

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

Av Helge Ridderstrøm (førsteamanuensis ved OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet)

Sist oppdatert 09.12.20

## Kultbok

“*Cult* is derived from the Latin word *cultus* meaning ‘adoration’ or ‘care’, usually linked to a context of religious practice” (Takens 2007 s. 7). Ordet “*cult* suggests a small group of loyal fans” (Welch Everman i Mathijs og Mendik 2008 s. 213). En kultbok “implies lengthy and irrational devotion probably, though not necessarily, by an ardent minority, to an author or book” (Paul Simpson m.fl. i *The Rough Guide to Cult Fiction*; her sitert Takens 2007 s. 9).

“[F]eelings for and attitudes towards literature are what characterises cult fiction to a large extent.” (Takens 2007 s. 4)

En kultbok blir brukt av personer til å bygge opp sin identitet, eller fungerer ubevisst på denne måten. Boka gir status å eie, ha lest og kunne nevne eller sitere fra. Det er en bok en “bare *må* ha” lest, ha i hylla, kunne referere til i samtaler osv. innen et visst miljø eller i en fankultur. Det å ha kjennskap til boka skaper tilhørighet med noen og avstand til andre (til folk flest).

En kultbok er ofte skrevet av en forfatter som er en outsider, og som ikke har hatt forhåpninger om å vinne noen litteraturpris (Abrahamsen 2003 s. 6). At noe blir et kultverk innebærer at det oppstår en aura rundt verket, eventuelt på nytt (Winter 2010 s. 84; på tysk: “Reauratisierungen”). Kultstatusen gir seg ofte utslag i at boka har én eller flere (ikke-kommersielle) fansider på Verdensveven (Neuland 2003 s. 242).

“De fleste bøker som blir betegnet som “kult-aktige”, har en forbindelse med en bestemt generasjons livsfølelse. Kultboka tematiserer denne livsfølelsen og speiler den på en provoserende, ærlig eller også på en spesielt prosaisk måte. Ofte blir kultbøker også til bestselgere – men bare på grunn av salgsstatistikk kan ikke en bok bli til et kultobjekt. Et eksempel er Günter Amendt, som med boka *Sexfront* (1970) for første gang i Tyskland skrev om temaet seksuell opplysning. Mange oppfattet denne opplysningsboka som skandaløs [...]. Dens målgruppe, ungdommer, gjenkjente seg i *Sexfront* – og dermed ble boka (til tross for mye kritikk fra kirken og den eldre generasjon) raskt til en kultbok.” (<http://literatur.edelight.de/b/kultbuecher/>; lesedato 28.09.12)

Amerikaneren Thomas Reed Whissen bok *Classic Cult Fiction: A Companion to Popular Cult Literature* (1992) “defines the concept in a preface and long introduction. His main argument in the preface is that a cult book speaks *to* and *for* its readers, meaning that readers need to feel directly addressed and represented by it (ix). Reed Whissen states that “when a book has this kind of effect on a sizable number of readers, then we can say it deserves to be called a *cult book*” (ix). In the section on Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* he states that “[...] a true cult book is one that seems to address the reader directly and to say things in a way the reader would wish to say them” (47). According to Reed Whissen, a reader has to fall under the spell of a cult book (x), more specifically, the book has to be so influential that it “[...] gathers the sort of *worshipful following* that can only be described as a cult” (xi, emphasis mine). [...] ‘worship’ and ‘devotion’, transferred to a secular context (i.e. a book) [...] Reed Whissen states that “what distinguishes cult literature from other literary genres is primarily that a book acquires cult status on the basis of reader response rather than the author’s intention” (xi).” (Takens 2007 s. 10-11)

“Reed Whissen also speaks about the obsession readers experience when it comes to the book they admire: “Cult books have a mesmerizing effect on their readers, holding them in thrall with a passionate intensity that has much in common with obsessive love” (xiii). Reed Whissen states it is indeed “[...] the obsession that characterizes the relationship between a cult reader and a cult book” (xv). The obsession can manifest itself in various ways, and in the most extreme case readers wholly identify with the book’s characters, imitating their behaviour, which does not always end well (Reed Whissen, xx). A cult book does not necessarily have to be a bestseller, however. The obsession described above seems to imply that cult books and popularity go hand in hand, but this need not always be the case. Cult books *can* be popular works of fiction, but there are also many cult books that have a select group of ‘followers’ who are strongly drawn to it and know everything about it. Reed Whissen claims that “[...] many cult books have small but special audiences and are relatively unknown outside a narrow circle for either cultural or linguistic reasons” (xv).” (Takens 2007 s. 11)

“Cult books re-invent reality and challenge accepted patterns of thought and behaviour. In this way, they initially create rebellion and denial, dreaming of a different world, but in the end cult heroes often “[...] turn [their] back, bite [their] tongue and bide [their] time” (Reed Whissen, xxiii). The end, therefore, is usually one of passivity. The psychological components are always linked to a character in the book readers can identify with. This character offers readers the possibility to recognise their own alienation and loneliness, boost their egos, etc. The *idealisation* of cult heroes is rather ‘neurotic’, since these heroes often behave in a destructive way and sometimes exhibit a confused or perverted sexuality (Reed Whissen, xxv). Nevertheless, these heroes are idealised, for example because they display an extreme need to be free (e.g. Dean Moriarty in Kerouac’s *On the Road*). This need has its roots in the democratic ideal and readers can recognise it as their own. The

Romantic heritage comes back in the aspect of *alienation*: “In most cult books one is likely to encounter at least one lonely figure living in self-imposed solitary confinement of either a psychological, emotional, spiritual or intellectual sort – alone, aloof, apart; in a word, alienated” (Reed Whissen, xxvii). This character is searching for his or her personal truth in a solitary way, which readers identify with if they feel they are in a similar position. Additionally, they feel they are the only ones taking this road, but, as we have seen, this experience is actually far from personal. Again, there is a paradox when it comes to the term ‘alienated’ in this context, because when whole groups claim to feel like this – e.g., in the sixties – the term becomes rather hollow. However, alienation still is the main characteristic of the cult hero, who displays a detachment from the world, a rejection of (and by) society as well as an extreme self-consciousness. Reed Whissen notes that a good example of this is Holden Caulfield, the protagonist of Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* (xxvii-xxviii). Cult books also boost the egos of their readers; *ego-reinforcement* occurs. Reed Whissen states that “a cult book must, above all, serve as the mirror in which the alienated see themselves reflected – and rejoice” (xxx). Being alienated becomes a status symbol, since in the end it means being different from and superior to ‘the mob’ (Reed Whissen, xxxi). [...] cult followers often feel superior to the blindness everywhere around them.” (Takens 2007 s. 13-14)

“Another component having its roots in Romanticism is *suffering*. [...] Suffering can be seen as the theme of many cult books, for example that of Goethe’s *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*, King’s *Misery*, Plath’s *The Bell Jar*, and also Pirsig’s *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (Reed Whissen, xxxiii). The ‘masochistic reader’ enters the stage here, as cult readers tend to suffer along with the characters and seems to enjoy this kind of torment. [...] Cult fiction also offers its readers a model for *behaviour modification* or “[...] a program for altering the way they look and act” (Reed Whissen, xxxiv). *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, for example, as well as *On the Road* and the works of the Beats of the late fifties provided readers with examples of alternative possibilities. Those who read cult books suddenly saw wholly new options and modelled their behaviour according to the one(s) they chose (Reed Whissen, xxxiv). This has its roots in the influence of the democratic ideal, which made people claim and assert their freedom. Finally, the component of *vulnerability* should be taken into account. As has been noticed above, the influence of myths and their metaphysical dimension contributed to the development of the idea that everything is relative. This conviction makes the cult hero vulnerable, as he or she does nothing but turn his or her back and suffer in silence. The dream remains, but fighting spirit and action is lacking. Reed Whissen calls these characters *naïf*, and applies this label to Werther, Holden Caulfield and even Lou Ford, the madman in Jim Thompson’s *The Killer Inside Me*. They are “[...] a little too good for this world, but [their] charming innocence tempts us to follow in [their] path” (Reed Whissen, xxxvi). Readers who are receptive to this kind of behaviour and imitate it place themselves in a weak position as well: “This attitude of benign indifference, amounting almost to a paralysis of the will, ultimately renders a reader vulnerable

to the doctrines and dogmas of the book in question” (Reed Whissen, xxxv).” (Takens 2007 s. 15-16)

“Reed Whissen claims that the mind-set of cult fiction readers is “[...] a mind set that can best be described as vulnerable in the sense of being receptive to oversimplified solutions and susceptible to evasions of responsibility that pass for involvements” (xxv). Nevertheless, readers seem to have a double agenda. They ‘surrender’ to the cult book, but also ally themselves with all those who have read it with them, thereby acquiring a certain kind of collective power (Reed Whissen, xxxvi). They like to believe they are alone – alienated, vulnerable –, but in reality they are not. This duality constantly returns in the relationship between cult fiction and its readers. Taken together, all psychological components interact in a complex network, which the ultimate effect of cult fiction depends on.” (Takens 2007 s. 16)

Tyskeren Rudolf Freiburg m.fl. har redigert verket *Kultbøker* (2004; på tysk), der de minner om at en kultbok ikke trenger å være en bestselger. Det sentrale er bokas resepsjon. Freiburg m.fl. hevder at kultbøker på en eller annen måte treffer en “nerve” i sin (sam-)tid, og dermed ikke alltid forblir kultbøker, mens noen bøker blir det lenge etter at de første gang ble publisert (Evelyne Polt-Heinzl i <http://www.literaturhaus.at/index.php?id=3741&L=656>; lesedato 25.03.20).

“What is a cult book? We tried and failed to arrive at a definition: books often found in the pockets of murderers; books that you take very seriously when you are 17; books whose readers can be identified to all with the formula “<Author Name> whacko” [dvs. en eksentrisk fan av en bestemt bok]; books our children just won’t get... Some things crop up often: drugs, travel, philosophy, an implied two fingers to conventional wisdom, titanic self-absorption, a tendency to date fast and a paperback jacket everyone recognises with a faint wince. But these don’t begin to cover it. Cult books include some of the most cringemaking collections of bilge ever collected between hard covers. But they also include many of the key texts of modern feminism; some of the best journalism and memoirs; some of the most entrancing and original novels in the canon. Cult books are somehow, intangibly, different from simple bestsellers – though many of them are that. *The Carpetbaggers* [av Harold Robbins] was a bestseller; *Zen and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* [av Robert M. Pirsig] was a cult. They are different from books that have big new ideas – though many of them are that. *On The Origin of Species* changed history; but *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* was a cult.” (Sam Leith i <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/3672915/50-best-cult-books.html>; lesedato 28.09.12)

På 1890-tallet var Friedrich Nietzsches *Slik talte Zarathustra* (1883-85) og Max Stirners *Den enkelte og hans eiendom* (1844) begge kultbøker blant dem som ønsket en grenseløs individualisme og et nytt “overmenneske” (Fülberth og Dietz 1988 s. 122).

“What are the requirements for transforming a book or a movie into a cult object? The work must be loved, obviously, but this is not enough. It must provide a completely furnished world so that its fans can quote characters and episodes as if they were aspects of the fan’s private sectarian world. ... I think that in order to transform a work into a cult object one must be able to break, dislocate, unhinge it so that one can remember only parts of it, irrespective of their original relationship with the whole.” (Umberto Eco sitert fra Jenkins 1992 s. 50)

“Vi har hatt eksempler på norske forfattere som har proklamert at de er i ferd med å skrive en “kultroman”. Allerede med et slikt utsagn, røper de at de ikke forstår hva det dreier seg om. Et slikt fenomen kan ikke planlegges. Det blir til gjennom måten det blir mottatt på.” (*Dagbladet* 21. januar 2008 s. 38) Johan Harstads roman *Hässelby* (2007) ble av forlaget omtalt som “en varslet kultroman”. Boka er en oppfølger til Gunilla Bergströms barnebøker om Albert Åberg og handler om Albert som voksen.

Den tysk-sveitsiske forfatteren Hermann Hesse har som et av sine sentrale litterære motiver en begavet og individualistisk manns problemer når hans idealer må bryne seg med virkeligheten. Hesse ble sterkt inspirert av østlig filosofi og religion. I 1911 besøkte han India, et besøk som bl.a. ledet til romanen *Siddhartha* (1919-21). Han ble en talsmann for pasifisme og personlig egenart i motsetning samfunnets maktmisbruk og vold. På begynnelsen av 1960-tallet ble hans bøker mye lest av amerikansk ungdom, en popularitet som gjorde han til en kultforfatter. Han ble “motkulturens dikter”. “Med hippiebevegelsens framvekst i USA fikk Hesses forfatterskap en formidabel renessanse. En hel generasjon sinte unge menn og kvinner var klare for å ta et oppgjør med sin tid og skape en ny verden tuftet på indre – ikke ytre – verdier. For dem ble Hesses bøker bibler. Og noen av dem gikk vel langt i sine tolkninger av Hesses tekster. Forfatteren, psykologen og kultfiguren Timothy Leary anbefalte for eksempel Hesses bøker – især “Steppeulven” og “Siddharta” – før inntak av LSD. Hesses oppvekst- og dannelsesromaner – med forankring i filosofi, psykoanalyse og orientalsk religion og mystikk – om ensomme outsiders og søkende sjeler i konflikt med den tiden de var tvunget til å leve i, skulle vise seg å treffe en nerve hos denne generasjonen. Slik Hesse også hadde truffet en nerve hos sine samtidige lesere etter første verdenskrig. [...] Generelt var amerikanske litteraturkritikere lunkne til Hesses forfatterskap. En skrev i sin anmeldelse av “Narsiss og Gullmann”: “Dette er ikke litteratur, det er røkelse”. Fascinasjonen ved Hesse var først og fremst et kulturelt – ikke et litterært – fenomen. Og kulten fikk aparte ringvirkninger. I 1967 døpte en ung mann ved navn John Kay bandet sitt etter Hesses kanskje mest berømte verk, “Steppenwolf” (“Steppeulven”), og i San Francisco ble “The Magic Theatre” grunnlagt, oppkalt etter teatret beskrevet i samme bok.” (Jonas Rein Seehaus i *Dagbladet* 8. august 2012 s. 60-61)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Ernest Hemingways roman *The Sun Also Rises* (1926; oversatt til norsk i 1929 med tittelen *Og solen går sin gang*) ble en kultbok “som

har sørget for en valfart av dumdristige fans til okseløpet i Pamplona, som skildres inngående.” (*Dagbladet* 9. februar 2009 s. 39) “Almost immediately upon the release of *The Sun Also Rises*, at least one press outlet noted the emergence of a Hemingway “cult” on two continents.” (Lesley M. M. Blume i <https://lithub.com/how-hemingways-bad-behavior-inspired-a-generation/>; lesedato 30.08.19) Hans bøker er karakteristiske ved den kult-egenskapen “rebellion and adversity in writers and their fiction” (Takens 2007 s. 10).

“J. D. Salinger turns 90. There probably won’t be a party, or if there is we’ll never know. For more than 50 years Mr. Salinger has lived in seclusion in the small town of Cornish, N.H. For a while it used to be a journalistic sport for newspapers and magazines to send reporters up to Cornish in hopes of a sighting, or at least a quotation from a garrulous local, but Mr. Salinger hasn’t been photographed in decades now and the neighbors have all clammed up. [...] With its very first sentence, his novel “The Catcher in the Rye,” which came out in 1951, introduced a brand-new voice in American writing, and it quickly became a cult book, a rite of passage for the brainy and disaffected.” (<http://www.nytimes.com/>; lesedato 05.10.12)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Thomas Pynchon ble en kultforfatter: “In the sixties, Pynchon inspired an almost obsessive cult among enthusiasts, who passed his books around along with records of Bob Dylan and the Beatles. When *Gravity’s Rainbow* appeared in 1973, it remained on the best-seller lists for weeks.”

Innen graffiti- og hiphop-subkulturen har Olivier Monmagnons bok *Sabotage! Graffiti-kunsten på Europas tog* (1996), en fransk bildebok med franske og engelske tekster, fått kultstatus, og regnes sammen med Henry Chalfant og James Prigoffs bok *Spraycan Art* (1987) som “bibler” (Krekow, Steiner og Taupitz 1999 s. 151).

Den amerikanske forfatteren Luke Rhinehart (pseudonym for George Cockcroft) er kjent for romanen *The Dice Man* (1971; på norsk 1995 med tittelen *Terningmannen*), en tekst som inspirerte mange lesere til å bruke terninger for å ta valg. Rhinehart “hadde aldri regnet med at *Terningmannen* skulle få den store oppmerksomheten og senere gjøre ham til “terningkultens” overhode. [...] Tusenvis av lesere verden over har gitt seg i kast med terningen etter å ha lest boken, den har inspirert til en dokumentarfilm om folk som lever etter terningens befalinger, et reiseprogram på [TV-stasjonen] Discovery [...] *Terningmannen* har alltid vært det man vil kalle en kultroman – det vi si at den ikke er blitt promotert på annen måte enn av mennesker som har lest den og anbefalt den for venner.” (*A-magasinet* 26. mars 2010 s. 8 og 11)

Om de to “norske kultforfatterne, Agnar Mykle og Jens Bjørneboe, er det i løpet av de siste årene skrevet bredt anlagte biografier, av henholdsvis Anders Heger (*Mykle – et diktet liv* 1999) og Tore Rem selv (*Sin egen herre* 2009, *Født til frihet* 2010).

[...] I *Sin egen herre* og *Født til frihet* plukker Rem over drøyt tusen sider i stykker myten om generasjonsikonet Jens Bjørneboe og viser hvordan Bjørneboe etter sitt litterære gjennombrudd på 1960-tallet i økende grad blir offer for sin egen offentlige iscenesatte forfatterpersonlighet” (Espen Haavardsholm i *Aftenposten* 19. november 2010 s. 4).

Arne Garborgs roman *Trætte Mænd* (1891) “speiler ifølge [Eldrid] Lunden en rekke trender i Europas åndsliv; “estetismen, egosentrisiteten, sentimentaliteten, kvinnesynet ... nytinga, dopet, det okkulte, flirtinga med sjølmordet, trøttleiken”. Interessant nok ble denne romanen faktisk kultlesning i norske pønkrock-miljøer rundt 1980” (*Dagbladet* 10. november 2008 s. 45).

“Since a cult book becomes cult in a certain time, with its own cultural, social and psychological constructs, a *full* investigation of cult fiction should also take into account time-related reader response. *On the Road*, for example, became so popular in the sixties because its spirit of freedom corresponded to the *Zeitgeist*. Apparently, this book touched people in a different way than other books of that era did, and it is this difference that makes it cult fiction (Reed Whissen, xii). [...] analysing the contexts in which they caught on (cultural, social, political, economical) [...] Moreover, analysing a few books would not tell us much about cult fiction in general.” (Takens 2007 s. 21)

En person som er en stor stjerne innen en annen kunstform enn litteratur, kan ha lettere enn andre personer for å oppnå kultstatus for sine litterære verk. Den australske sangeren og musikeren Nick Caves roman *And the Ass saw the Angel* (1989) ble en kultroman.

Den tysk-amerikanske forfatteren Charles Bukowskis “whole oeuvre, including *Pulp* [1994], can be considered cult fiction. This is mainly due to the fact that during his lifetime Bukowski was already considered a cult figure – a reputation which only grew after his death. Bukowski’s writing is raw and explicit, dealing with everyday, working life, and it is not always flattering towards women. [...] When reading his biography, written by Howard Sounes, it becomes clear that Bukowski’s personality and writing mingled, as his pessimistic worldview, heavy drinking, quarrelsome nature and appetite in women shine through in his books. Think, for example, of his novels *Post Office* (1971), *Factotum* (1975) and *Women* (1978). All his poetry and books are based on his own life, and the name Henry Chinaski, which is the hero of a number of Bukowski’s novels, closely resembles the writer’s own name. When he became famous during the 1970s, this blending of fact and fiction caused him to attract many fans – mostly women – who greatly admired his work, who wished to meet him in person in order to see what he was like and who often wanted to have sex with him.” (Takens 2007 s. 52)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Mark Z. Danielewski ga ut romanen *House of Leaves*, som ble publisert gradvis på Verdensveven og deretter utgitt som bok i 2000. Boka har fått kultstatus, på grunn av både innhold og måten den først ble publisert på.

“Sometimes a book, or an idea, can be obscure and widely influential at the same time. That’s the case with “Ecotopia,” a 1970s cult novel, originally self-published by its author, Ernest Callenbach, that has seeped into the American groundwater without becoming well known. [...] “ ‘Ecotopia’ became almost immediately absorbed into the popular culture,” said Scott Slovic, a professor at the University of Nevada, Reno, and a pioneer of the growing literature-and-the-environment movement. “You hear people talking about the idea of Ecotopia, or about the Northwest as Ecotopia. But a lot of them don’t know where the term came from.” In the ’70s, the book, with a blurb from Ralph Nader, was a hit, selling 400,000 or so copies in the United States, and more worldwide. But by the raging ’80s, the novel, along with the Whole Earth Catalog, seemed like a good candidate for a ’70s time capsule – a dusty curio without much lasting impact. Yet today, “Ecotopia” is increasingly assigned in college courses on the environment, sociology and urban planning, and its cult following has begun to reach an unlikely readership: Mr. Callenbach, who lives in Berkeley, Calif., and calls himself a “fringe, ’60s person,” has been finding himself invited to speak at many small religious colleges. This month, the book’s publisher, Bantam, is reissuing it. [...] “It was rejected by every significant publisher in New York,” Mr. Callenbach said. “Some said it didn’t have enough sex and violence, or that they couldn’t tell if it were a novel or a tract. Somebody said the ecology trend was over. This was New York, circa 1974. I was on the point of burning it.” [...] In fact, like other important environmental books, the novel’s impact may be lasting. Writing has a special place in the environmental movement – “a literature with measurable effects,” wrote Bill McKibben, in the introduction to “American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau,” a new anthology. [...] Mr. Callenbach hopes the book will resonate among the greening edges of an evangelical movement.” (Scott Timberg i <http://www.nytimes.com/>; lesedato 04.10.12)

Edgar Allan Poe og Charles Baudelaire er kultforfattere i goth-kulturen – delvis fordi begge forfatterne led i en verden som de ikke passet inn i (Grossegger og Heinzlmaier 2002 s. 151).

Mange av dem som har en kultroman, føler at hun/han også må ha filmatiseringene av boka. “For en ekte “Ringenes herre”-fan har allerede en egen hylle viet til alt som har med J.R.R. Tolkiens klassiker å gjøre. Gjerne bøkene i et par utgaver, noen bøker om bøkene – og alle tre filmene i et par utgaver. Ja, for filmene kom jo som kjent i to utgaver, først en identisk med kinoversjonene som “alle” kjøpte, og så en forlenget og forbedret versjon med uendelige mengder ekstramateriale som “alle” også måtte ha. Blu-ray-pakka som kommer nå inneholder kinoversjonene – og bevares – de allerede visuelt imponerende filmene blir ikke mindre imponerende i HD-kvalitet. Men de utvidete versjonene er ennå ikke å få på Blu-ray.

Filmselskapet mistenkes for å kalkulere med dobbeltsalg igjen, og mange er forbanna.” (*Dagbladet* 7. april 2010 s. 56)

“AbeBooks lager også en bestselgerliste for amerikansk militærpersonell stasjonert i Irak, der “Devil’s Guard” av George Robert Elford havner på sjetteplass. Boken gir seg ut for å være en tidligere nazioffisers sanne beretning om livet som leiesoldat i Indokina, og er blitt en kultbok i det amerikanske militæret. Ingen forlag vil trykke nytt opplag av boken, dermed blir den dyr å kjøpe brukt, og går i stor grad på rundgang blant soldatene.” (*Dagbladet* 13. juli 2016 s. 52)

I Hitler-Tyskland ble diktatorens bok *Min kamp* (1925-26) “Brukt som kultbok [...] Ti millioner eksemplarer var solgt i Hitler-Tyskland da krigen tok slutt. - Men ble den lest? - Tyske historikere diskuterer i hvilken grad boken ble lest i det hele tatt. Men mye tyder på at den ble brukt på en nærmest kultisk måte, der løsrevne enkeltavsnitt og -setninger ble sitert og pugget. I Hitler-Jugend fungerte boken som en slags bibel” (*Morgenbladet* 18.–24. november 2011 s. 24).

Andrew Calcutt og Richard Shephards bok *Cult Fiction: A Reader’s Guide* (1998) “sets out to list the most important creators of literature “from the margins and extremes ... [...]”. Energetically written, with photographs, topical lists (“H is for Heroin – 10 Novels About Junk”), and reproductions of book jackets [...] All the usual suspects are here: proto-libertine J.K. Huysmans, bottle-killer Charles Bukowski, amphetamine-fueled Philip K. Dick. And Texans fare surprisingly well, with Kinky Friedman, Bruce Sterling, and Robert E. Howard represented. But because *Cult Fiction* is British, written by two youngish journalists who share an interest in pop culture, the American reader also gets a heaping portion of English, Irish, and Scottish writers. James Kelman (*How Late It Was, How Late*) and Irvine Welsh (*Trainspotting, Ecstasy*) are more or less familiar, but try finding Stewart Home, Keith Waterhouse, or Ted Lewis in your neighborhood superstore. [...] an anthology that purports to celebrate authors “whose walk is as transgressive as their talk” [...] The selection of writers profiled in *Cult Fiction* says more about the authors’ artistic predilections – tales of hard crime, drug use, and sexual experimentation – than it does about the continuing importance of marginal, even dangerous, makers of fiction. The fact is, the most important “marginal” writer in America today may well be William L. Pierce, whose reactionary *Turner Diaries* serves as a blueprint for the social mayhem cooked up by avid young readers like Timothy McVeigh. In America, the power of fiction is greater than Calcutt and Shephard bother to imagine, and the cults it can create a whole lot more disturbing.” (Bruce McCandless i <https://www.austinchronicle.com/books/2000-02-25/75968/>; lesedato 05.09.19)

Alle artiklene og litteraturlista til hele leksikonet er tilgjengelig på <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no>