Alternate Kennedys* (1992). Antologien inneholder 25 historier som spekulerer i “hva hvis”-scenarioer om Kennedy-familien, blant annet med et rockeband som består av Kennedyer. Resnick har dessuten sammen med Patrick Nielsen Hayden publisert *Alternate Skiffy* (1997) som “gathers Recursive SF stories in which the history of Genre SF itself took other paths”: “The long-awaited anthology of “What if...” stories concerning the science fiction field. [...] The first story in the collection [is] Barry Malzberg’s “A Science of the Mind” in which Theodore Sturgeon and Horace Gold attempt to concoct a Scientology-like religion. Other stories of similarly high caliber include Anthony Lewis’s “Plus Ultra” about Hugo Gernsback, President of the League of Nations and David Langford’s “The Spear of the Sun” about G.K. Chesterton. [...] Lyn Nichols’s “Kidnapping Koriba,” which explains where Resnick got the various story ideas he used for his popular “Kirinyaga” cycle and Nicholas diChario’s “Mission 51-L” in which NASA selects a Hugo winner for a space launch.” (<https://wildsidepress.com/alternate-skiffy-ed-by-mike-resnick-and-patrick-nielsen-hayden/>; lesedato 09.09.22)

Den engelske skuespilleren og forfatteren Stephen Frys *Making History* (1996) foregår i en versjon av vår verden der Adolf Hitler aldri levde. “This “terrific” novel of alternate history asks: What if Hitler had never been born? [...] Michael Young is a graduate student at Cambridge who is completing his dissertation on the early life of Adolf Hitler. Leo Zuckermann is an aging German physicist haunted by the Holocaust. Together, they idealistically embark on an experiment to change the course of history. And with their success is launched a brave new world that is in some ways better than ours – but in most ways even worse.” (<https://www.storytel.com/no/nm/books/making-history-1244864>; lesedato 06.09.22) Eric-Emmanuel Schmitts *Adolf H’s to liv* (på norsk 2006) handler blant annet om hvordan Schmitt tror det ville ha gått hvis Hitler hadde kommet inn på kunstakademiet slik han ønsket.

Andre eksempler:

Keith Roberts: *Pavane* (1968) – England forblir et katolsk land etter renessansen

Martin Cruz Smith: *The Indians Won* (1970) – de amerikanske indianerne motstår de hvites invasjon av deres land



Harry Turtledove: *A Different Flesh* (1988) – en historie om hvordan vi behandler Homo erectus, en “nesten” menneskelig art som har overlevd helt til vår tid

Robert Harris: *Fatherland* (1992) – nazistene vinner 2. verdenskrig og handlingen i boka foregår i 1964

Jean-Christophe Rufin: *Røde Brasil* (2001) – en fransk lege og forfatters historiske roman om en fiktiv fransk erobring av Brasil på 1500-tallet

Den spanske forfatteren Fernando Díaz-Plajas roman *Seiers-defileringen* (1976) har en handling der republikanerne vinner den spanske borgerkrigen (Strosetzki 1996 s. 333).

“Alternative histories  
What if history had been different?

*Fatherland*, Robert Harris – the Germans won the war  
*The Indians Won*, Martin Cruz Smith – US history rewritten  
*Pavane*, Keith Roberts – England remains Catholic  
*Warlord of the Air*, Michael Moorcock – 19th century empires still intact  
*The Architecture of Desire*, Mary Gentle – Oliver Cromwell is a woman”  
(Fowler og Bennett 1996 s. 72)

“[E]ssays edited by J. C. Squire, *If It had Happened Otherwise* (anth 1931; vt *If, or History Rewritten*; exp 1972) ostensibly took its inspiration from G. M. Trevelyan’s essay “If Napoleon had Won the Battle of Waterloo” (July 1907 *Westminster Gazette*), though the twenty-two essays in Joseph Edgar Chamberlin’s *The Ifs of History* (coll 1907) conspicuously anticipate the later volume, as does F. J. C. Hearnshaw’s *The “Ifs” of History* (coll 1929) [...] Bernard Newman’s *The Cavalry Went Through* (1930), a Scientific Romance in which the course of World War One is transformed (perhaps for the first time in fiction); the tone of the telling intermittently resembles the speculative essay. More recently, Andrew Roberts’s *What Might Have Been: Imaginary History from Twelve Leading Historians* (anth 2004) follows Squire’s model, while Niall Ferguson’s essay collection *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (coll 2000) was cited by Stephen Baxter as an influence on his *Time’s Tapestry* series, which examines possible alternative histories from Roman Britain through World War Two.” ([https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate\\_history](https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate_history); lesedato 04.08.22)

“*Forbidden Fruit: Counterfactuals and International Relations* (2010) by Richard Ned Lebow makes use of what its author is unfortunately inclined to call counterfactuals in an incisive analysis of contemporary history; his *Archduke Franz Ferdinand Lives!: A World Without World War I* (2014) analyses various possible outcomes for the future if World War One had been averted. The most common

preoccupations of modern speculative historians were exhibited in two essays written for *Look* magazine: “If the South had Won the Civil War” (22 November 1960 *Look*; 1961) by MacKinlay Kantor and “If Hitler had Won World War II” (19 December 1961 *Look*) by William L. Shirer [...] Another event seen today as historically pivotal, the invention of the atom bomb, is the basis of two novels by Ronald W Clark: *Queen Victoria’s Bomb* (1967), in which the atom bomb is developed much earlier in history, and *The Bomb that Failed* (1969; vt *The Last Year of the Old World* 1969), in which its appearance on the historical scene is delayed.” ([https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate\\_history](https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate_history); lesedato 11.08.22)

“Alternative histories are used satirically by such non-genre writers as R. Egerton Swartout in *It Might Have Happened* (1934) and *Marghanita Laski in Tory Heaven* (1948), and the notion is given a more philosophical twist in Guy Dent’s *Emperor of the If* (1926). The continuing popularity of alternative histories with mainstream writers is further illustrated by John Hersey’s *White Lotus* (1965), Vladimir Nabokov’s *Ada* (1969), Martin Cruz Smith’s *The Indians Won* (1970), Guido Morselli’s *Past Conditional* (1975; trans 1981), Douglas Jones’s *The Court Martial of George Armstrong Custer* (1976) and Philip Roth’s *The Plot Against America* (2004), though more contemporary examples, like Michael Chabon’s *The Yiddish Policemen’s Union* (2007), no longer really fit the “mainstream” girdle. Following the commercial success of Harry Turtledove’s extensive series of alternate history novels, a number of popular novelists otherwise only marginally related to sf [= science fiction] have helped establish the alternate-history thriller as almost a separate genre, related to mainstream sf in a way perhaps analogous to the technothriller; these include Robert Conroy, who has produced eight such novels; John Birmingham, especially with his *Axis of Time* series; and even American politician and presidential candidate Newt Gingrich, who has collaborated on several such novels with William R. Forstchen.” ([https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate\\_history](https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate_history); lesedato 11.08.22)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Ward Moores kontrafaktiske *Bring the Jubilee* (1953) har en titel som henviser til en militærsang. “Trapped in 1877, a historian writes an account of an alternative history of America in which the South won the Civil War. Living in this alternative timeline, he was determined to change events at Gettysburg. When he’s offered the chance to return to that fateful turning point his actions change history as he knows it, leaving him in an all too familiar past.” ([https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/91099.Bring\\_the\\_Jubilee](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/91099.Bring_the_Jubilee); lesedato 11.08.22)

Den amerikanske historikeren Robert Sobels roman *For Want of a Nail: If Burgoyne Had Won at Saratoga* (1973) “is an alternate history novel [...]. The novel depicts an alternate world where the American Revolution was unsuccessful. [...] The Point of Divergence is the arrival of reinforcements for British General Horatio Gates during the Battle of Saratoga, which turns the tide of the American Revolutionary War to the favor of the United Kingdom, which then stamps out the

rebellion. Afterward, the colonies are reorganized into the more centralized and autonomous Confederation of North America (CNA), while thousands of revolutionaries that weren't executed or imprisoned sojourn westward, founding the nation of Jefferson in the place Texas would have been. Under the charismatic yet steady leadership of Andrew Jackson, it unifies with the neighboring Republic of Mexico to create the United States of Mexico (USM) in 1820. The new republic is soon embroiled in a continental power struggle with the Confederation of North America. Although historical figures factor heavily in the beginning, such as Thomas Edison essentially inventing most modern technology, there are also new faces in the CNA and the USM, such as the idealistic automobile mogul Owen Galloway and the histrionic liberal governor Richard Mason, the nepotistic narcissist Benito Hermión, as well as the bastardy Corrupt Corporate Executive Bernard Kramer who leads his company Kramer Associates in attaining dizzying heights of power. Throughout this entire book, one finds that two hundred years of history becomes a lot more interesting when you don't know what happens next." (<http://vtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Literature/ForWantOfANail>; lesedato 19.07.17)

Den russiske forfatteren Vasilij Aksionovs roman *Øya Krim* (1979) har som premiss at det ved siden av det totalitære Sovjetunionen finnes et demokratisk Russland. "Russians of a certain generation associate the name Aksyonov with a dissident writer who wrote a celebrated novel of political satire, *Island of Crimea*. First published in 1979, Vasily Aksyonov's fantasy imagines that Crimea is an island, not a peninsula, that had survived as a White Russian enclave after the 1917 Bolshevik takeover and then grown into a sort of Russian Taiwan, booming, decadent and crammed full with all the luxuries that Brezhnev-era Russians craved. It ends with annexation, as mainland Russia is invited to take control and its forces roll in. The anomalous experiment comes to an end." (<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/03/putins-crimea-annexation-strategy-104375/>; lesedato 06.09.22)

Amerikaneren Robert Silverbergs roman *Roma Eterna* (2003) skildrer en rekke hendelser som skjer i løpet av 1500 år, der Romerriket har bestått fram til vår tid. "[T]he imperial Eternal City (aka Roma) takes 2,000 years to decline but not quite fall. Starting with a scholar's recollection of a failed Hebrew exodus from Egypt centuries earlier, this unusually moving novel depicts 10 crucial historical moments, each centering on the personality of a fictional emperor seen through the eyes of an engaging lesser figure, like an imperial bureaucrat, a luscious and wealthy widow, a brave legionary commander, a conscientious architect, a hunky son of a Celtic chieftain, or even barbarian children who unwittingly bring down the last emperor. Silverberg seamlessly interpolates glimpses of Rome's real history in this handsomely crafted fiction, whether looking back to the ideals of the ancient Republic – duty, honor, country – or inventing a captivating cast of might-have-beens. He unifies his narrative with unusual but convincing historical theory: that Roma's vaunted religious tolerance, in turning the sacred into a mere

instrument of governance, had sown the seeds of revolution – a spiritual and intellectual upheaval that here leads the children of Israel to a second and glorious trek to the stars. Guided by the sure hand of an old master, these many roads lead to a fascinating city of multitudinous souls.” (<https://www.publishersweekly.com/9780380978595>; lesedato 09.09.22)

I *Hvis Føreren visste det* (1966) av østerrikeren Otto Basil har Hitlers Tyskland vunnet 2. verdenskrig og den første atombomben eksploderte ikke over Hiroshima, men i London. Det er etablert et germansk “verdensrike” med Berlin som hovedstad for den delen av verdens som ikke kontrolleres av japanerne. Paven og Dalai-Lama holdes fanget i byen Köln. Så dør Hitler, og etterfølges av en mann som heter Ivo Köpfler. Tredje verdenskrig nærmer seg ([https://www.milena-verlag.at/index.php?item=klassiker&show\\_details=139](https://www.milena-verlag.at/index.php?item=klassiker&show_details=139); lesedato 09.09.22).

“The art of speculative fiction is the pursuit of small but ramifying differences. Robert Harris’s *Fatherland* is not the first work of fiction to imagine the Germans as victors in the second world war. The author has acknowledged a debt, for instance, to Len Deighton’s *SS-GB*. But it is singular in the rigour with which it imagines an alternative history. “Speculative fiction” might in the past have served as a synonym for science fiction, but it has come more strictly to refer to a historical scenario based on an alternative, but plausible, set of outcomes. A modern classic of this genre is Philip Roth’s 2004 novel *The Plot Against America*, in which Charles Lindbergh defeats Roosevelt in the 1940 presidential election and leads America into antisemitism and isolationism. [...] In *Fatherland*, Hitler has won. It is 1964 and the Greater German Reich stretches from the Low Countries to the Urals. Britain is some kind of client state of little interest to any of Harris’s characters. (In mischievous fashion, Harris drops occasional “facts” about Britain into the narrative: an assured young SS officer has all the “English coolness” learned at the SS Academy in Oxford; the country is nominally ruled by King Edward VIII and Queen Wallis.) Harris makes his alternative history entirely concrete. In Berlin, where the novel is set, Albert Speer, Hitler’s architect, has fulfilled some of the grand architectural designs of the fascist state. There is the Triumphal Arch and the Great Hall of the Reich (“the largest building in the world”, as the tour guide announces). Berlin’s airport is naturally the Flughafen Hermann Göring.” (John Mullan i <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/mar/30/guardian-bookclub-fatherland-robert-harris>; lesedato 04.08.22)

I *Fatherland* “[t]he earliest change made to real events is the failure of the assassination attempt on Reinhard Heydrich in Prague in 1942. (In historical fact, Heydrich, though wounded, seemed to have survived the attack by Czech partisans, but later died in hospital of septicaemia.) This alternative is, of course, perfectly likely. Heydrich can become the state’s evil genius, never present in the novel but always behind the plot. *Fatherland* is clearly influenced by George Orwell’s [dystopi] *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, fiction’s template for the workings of a totalitarian society [...] the nation is in a state of perpetual war with the hordes of Russia. The

Nazi state is not, however, the perfected tyranny that Orwell creates, where even the most private rebellion is inevitably noticed by the authorities. Power in this Fatherland is more frayed. Some people listen to American radio stations; groups of the urban young grow their hair and wear unconventional clothes; the Beatles have apparently played in Hamburg, though pop music is officially deplored. There are hints of the 1960s. This is alternative history, not allegory. The fraying of power is important to Harris's use of the other genre he exploits: the police procedural. It must be conceivable in this fictional world for a clever and brave investigator – the traditional police detective transposed into a nightmare situation – to find out the terrible truth that has been hidden from Germans as well as from the rest of the world. [...] What this genre plays on is our sense of contingency. There is no divine plan. No outcome is inevitable. Evil is as likely to triumph as good. Harris's axiom is German victory over the Soviet Union, its remaining forces driven back beyond the Urals. The US is too powerful to be defeated, but with the conquest of Britain there can be no D-Day.” (John Mullan i <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/mar/30/guardian-bookclub-fatherland-robert-harris>; lesedato 04.08.22)

“Det er 1941, og Hitlers Nazi-Tyskland har vunnet krigen over Storbritannia. Winston Churchill er mest sannsynlig henrettet i Berlin, kong Georg VI er fengslet i Tower of London, og de britiske gull- og valutaeservene er shippet til Canada. Det å skrive kontrafaktisk historie om Hitler, at han har vunnet annen verdenskrig, er ikke sensasjonelt i seg selv, men [den britiske forfatteren] Len Deightons roman *SS-GB* [1978] er en av de sterkeste og mest interessante bøkene i sjangeren. Vi følger Scotland Yards Douglas Archer, enkemann og feiret detektiv, som manøvrerer seg i en politiorganisasjon styrt av SS-Gruppenführer Fritz Kellerman. En tilsynelatende ordinær drapsetterforskning tar uventede retninger da SS sender Standartenführer Oskar Huth til England for å ta over saken. Archer ender brått i et vepsebol av interne nazi-maktkamper, engelsk motstandsbevegelse og de som vil ha USA med i krigen.” (Asbjørn Slettemark i *A-magasinet* 31. mars 2017 s. 44)

*SS-GB* (1978) av Len Deighton er “set in a world where Nazi Germany invaded Great Britain in 1940. [...] In a Britain occupied by Nazi Germany, a British detective investigates the murder of a nuclear physicist. He must unravel the complex plots of his German superiors and the British resistance, in order to survive and transfer the secret of the atom bomb to Britain's last hope: the USA. [...] *SS-GB* uses the alternate world as a setting and makes no serious attempt to create a coherent alternative history. Len Deighton provides no point of departure that enabled the German army to get across the English Channel, and he barely explains the progress of the German invasion of Britain. This makes *SS-GB* a ‘hand-waving’ alternative history” (Graeme Shimmin i <https://graemeshimmin.com/ss-gb-book-review/>; lesedato 09.09.22).

“*SS-GB* is a classic work of alternative history, set in a world where Nazi Germany invaded Great Britain in 1940. Written by Len Deighton and published in 1978, it's one of the few alternative history novels to top the bestseller charts. The BBC

broadcast a five-episode miniseries adaptation of *SS-GB* in March 2017. [...] In a Britain occupied by Nazi Germany, a British detective investigates the murder of a nuclear physicist. He must unravel the complex plots of his German superiors and the British resistance, in order to survive and transfer the secret of the atom bomb to Britain's last hope: the USA. [...] Deighton shows a frighteningly plausible alternate Britain, rapidly caving in to Nazi tyranny. [...] Like *Fatherland* by Robert Harris, *SS-GB* uses the alternate world as a setting and makes no real attempt to create a coherent alternative history. Len Deighton provides no point of departure that enabled the German army to get across the English Channel, and the progress of the German invasion of Britain is barely explained. [...] Unlike most 'Nazi victory' novels, which tend to be set decades or even centuries after the war, *SS-GB* is set less than a year after Britain's surrender. How the country has become quite so settled under German occupation in such a short period is never explained. [...] King George VI is held in the Tower of London. [...] Queen Elizabeth and her daughters escape to New Zealand. [...] Rear Admiral Connolly creates a British government-in-exile in Washington DC, but has trouble gaining diplomatic recognition. [...] The British nuclear bomb research laboratory, at Bringle Sands in Devon, is taken over and the scientists taken into custody. [...] The 'nuclear research laboratory' at Bringle Sands is not historical, and there is nowhere called Bringle Sands in Devon. In reality, in 1940/41 the British nuclear project centred on the universities of Liverpool, Birmingham, Oxford and Cambridge. [...] The original hardback edition of *SS-GB* also included two false documents on the dust jacket: a British stamp featuring Hitler's head and a 1941 postmark, and a photograph of Hitler taking the salute as his troops march down Whitehall. [...] Stormtroopers marching past the Houses of Parliament and swastikas flying over Buckingham Palace are rather overused images." (Graeme Shimmin i <http://graemeshimmin.com/ss-gb-book-review>; lesedato 13.10.17) Deighton og filmskaperne kunne basere seg på faktiske nazistiske dokumenter om hvordan Storbritannia skulle styres under den tyske okkupasjonen. Tyskerne hadde planene klare for det britiske samfunnet etter erobringen.

"S. P. Somtow's *The Aquiliad* (fixup 1983), in which the Roman Empire conquered the Americas; and William Gibson's and Bruce Sterling's *The Difference Engine* (1990), in which Charles Babbage's calculating machine precipitates an information-technology revolution in Victorian England. More earnest examples are fewer in number, but they include "The Lucky Strike" (in *Universe 14*, anth 1984, ed Terry Carr) by Kim Stanley Robinson, in which a US pilot refuses to drop the atom bomb on Hiroshima, *Elleander Morning* (1984) by Jerry Yulsman, which imagines an alternate history where Hitler was assassinated before precipitating World War Two and the attendant Holocaust" ([https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate\\_history](https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate_history); lesedato 11.08.22).

Den portugisiske forfatteren José Saramagos roman *Historien om beleiringen av Lisboa* (1989) har Raimundo Silva som hovedperson. Silva, "proofreader for a Lisbon publisher, decides on a whim to put a negative into a history text,

effectively recasting Portugal's past: during the siege of Lisbon in the twelfth century the Crusaders did *not* come to the help of the king of Portugal against the Saracens. Rather than causing Silvia to lose his job, his act of insubordination grabs the attention of his new superior, Dr. Maria Sara, who is fifteen years his junior. She persuades him to actually write this new history, and as he begins to create his revisionist tale the two fall in love." (Boxall 2006 s. 776)

I den ukrainske forfatteren Vasily Koželjankos *Parade i Moskva* (1997) beseirer Ukraina sammen med tyskerne den røde armé. "Alternative histories novels "Parade in Moscow" (1997), "Kotigoroško" (2000), "Terorium" (2001), "False Nostradamus" (2001) novels appeared in an independent Ukraine when there was no longer a Soviet censorship. In alternative historical prose, heroes can be embedded in the history of an active person or as fictional characters who carry the ethno-stereotypical lines of their community and have ethno-stereotypes about other peoples. Ethnic stereotypes of Ukrainians and Russians and stereotypes of Ukraina and Russia can be mythologised. Relations between a stronger and weaker, older and younger, colonizing country and colonized country are presented as a conflict between Strong Russia and a weak Ukraine, but also a strong Ukraine of weak Russia." (Dejan Ajdačić i <http://www.rastko.rs/cms/files/books/5e63646fec82.pdf>; lesedato 06.09.22)

"An extreme case is Williamson Murray's (2000) very brief Churchill counterfactual ["What a Taxi Driver Wrought"]. In 1931 a New York City cab driver collided with Winston Churchill on a street corner and injured him. Murray goes on to suggest that if Churchill had been killed in the accident that a strategically beleaguered Britain would have surrendered in 1940, turned over their fleet to the Germans who, in turn, would have conquered Europe by 1947 and gone on to fight the U.S. forces in South America. Just how these events would have come about are not explicated in the Murray scenario. But the overarching assumption is that one man stood in the way of a European victory by the Germans. Remove the one man and all is lost – or won, depending on one's perspective. There is a simple theory of the Great Man lurking in this tale. We do not usually base our social science theories on singular individuals. The 1945 outcome is most usually explained, most briefly, by the observation that the winning side had access to a great deal more material resources than the losing side. In retrospect, if not inevitable, the Allied victory was highly probable based on this asymmetry of power. To be told that much of that asymmetry made little difference and that it all hinged on a taxi driver's error a decade or so earlier is downright irritating, if not disturbing." (William R. Thompson i <https://www.sociostudies.org/journal/articles/140629/>; lesedato 06.09.22)

I den tyske historikeren og forfatteren Christian von Dittfurths roman *Konsulen* (2003) blir Hitler myrdet i 1932, året før han i virkeligheten kom til makten i Tyskland. Det bryter ut borgerkrig. Dittfurth har også skrevet en roman der kommunismen blir den rådende ideologien i hele Tyskland som følge av at

stalinister tar livet av den russiske reformpolitikeren Mikhail Gorbatsjov og av påfølgende internasjonal politikk (*Muren står ved Rhinen*, 1999). *Den 21. juli* (utgitt i 2001) av Dittfurth er både en kontrafaktisk historie og en thriller. Forfatteren dikter opp at Claus von Stauffenbergs attentat mot Hitler 20. juli 1944 lykkes. Dagen etter (som er bokas tittel) inngår attentatmennene en avtale med SS, som gjør at Heinrich Himmler styrer Tyskland til inn på 1950-tallet.

Amerikaneren Kim Stanley Robinsons *The Years of Rice and Salt* (2002) “covers some six centuries in the history of various world cultures as they developed in the absence of Europe, which was virtually wiped out by the plague. A similar premise was used by Harry Turtledove in *In High Places* (2005).” ([https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate\\_history](https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate_history); lesedato 11.08.22) Bøker som dekker svært lange historiske tidsrom, bruker det som har blitt kalt “time sweep”.

I amerikaneren Philip Roths roman *The Plot Against America* (2004; på norsk 2006) tenker forfatteren seg konsekvensene av at den svært populære, men tyskennlige og antisemittiske flygerhelten Charles Lindbergh blir valgt til president i USA i 1940. I den reelle historien var det Franklin Delano Roosevelt som ble (gjenvolgt som) president i 1940. Roths roman sjokkerer leseren “when the story swerves into “What if?” mode. The anti-Semitic, isolationist air-ace Charles Lindbergh unexpectedly wins the 1940 presidential election and, for the two years before his mysterious disappearance, gradually unleashes quasi-Nazi forces in the U.S. He negotiates a cordial “understanding” with Adolf Hitler, and accepts his anti-Semitic policies. His contemporary successor begins to establish a fascist regime complete with pogroms, but in the subsequent election F.D.R. [= Franklin D. Roosevelt] wins and history as we know it is restored.” (Boxall 2006 s. 944)

Roths *The Plot Against America* er “the chilling story of what happens to one family when America elects a charismatic, isolationist president [...] Roth imagines an alternate history where Franklin D. Roosevelt loses the 1940 presidential election to heroic aviator and rabid isolationist Charles A. Lindbergh. Shortly thereafter, Lindbergh negotiates a cordial “understanding” with Adolf Hitler, while the new government embarks on a program of folksy anti-Semitism. For one boy growing up in Newark, Lindbergh’s election is the first in a series of ruptures that threaten to destroy his small, safe corner of America – and with it, his mother, his father, and his older brother.” ([http://link.winnefox.org/portal/The-Plot-Against-America/zUk4\\_-e3HO0/](http://link.winnefox.org/portal/The-Plot-Against-America/zUk4_-e3HO0/); lesedato 04.08.22)

Den britiske forfatteren (og Nobelprisvinneren) Kazuo Ishiguros roman *Never Let Me Go* (2005) “is set in a counterfactual version of 1990s England, where advances in medical science have led to the breeding of human clones for organ harvesting. Clones are raised in government-run institutions and begin ‘donating’ their organs once they reach adulthood, usually undergoing four donation operations before they die. The novel is narrated by Kathy, a 31-year-old human clone.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 39)



Den amerikanske forfatteren Michael Chabon ga i 2007 ut romanen *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*. Handlingen er basert på et reelt forslag: "I november 1938, to uker etter krystallnatten i Tyskland og ti år før staten Israel ble etablert, lanserte USAs innenriksminister Harold Ickes et fascinerende forslag. Ickes hadde nylig besøkt Alaska og diskutert strategier for økonomisk vekst i den forblåste utposten i nord. Nå lurte han på om ikke Europas forfulgte jøder kunne være løsningen for USAs mest tilbakestående stat? Tanken om å åpne for jødisk masseinnvandring til Alaska ble videreutviklet i en offisiell rapport to år senere, like før andre verdenskrig brøt ut. Ideen vakte imidlertid liten begeistring hos president Roosevelt og døde en rask død i Kongressen. Slik ble drømmen om en jødisk fristat på tundraen en av historiens mange fotnoter og *could have beens*. Men i Michael Chabons roman *Den jiddische politiforening*, som kommer på norsk i disse dager, utforskes tanken videre. Boken utspiller seg i Sitka, en reell by i Alaska som i Chabons alternative versjon er blitt en millionhovedstad for regionens sammensatte jødiske befolkning – *the frozen chosen*, som de kalles et sted." (*Morgenbladet* 3.–9. juni 2011 s. 32)

"Paul Austers nye roman *Man In The Dark* [2008] er en kontrafaktisk fortelling om et USA i borgerkrig, hvor New York leder en fraksjon i kamp for å forlate unionen og opprette den nye nasjonen ISA (Independent States of America)." (*Morgenbladet* 31. oktober–6. november 2008 s. 36)

Chabons *Den jiddische politiforening* (på norsk 2011) er en roman der "to klassiske sjangere møtes: krim *noir* og kontrafaktisk historie. Vi befinner oss i Det føderale distriktet Sitka, en jiddischspråklig millionby i Alaska, sentrum for jødisk bosetning etter at staten Israel ble oppløst i 1948. Ordningen er midlertidig: Etter seksti år skal Sitka igjen bli amerikansk territorium. (Selv om rammen virker bisarr, er ikke Chabons påfunn fri fantasi; under annen verdenskrig var det faktisk planer om en frihavn i Alaska for jødiske flyktninger.)" (*Morgenbladet* 10.–16. juni 2011 s. 38)

Den britiske forfatteren Doris Lessings memoarlignende roman *Alfred & Emily* (2008; på norsk 2009) begynner med "en kontrafaktisk historie. Det er en fortelling om hva slags liv hennes far og mor kunne tenkes å ha fått hvis ikke Den første verdenskrig overhodet var skjedd. Da ville de heller ikke vært gift med hverandre; de to møttes da Emily var sykepleier på et London-sykehus som tok seg av soldater brakt hjem fra fronten med store skader. En av dem var Alfred, som måtte amputere et ben. Lessing forestiller seg at farens drøm om være bonde i England ville gå i oppfyllelse, mens Emily ville være ulykkelig gift med en rik lege som døde tidlig og senere bygget opp skoler for underprivilegerne. Slik ble det altså ikke, og i bokens annen del får vi Lessing fortelling om foreldrenes – og hennes – liv, fremfor alt i årene på en tungtdrevet farm i det som engang var Sør-Rhodesia (nå Zimbabwe), der Alfred slet med depresjoner, diabetes, fattigdom og traumatiske minner fra skyttergravene." (*Aftenposten* 30. oktober 2009 s. 15) "[F]ørst en

kontrafaktisk fortelling om hvordan det kunne ha fortont seg om verdenskrigen aldri hadde vært, der faren får sin engelske bondegård og moren får sin lege, deretter om det faktiske livet på en forgjeldet farm i Rhodesia, i en tematisk inndelt memoar.” (*Morgenbladet* 8.–14. januar 2010 s. 38)

Den sveitsiske forfatteren Christian Kracht sin roman *Jeg forblir her i solskinn og i skygge* (2008; på norsk 2014) har en handling der “Lenin aldri dro tilbake til Russland, og Sveits er blitt til SSR, en sveitsisk sovjetrepublikk.” (*Morgenbladet* 2.–8. mars 2012 s. 38) Kracht forandrer historien fra 1917. Lenin reiser ikke fra Sveits til Russland for å starte en proletar-revolusjon. Den russiske revolusjonen finner ikke sted, men Lenin innleder en revolusjon i Sveits. Stormaktene under 2. verdenskrig ligner delvis på dem vi kjenner fra 2. verdenskrig og er delvis oppdiktet. I Afrika er det grunnlagt en stor sveitsisk-sovjetisk koloni. Krigen varer i 96 år. “A nameless narrator who, as we discover some way into the story, is a black mercenary from some Swiss colony in East Africa, is sent to find and arrest the mysterious counter-revolutionary Brazhinsky. He pursues him through the eerily beautiful, snow-covered emptiness all the way to the heart of darkness – the Reduit, headquarter of the Soviet military deep inside the Swiss mountains. What he experiences there, when the encounter with Brazhinsky finally happens, is the death of utopia. A disillusionment with everything that he has been taught that will ultimately make him undertake another journey, away from indoctrination and war.” (<http://unitedagents.co.uk/christian-kracht>; lesedato 10.08.12)

“En forhutlet Hitler våkner opp på en byggeplass i Berlin. Det er 2011, men det vet han ikke. Ennå. Forvirret forsøker han å orientere seg, blir sjokkert over mangelen på respekt han blir møtt med – før han finner en avisiosk og innser det utrolige. Han besvimer. Kioskeieren forbarmer seg over ham og gir ham nye klær – til erstatning for den gamle, skitne uniformen. Hitler er tilbake, men det er det ingen som skjønner. De tror han er en imitator, og blir raskt et fenomen. Han dukker opp i talkshow, får etterhvert sitt eget – og når vi forlater ham har han stiftet et politisk parti. Den tyske forfatteren Timur Vermes har hatt enorm suksess med sin debutroman, “Han er her igjen”. Først og fremst er det en humorbok, men tydeligvis også noe mer. Den er solgt i 850 000 eksemplarer, og har ligget på toppen av bestselgerlista siden desember – treffende prissatt til 19 euro og 33 cent per stykk. Hva er det som er morsomt? Boka er skrevet i førsteperson, så det er Hitler selv som forteller. Hans perspektiver på det moderne samfunnet, og ikke minst absurde politiske tordentaler – både som indre dialog og som faktiske taler i denne kontrafaktiske romanen, skaper driv og komikk. Det forvirrende, og kanskje tiltalende, ved boka er både at leserne og det fiktive universet i boka ler av og med Hitler. I boka gjør forfatteren et snedig grep: Hitler blir banket opp av nynazister, som feilaktig tror at han gjør narr av dem i sine tv-opptredener. Dette utnytter Hitler selvfølgelig til det fulle ved å spille offer, og vinner stor sympati hos andre ledende politikere og i media. Han snakker på tv med representanter for De grønne og Sosialdemokrater som bare virker lettere irritert over meningene hans. Metode og posisjonering vinner over politisk innhold.” (*Dagbladet* 5. mai 2013 s. 3)

Den tyske forfatteren Simon Urbans *Plan D* (2011; på norsk 2013) “er en kontrafaktisk roman og debutanten Simon Urban har utvilsomt lest seg opp på sjangeren. Et must i så måte er Philip Roths *Konspirasjonen mot Amerika*, hvor Charles Lindberghs nasjonalsosialister kommer til makten i USA på slutten av trettitallet. Urban har garantert lest Robert Harris *Fedreland*, en kriminalroman fra et Tyskland hvor nazistene har vunnet andre verdenskrig og styrer med jernhånd. I *Plan D* inviterer Urban oss med i en angstridd politithriller om DDR, slik det kunne fremstått i dag hvis årene etter kommunismens sammenbrudd hadde forløpt annerledes. I Urbans fortelling, som foregår i 2011, er DDR og Forbundsrepublikken fremdeles to selvstendige stater. Det sosialistiske DDR, under Egon Krenz’ middelmådige lederskap, er fremdeles dypt autoritært, om enn i en noe mindre forgubbet versjon enn under Erich Honecker. Som mange kjenner til var Krenz i virkeligheten partileder en kort stund i 1989, og ble fengslet etter murens fall. [...] I *Plan D* står muren fortsatt, selv om myndighetene i en kort periode i 1989 lot et par millioner borgere ta veien mot vest. Gjerne riff raff og politiske skadedyr, etter myndighetenes syn. Ved å love politiske og økonomiske reformer har DDR fått EU-midler, noe som i praksis er bestikkelser for å sikre tilgang til østtyske gasskorridorer fra Russland. Siden penger ikke lukter har Krenz derfor uhindret kunnet stenge muren igjen og revitalisere kommunismen under mottoet “Gjenoppvåkningen”.” (Bård Larsen i <https://www.civita.no/politisk-filosofi-og-idedebatt/bokessay-spenning-og-satire-fra-historiens-skraphaug>; lesedato 04.06.21)

“Lavie Tidhar’s *Osama* (2011) portrays a world in which global terrorism never took hold, but in which a pulp novelist has written a series about a terrorist named Osama Bin Laden, whose “fictional” exploits describe our own reality; a similar subjunctivity governs Matt Ruff’s *The Mirage* (2012), where Bin Laden, caught in a less toxic history, attempts to conjure a world where he won: our world.” ([https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate\\_history](https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/alternate_history); lesedato 11.08.22)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Shannon Selins roman *Napoleon in America* (2014) lar den franske generalen flytte over Atlanteren. “What if Napoleon Bonaparte had escaped from St. Helena and wound up in the United States in 1821? [...] Former French Emperor Napoleon has been imprisoned on a dark wart in the Atlantic since his defeat at Waterloo in 1815. Rescued in a state of near-death by Gulf pirate Jean Laffite, Napoleon lands in New Orleans, where he struggles to regain his health aided by voodoo priestess Marie Laveau. Opponents of the Bourbon regime expect him to reconquer France. French Canadians beg him to seize Canada from Britain. American adventurers urge him to steal Texas from Mexico. His brother Joseph pleads with him to settle peacefully in New Jersey. As Napoleon restlessly explores his new land, he frets about his legacy. He fears for the future of his ten-year-old son, trapped in the velvet fetters of the Austrian court. While the British, French and American governments follow his activities with growing alarm, remnants of the Grande Armée flock to him with growing anticipation. Are Napoleon’s intentions as peaceful as he says they are? If not, does he still have the qualities

necessary to lead a winning campaign?” (<http://shannonselin.com/my-book/napoleon-in-america/>; lesedato 17.10.17)

Også filmer kan fortelle en kontrafaktisk historie. I amerikaneren Kevin Willmotts liksomdokumentar *C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America* (2004) framstilles historien som om sørstatene vant den amerikanske borgerkrigen på 1860-tallet. Filmen inneholder blant annet gjengivelse av fotografier og øyevitneskildringer, filmkutt fra tilsynelatende autentiske spillefilmer, intervjuer og historikerforklaringer. Den hypotetiske forutsetningen er at det amerikanske samfunnet i 2004 fortsatt har afroamerikanske slaver, og dessuten slaver av andre “raser” (kinesere, latinamerikanere). Filmen avbrytes flere steder av reklameinnslag, bl.a. en reklame for en tung arm-lenke som en slave må bære og som ikke kan tas av. Armlenken gjør at det er lett å spore slaven hvis han eller hun rømmer. Alle reklamene er rasistiske, men til dels svært parodiske.

I en folder som fulgte med DVD-versjonen av *C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America* skriver Kaleem Aftab: “Director Kevin Willmott adroitly recreates the history of this *C.S.A.* [= Confederate States of America, dvs. USA under sørstatenes ledelse] with a documentary made by the fictional British Broadcasting Service. The film extends this fiction further by letting us take part in the first screening of the previously banned documentary in the *C.S.A.* A scenario that Willmott cleverly uses to allow us to see how America may have looked like today had the Confederate forces been victorious through the racist adverts being aired by the channel. At first glance this creates a sense of relief that the Civil War turned out how it did, but subtly mixing products and people from the actual history of the United States of America with the action, Willmott stops hiding behind his poker face and shows us his hand; this is a lamentation to the racial history of the United States of America.”

*C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America* inneholder også et kutt fra “an imagined film from D. W. Griffith about the escape to Canada of Lincoln”, der den tidligere presidenten har kledt seg ut som afroamerikaner og opptrer svært ynkelig når han blir tatt til fange av sørstats-soldater. Denne imaginære filmen er i svart-hvitt, og fungerer som en feiring av krigsseieren på 1800-tallet. Her angripes David Wark Griffith som regissør. “Of course, it’s always been a great bugbear of African-Americans and others who abhor racist images that the so-called father of cinema’s *Birth of A Nation* [dvs. Griffiths mest kjente film] contains an ocean of negative black images. It is as if Willmott, a professor of film at the Kansas University holds a mirror up to our world and cries. The danger of any film that deals with race is that it opens itself up for accusations, merited or not, of reverse racism and it’s something that Willmott and [Spike] Lee have both faced. Here, Willmott points his finger at the facial failings of the United States at everyone no matter how famous, what colour or religion there. He is unrelenting in his criticism.” (Kaleem Aftab) I begynnelsen av *C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America* er det en

tekstplakat som advarer om at filmen ikke egner seg for “children and servants”, underforstått afroamerikanske slave-tjenere.

“Blodet står som geysirer ut av kroppen på slavedriverne i [Quentin Tarantinos film fra 2012] “Django Unchained”. [...] Filmen er den siste i en rekke hevnfantasier fra Tarantinos hyperaktive hånd. Tidligere har han latt kvinner slakte sine fiender og jøder skalpere nazister, det siste i den kontrafaktiske “Inglourious Basterds”. Også “Django Unchained” er kontrafaktisk, en stilisert drøm om en verden som aldri var, der herrefolket ikke får dø i synden.” (*Dagbladet* 18. januar 2013 s. 52)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Tamar Anolics *Triumph of a Tsar* (2018) “is a work of alternate historical fiction in which the Russian Revolution is averted, and the hemophiliac Alexei, son of Tsar Nicholas II, comes to the throne. In August, 1920, sixteen-year-old Alexei is enjoying his birthday celebrations when Nicholas dies suddenly. Overnight, Alexei becomes tsar of an empire that covers one-sixth of the world’s landmass. The Great War is over, but Russia is still suffering from the devastation and poverty that it brought. Communists such as Lenin, Stalin and Trotsky view the political situation as ripe for revolution, but they realize that the popular Alexei stands in their way. To make matters worse, Alexei’s hemophilia, the disease that has threatened him his whole life, returns to haunt him. With his life in constant danger from internal threats, Alexei must also navigate the external threats of fascism and Adolph Hitler. Slowly, Hitler’s menace increases throughout Europe until he tries to kill Alexei himself. Only then does Alexei realize that another World War is the only way to stop his German enemy.” (<https://www.independentauthornetwork.com/tamar-anolic.html>; lesedato 12.05.22)

“Ville utviklingen i Norge da ha gått i en helt annen retning uten unions-oppløsningen i 1905? Vi har spurt Øystein Sørensen hva som kunne ha skjedd hvis Norge og Sverige ikke skilte lag 100 år siden. [...] Sørensen har utviklet seg til å bli en av våre fremste eksperter på 1800-tallets og 1900-tallets skandinaviske historie, og har gitt ut boka “Historien om det som ikke skjedde: kontrafaktisk historie”. Det er kanskje derfor ikke så unaturlig at det også er han som i Norge er blitt en av de fremste eksponentene for kontrafaktisk historieskriving. Å operere innenfor denne disiplinen må regnes som en risikosport. Det forutsetter at man har en inngående oversikt over et betydelig kildemateriale. Uten en solid faglig plattform er det ikke noe grunnlag for å konstruere troverdige, alternative historiske scenarier. [...] Øystein Sørensen er seg meget bevisst skillet mellom det å være fagmann og forfatter av historiebøker, og det å operere som en tradisjonell skjønnlitterær skribent. Å drive med luftige spekulasjoner om hva som kunne ha skjedd under en langvarig norsk-svensk union overlater han derfor til romanforfatternes fantasiutflukter. - For en seriøs forsker blir faktorene for mange å holde styr på jo lenger ut man kommer på 1900-tallet til at det kan regnes som interessant. Det vil ikke være mulig å konstruere plausible hendelsesforløp, sier Sørensen. Han ser det likevel som en realistisk mulighet at unionen mellom Norge og Sverige ville kunne ha “overlevd” et par tiår inn på 1900-tallet, som en type

forsvarspakt, men alt taler for at unionen deretter ville ha utspilt sin rolle for godt.” (<http://www.forskning.no/artikler/2004/desember/1103714335.73/>; lesedato 09.08.12)

“Secret history is fiction that supposedly shows ‘what really happened’ or ‘what happened behind the scenes’. It includes fictional explanations for the cause of real events and incidents that the author claims were hushed up. Because it includes real events and real people, secret history is often confused with alternative history. But, if a novel is about ‘what really happened’ then it’s secret history not alternative history. Many thrillers are secret histories. For example, *The Eagle has Landed* describes an assassination attempt on Churchill. Jack Higgins presents the story as ‘based on fact’ and has a clever explanation of why the assassination was not recorded by history. It’s a great thriller, but it’s secret history, not alternative history. [...]

Paleofuturism is an author looking forward and imagining what might happen in the future. That imagined future has now been overtaken by reality. [...]

Alternative history is an author looking back and imagining what might have happened if the past had gone differently. [...] For example, *A Very British Coup*, by Chris Mullen describes attempts to destabilise a socialist government in Britain in the 1990s. It now reads like alternative history, but Mullen wrote it in the 1980s, so it’s actually paleofuturism. [...]

One steampunk story that is a hand-waving alternative history is *The Difference Engine* by William Gibson and Bruce Sterling. The point of departure is that Charles Babbage receives funding to complete his mechanical computer, which in the real world he didn’t.” (Graeme Shimmin i <http://graemeshimmin.com/what-is-alternative-history/>; lesedato 16.10.17)

“There are many stories which have been written of near (and even not-so near) futures which when read years later seem to be alternate histories because the dates mentioned have since passed by. Such stories may have been originally written as guesses as to what the future might bring, as warnings to the reader of an impending crisis, etc., but the authors’ intention is plainly not to write alternate history [...] One might call such works “retroactive alternate history”.” (Robert B. Schmunk i <http://www.uchronia.net/intro.html>; lesedato 21.08.24)

“Also akin to alternate histories are what are sometimes called “personal alternate histories” or “micro alternate histories”, stories in which fictional characters get a chance to see how their lives might otherwise have occurred. Examples include Alan Brennert’s novel *Time and Chance* and the movies *It’s a Wonderful Life* and *Sliding Doors*. However, the alterations in these stories are usually limited to the lives of the authors’ own fictional creations and do not affect the external world, Consequently, they are generally not considered alternate histories” (Robert B. Schmunk i <http://www.uchronia.net/intro.html>; lesedato 21.08.24).

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