

Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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Lad lit

(_sjanger) Det engelske ordet “lad” betyr gutt eller ung mann. Romaner om “retningsløse” unge menn som ikke ønsker eller klarer å bli voksne. Betegnelsen stammer fra Storbritannia, der den oppstod på 1990-tallet og fungerte som et markedsføringsknep.

Mange av bøkene er jeg-fortellinger med et bekjennende preg (der fortelleren kan være upålitelig). Briten Nick Hornby regnes som en av forfatterne som etablerte sjangeren. Denne litteraturen har latterliggjørende blitt kalt “dick lit” (som rimer på “chick lit”).

De unge mennene som er hovedpersonene, sliter blant annet med å finne sin plass i karrieresamfunnet, de er frustrerte og tvilende, har problemer med å legge langsiktige planer og kjeder seg mye (deres atspredelser er ofte å nyte musikk og populærkultur). De er desillusjonerte før de har kommet skikkelig i gang med voksenlivet.

Romanene handler om (relativt) unge menn og deres hverdagsproblemer, ofte beskrevet på en humoristisk måte. Hovedpersonen er vanligvis i 20- eller 30-årene og strever med å finne en meningsfull funksjon å fylle i samfunnet. Utfordringene og dilemmaene sliter på den unge mannen, som kan være i en mannlig identitetskrise. Relasjoner til kvinner fungerer dårlig, og kvinnene synes at han er umoden. Mannen kan ha besettelser (f.eks. for fotball) og fobier. Et sentralt spørsmål i denne litteraturen er mannens rolle og maskulinitetens plass i det postmoderne samfunn. Til tross for en uryddig tilværelse kan det vise seg at mannen har verdifulle kvaliteter, og blir til slutt et (mer) ansvarlig menneske.

Bøkene handler om “den umåtelig selvmedlidende mannen, som vil fortsette å være ung gutt og i alle fall ikke gå inn i noen bindende relasjoner – i evig søken etter meningen med brente straffespark” (*Bok og Bibliotek* juni 2005 s. 17). Bøkene tematiserer “masculinity in crisis” (Knowles 2002 s. 35) og unge menns “anti-careerism” (Knowles 2002 s. 39). Mennene er ofte fiksert på noe, som musikk eller fotball – dvs. med “male obsessions” (Knowles 2002 s. 66, for eksempel “the football-fixated Lad”, Knowles 2002 s. 17). De lever promiskuøs, dvs. med mange seksualpartnere, eventuelt i seriemonogami.

På tysk har sjangeren blitt kalt “Comedyroman” om menn (https://rp-online.de/nrw/staedte/neuss/maenner-luegen-weil-sie-frauen-imponieren-wollen_aid-212_35911; lesedato 05.05.20).

“If every cultural movement begins as a rebellion against its predecessor, then images of masculinity in the early 1990s have to be considered as a backlash against those which dominated the 1980s. During that decade [dvs. 1980-tallet] the “New Man” gained popularity, representing a progressive model of masculinity as someone who would share housework and other “feminine” tasks, who was in touch with his feelings, and who regarded women as partners and equals. In opposition to this, the image of the “Lad” or “New Lad” arose in the early 1990s as a generally middle-class figure espousing attitudes and behaviors conventionally (though not necessarily correctly) attributed to the working classes. Lads took up an anti-intellectual position, scorning sensitivity and caring in favor of drinking, violence, and a pre-feminist attitude to women as both sex objects and creatures from another species. They promoted un-PC views [= ikke politisk korrekte synspunkter] and a hedonistic [= nytende] attitude to life, scorning ideas of career aspiration or “settling down” for an uproarious social life with their friends and casual relationships with women.” (Knowles 2002 s. 15).

Litteraturforskeren Anna Katharina Knaup definerer i boka *Manne-romanen: En ny sjanger i den tyskspråklige samtidslitteraturen* (2015; på tysk) lad lit som romaner om unge menns kriser på bakgrunn av kvinners emansipasjon. Bøkene skal bidra til menns selvinnsikt/-forståelse (“männliche Selbstverständigungsliteratur”).

Mennene er ofte ensomme og med et svakt selvbilde, uten en klar rollemodell, føler seg sårbare i arbeidslivet (ytelses-samfunnet) og fortapte i kjærlighetsrelasjoner. I fortellingene opplever de vansker i forhold til kvinner, meningskrise, “tedio vitae” (en slags livstrøtthet og resignasjon) og de “slikker sine sår” (<http://www.literaturhaus.at/index.php?id=11170&L=634>; lesedato 25.03.20).

Nick Hornby er den mest kjente lad lit-forfatteren. To andre briter som skriver innen samme sjanger, er Tony Parsons og John O. Farrel. Joanne Knowles har sammenlignet Hornbys *High Fidelity* (1995) med en dannelsesroman: “The lesson Rob learns, in true *bildungsroman* style, is that one reaches maturity when one decides to act maturely. He grows up when he wants to do so – in fact, when he finally rejects the memory of his early romantic experiences with Charlie and others as things he no longer wants – and receives the traditional rewards of a stable relationship and a new (or renewed) vocation in life, in doing so.” (Knowles 2002 s. 23) “As a creation, Rob is a completely realized individual, but there are lots of guys like him around – underqualified guys, dead-ended in their jobs, attached to women who are smarter, have credentials, and are on the move.” (Rob Nixon sitert fra Knowles 2002 s. 63)

“Perhaps the most striking feature of lad lit is the difference between the characterisation of masculinity here and in other fictional genres. In traditional romances the heroes are invariably strong, powerful and successful; in spy fiction and military genres they are presented as intelligent, valiant, purposeful; in lad lit, by contrast, readers are offered a distinctly unheroic masculinity – one that is fallible, self-deprecating and liable to fail at any moment. In relation to work, for example, lad lit heroes are portrayed as unsuccessful, struggling, or as clinging on by a thread to their tenuous ‘careers’. They are usually doing something boring for which they are overqualified, or working in one of the ‘glamorous’ cultural industries (whose dark – or banal – underbelly will be exposed – e.g. advertising in *E* by Matt Beaumont, record company PR in Daniel Price’s *Slick* (Beaumont, 2000, Price, 2004)). Duffy in *Mr Commitment* (Gayle, 1999) is a struggling stand-up comedian who is always waiting for his big break, which palpably fails to materialize, whilst Rob in Nick Hornby’s *High Fidelity* (1995) tells us: ‘Here’s how not to plan a career: a) split up with girlfriend; b) junk college; c) go to work in a record shop; d) stay in record shop for rest of life’. Meanwhile Charles in *Don’t Try This at Home* (Reizin, 2003) is a producer of ‘deception comedy’ TV programmes who lives on his wit(s), lies his way out of every difficult situation, yet always manages to say the wrong thing to his (female) boss. He lives in fear of his contract not being renewed, and is obsessively preoccupied with the idea that one of his junior colleagues ‘could be my boss in five years time’. Moreover, his cynicism about the TV business makes him wonder whether he even wants to succeed [...] Simultaneously detached, bitter, and self-deprecating, Charles despises what he does, but not enough to actually try to change anything. The entire book might be seen as a searing critique of contemporary reality TV, with its deception, cruelty and on-camera ambushes, yet the hero’s response to feeling morally compromised is apathy; he humourously and intelligently dissects the world of which he is a part, but carries on just the same.” (Rosalind Gill i <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklitt/gill.html>; lesedato 05.09.22)

Lad-enes verden “might be said to constitute a ‘post-political’ universe in which there are no meaningful moral or ethical frameworks. In this dystopian world the characters wallow in the a-moral mud, but can call upon no alternate vision of how things might be, and, indeed, even seemingly ethical stances by other characters are revealed to be phony or calculating. No one comes out well: principled takes on advertising emerge as even more cynical, apparent critics of celebrity culture turn out to be just as vain and self aggrandising, and so on. Interestingly, the male hero’s lack of career success stands in stark contrast to that of the women in lad lit novels, who are typically portrayed as intelligent, confident and successful. [...] This is a fascinating reversal of the pattern in chick lit in which women are invariably portrayed as struggling in low paid, unsatisfying jobs which are far removed from their aspirations.” (Rosalind Gill i <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklitt/gill.html>; lesedato 05.09.22)

De unge mennene “tend to be portrayed as cowardly, hypochondriacal losers who are not in control of their own destinies and hark back longingly to simpler times (usually their adolescence). The extent to which hypochondria afflicts lad lit heroes is little short of remarkable: the men seem uniformly to suffer from some sort of suitably diffuse, painful but not debilitating illness – slow-growing brain tumours are a particular favourite (but the possibilities are endless). Kit, hero and narrator of *The International Gooseberry* (Hatch, 2001) worries perpetually about contracting West Nile encephalitis (travelling in the US!) and keeps up a running commentary about his other bodily ‘symptoms’, none of which is seemingly too trivial to warrant anxious attention [...] Why is the body such a site of anxiety for male narrators? It is notable that the anxiety relates neither to appearance (as in chick lit) nor to performance (in more hegemonically masculine terms). Rather it seems to index a more profound existential dis-ease with the self in late capitalist society, perhaps even melancholia.” (Rosalind Gill i <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklit/gill.html>; lesedato 05.09.22)

“The motif of un- or anti-heroism extends more broadly throughout the characterisation of leading male characters in lad lit. As Hornby’s Rob puts it: ‘I’m here in this stupid little flat, on my own, I’m 35 years old, I own a tiny failing business and my friends don’t seem to be friends but people whose phone numbers I haven’t lost’. Men are frequently portrayed as domestically inept, unable to cook, and left surviving on a diet of toast and pot noodle. Indeed, the toast diet is so central to constructions of laddish masculinity in these books that it might be said to stand metonymically for new lad’s entire lifestyle. Toast represents many things in these novels: a certain infantilism and refusal or inability to grow up and cook ‘proper’ food; a nostalgic harking back to adolescence or college days; a source of deep comfort, when life proves too difficult. [...] Mike Gayle’s book *Turning Thirty* [...] even has a large cover illustration of a toaster!” (Rosalind Gill i <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklit/gill.html>; lesedato 05.09.22)

Hornbys *High Fidelity* “er én af de seneste to årtiers mest fuldendte beskrivelse af (næsten) alle de tarvelige dele, der indgår i et break-up. Fra følelsen af manglende kontrol til det underlige følelsesmix af hævn, frihed og skyldfølelse, som det første hurtige knald efter bruddet kan afstedkomme. Hornbys egentlige triumf, er hans indirekte pointering af, at man ikke bliver mere tykhudet, jo ældre man bliver. Man lærer sjældent af sine fejl og falder gang på gang i de samme fælder. Det er måske en banal pointe, men ikke desto mindre en sand en af slagsen. Dermed siger Hornby også, at den personlige undergang er uundgåelig. Vi vil livet igennem støde på både tab, angst og død, uden at vi kan gøre noget ved det. Det er ganske enkelt et livsvilkår. Banalt som det lyder, er det en pointe vi – synes Hornby at sige – ofte glemmer. At blive forladt er en del af livet, man kan aldrig føle sig sikker, *get used to it*. Har man først erkendt det, bliver de forhold man har haft – og har – mere værd.” (Stefan Stander i <http://atlas-mag.dk/kultur/>; lesedato 07.04.17)

“Hornby anxiously – but profitably – sought to reassure his readers that a man could read books, be friends with feminists, even cry – and still be a man. That many of his readers were in fact women is significant: they, too, needed reassurance that the confused young men they had landed were, indeed, the males of the species [...] alienation, isolation, self-doubt and so on [...] With his series of weak-willed, lager-drinking losers, Hornby provided consolation to both sexes while stoking the fires of neurosis. In so repeatedly asking, “What is a man?” Hornby intimated that the question was the only one that mattered. Instead of giving a definitive answer, however, he introduced into the popular consciousness a particular breed of male – Hornby Man – and suggested that he defined the sex in the late 20th century. Hornby Man is obtuse, although not to the point of idiocy. He finds women both desirable and incomprehensible, and takes solace in timewasting exercises.” (Jonathan Heawood in <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/fromladlittolit>; lesedato 22.06.20)

“*High Fidelity* and *About a Boy* are perhaps popular with women because they show men struggling to be better, and they reassure them that beneath the sports talk and record cataloging, there’s a compassionate person in there.” (Sean Elder in <https://www.newsweek.com/2015/03/06/nick-hornby-knows-how-write-women-characters-309189.html>; lesedato 10.06.20)

Lad literature “marketing term of the 1990s in Britain, referring to a new kind of popular fiction concerning the ‘lad’ of that period, a supposedly carefree hedonist devoted to football, beer, music, and casual sex: a figure created in contrast to the feminist-defined ‘New Man’ of previous decades. Some publishers believed that such fiction would open up a lucrative new lad readership, but they discovered that although lads bought glossy magazines pitched to them at that time (Arena, FHM, Loaded), they hardly ever bought books. The key texts of this genre were the early novels of Nick Hornby, *Fever Pitch* (1992) and *High Fidelity* (1995), each of which has a protagonist dominated by a typically masculine obsession (Arsenal Football Club, a record collection) that highlights his inability to communicate with women. Other authors associated with this new wave of fictions about inadequate young British masculinities include Tony Parsons (*Man and Boy*, 1991), Tim Lott, and Mike Gayle. The term has sometimes been extended retrospectively to cover earlier fictions about selfish young men, including Martin Amis’s *The Rachel Papers* (1973) and even the American novelist Bret Easton Ellis’s *Less Than Zero* (1985). Since British lad lit arrived in the USA slightly later than the more successful first wave of chick lit, it was mistakenly believed to be a backlash against the Bridget Jones phenomenon” (<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100047415>; lesedato 31.03.20).

“Nick Hornby, Jonathan Tropper, Nick Spalding, Matthew Norman, Steven Scaffardi, Matt Dunn, Andy Jones, Jon Rance, Mike Gayle, Graeme Simsion (sort of), Mil Millington ... all but three are British and only two are American (Tropper and Norman) [...] publishers shouldn’t discount the 20-30 year old male reader as a

viable demographic for contemporary fiction.” (Matthew Hanover i <https://www.matthewhanover.com/blog/2018/05/11/we-need-more-american-lad-lit>; lesedato 31.03.20)

“Women in lad lit figure as objects of admiration and awe, resentment, and lust. [...] Sexual scrutiny of women is central to most lad lit novels – even at the level of basic descriptions of female characters [...] a distinctly postfeminist form of sexual objectification. [...] Feminism is acknowledged, its terms adopted, but only to be pressed into service in the continued objectification and most demeaning sexual scrutiny of women. Here, then, feminism is indexed with the paradoxical purpose of repudiating it. [...] it uses feminist ideas precisely to re-inscribe the status quo. [...] ties into another postfeminist theme, notably the reassertion of notions of natural sexual difference which has become such a dominant idea in recent years – building on the popularity of evolutionary psychology and John Gray’s best-selling self-help manuals which present women and men as belonging two different, but (crucially) complementary, planetary species (Potts, 1998, Gill, 2007a). Such ideas are repeatedly drawn upon in lad lit – sometimes in the most odious ways. Here, for example, is Dan explaining to Edward, main protagonist of Matt Dunn’s (2006) *The Ex-Boyfriend’s Handbook*, why women saying no don’t always mean no:

“Edward, you have so much to learn. If I walked away every time a girl said ‘no’ to me when I asked her out...”

“That happens, does it?”

Dan thinks about this. “Well, rarely. But the point is, where a woman is concerned ‘no’ doesn’t always mean ‘no’. In fact, sometimes it’s actually a ‘yes’ in disguise.” (2006: 26)

It hardly needs stating how pernicious such a claim is in the context of its use in the courtroom and media discourse about rape.” (Rosalind Gill i <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklit/gill.html>; lesedato 05.09.22)

“Women as objects of desire are frequently presented as ‘prey’ in lad lit novels – indeed, I don’t think I have ever come across so many predatory metaphors, outside of the domain of wildlife documentaries! Part of the ‘honesty’ of the confessional lad lit credo involves recounting openly the attempts to seduce women, the carefully devised plans to ‘score’ even when this involves telling lies or cynically manipulating a situation to turn it to one’s sexual advantage. David Baddiel’s laddish hero, Vic, ‘fucked her the day Princess Diana died’ because he was able to persuade the woman in question that his red eyes (sore from hayfever) were the result of tears of grief; she fell for his new mannish sensitivity. [...] while lad lit characters are presented as acting duplicitously, it is their very duplicity that is offered up for confession as honesty. That is, while the characters act in dishonest and manipulative ways, the narrators own up to this – indeed lay it bare for us as readers. The specificities of the confessions, and particularly their focus upon what all men are like, raises questions about the assumed readership of lad lit: is it really

designed for women and not men at all? What pleasures and points of identification might it offer to male or female readers?” (Rosalind Gill i <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklit/gill.html>; lesedato 05.09.22)

“This fiction offers a bricolage of different constructions of masculinity: the sex-predator/playboy; the employment/financial/sexual failure; the perpetual adolescent; the melancholic man yearning for freedom from responsibility or looking back nostalgically to simpler times. Unlike other genres (including chick lit) lad lit predominantly presents its main male protagonists as flawed, fallible and self-deprecating. [...] this distinctive ‘unheroic masculinity’ [...] this patterned construction of men and women is a distinctively postfeminist one, which presents women as beneficiaries of a ‘genderquake’ in which men have been left behind and disadvantaged. The features that mark lad lit out as postfeminist include: the notion that equality has been achieved; the depiction of women as having smashed through every glass ceiling there is to achieve superior status; the repeated referencing – and then repudiation or undermining – of feminism and feminists; and the reassertion of natural sexual difference, based on heteronormative ideas of gender complementarity. [...] authorise sexism and work to rebut or head off potential critique through a variety of strategies including indexing feminist credentials or making clear the knowingness of the transgression. [...] postfeminist dynamic operates effectively to facilitate crude and sexist sexual objectification of women by variously apologising, nodding to feminism, constructing men as ‘naturally’ predatory or presenting them as confused victims of ‘political correctness gone mad’.” (Rosalind Gill i <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklit/gill.html>; lesedato 05.09.22)

“Lad lit “has been growing rapidly as a publishing phenomenon since the late 1990s. Its early and most celebrated exponents were Nick Hornby and Tony Parsons, but it now includes a long list of authors, distinctive US and UK versions, and even subgenres such as ‘dad lit’. Searches on Amazon.co.uk will produce hundreds of results, which, like chick lit novels, are easily recognizable by their brightly coloured covers, with cartoon-style illustrations and marketing quotes stressing their humour, observational acuity and insight into the ‘tortured male psyche’. Indeed, the sheer volume of endorsements which portray the genre as a mirror of contemporary masculinity (‘A well observed insight into a man’s brain’, ‘A perfect portrait of the love-lorn male’) would suggest that this is an important site for the study of gender. [...] the distinctly ‘unheroic’ masculinity it constructs as well as its postfeminist-style depiction of women as sexual objects. [...] so-called ‘lad mags’, such as *Arena*, *Maxim* and *FHM* (and more recently *Zoo* and *Nuts*) have been particularly important iterations of this form of masculinity [...] it was with the launch of *Loaded* and the relaunch of *FHM* in 1994 that laddism found its most distinctive voices. Taking its inspiration from the British tabloid newspaper *The Sun* and from the music press, *Loaded* was a young, loud, hedonistic celebration of masculinity. It spoke to men in a popular demotic, addressing them in terms of their assumed interests in beer, football, women and

‘shagging’. James Brown, the joint founder of the magazine, asserts that *Loaded* expressed what would have come out ‘if you picked me up and shaken everything out of my head’ (quoted in Crewe 2003:100).” (Rosalind Gill i <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/wpw/chicklit/gill.html>; lesedato 05.09.22)

Erlend Loe kan kalles en norsk lad lit-forfatter, med sine lett snublende mannlige hovedpersoner. Hovedpersonen i Loes roman *Naiv.Super* (1996) vil ikke bli voksen, han vil beholde barnet i seg. Jeg-personens liv skildres i et “naivt” eller “barnslig” språk. Han og noen av de andre hovedpersonene hos Loe lever med forvirring, med en nokså apatisk mentalitet. Den danske forfatteren Jesper Wung-Sung novellesamlingen *To ryk og en aflevering* (1998) har tekster som kan kalles lad lit. En annen dansk forfatter som har lignende tematikk, er Benn Q. Holm. Også dansken Jacob Weinreich kan med en viss rett kalles lad lit-forfatter, f.eks. med romanen *Anfield Road* (2002). Den svenske forfatteren Ronnie Sandahls debutroman *Vi som aldrig sa hora* (2007) kan oppfattes som lad lit.

Briten Tim Lotts *White City Blue* (1999) vant Whitbread Award for Best First Novel. “Estate agent Frankie Blue [...] has been friends with Diamond Tony, a hairdresser, Colin, a computer nerd, and Nodge, a cabbie, since schooldays. Now they are thirty and trying to live the same life as they did then – drinking, girls, banter, football. Then comes Frankie’s Great Betrayal – Veronica, and marriage, his ticket to a bigger, better grown-up world. From the moment he tells his mates, the whole patchwork of their friendships begins to collapse – revealing the sad, shocking but often hilarious truths that lie underneath. [...] Caustically funny and sometimes very affecting ... with sardonic wit and a kind of tough tenderness, Lott portrays people growing up, growing apart or growing together [...] he’s decided to carry out the ‘great betrayal’ – he’s going to get married, to Veronica, a pathologist who spends her life looking inside people to see what’s gone wrong. [...] his life is thrown into sharp relief. He begins to see it as a series of choices between his mate and his mates, security and freedom, truth and lies. *White City Blue* is the darkly funny tale of one man’s odyssey, by way of curry house and pub, towards a greater understanding of the infinite mysteries of true love and male friendship. [...] Women write about trying to find Mr Right and men write about how to hide from these women. They also write about the importance of finding a safety net in the form of your male friends. *White City Blue* is totally faithful to this format.” (Rachel Taylor i <https://www.fiction-net.com/book-reviews/review-white-city-blue.htm>; lesedato 06.04.20)

Den engelske forfatteren Mike Gayles *My Legendary Girlfriend* (1998) “recounts four days in the life of London schoolteacher Will Kelly, who is emerging from an extended stay in heartbreak hotel since his girlfriend, Aggi, dumped him three years earlier. The self-absorbed, self-deprecating English instructor doesn’t lack for romantic prospects – he landed on his feet with comely young Martina – but Will’s obsessive tendency to compare her to Aggi renders him indifferent to Martina’s charms. The unlikely object of his affection turns out to be Kate, the former

occupant of his flat, who finds herself in an intimate phone relationship with the rather unstable teacher when she calls looking for her mail. The thin plot consists of scenes in which Will alternately displays his tongue-in-cheek humor to his paramours and launches into a series of whiny rants and bouts of longing for Aggi. [...] Will's constant whining will try the patience of even the most avid Anglophiles." (<https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-0-7679-0973-0>; lesedato 17.04.20)

Engelske Mark Barrowcliffes *Girlfriend 44* (2000) ble skrevet på oppfordring: "When a literary agent read Mark Barrowcliffe's article urging the withholding of sympathy from men dumped by their girlfriends, she encouraged him to write a novel, and *Girlfriend 44* is the hilarious result. Thirty-two-year-old Harry Chesshyre has worked his way through forty-three lovers and thinks he knows everything about women. Little does he know that his heart is about to be broken. Harry, a researcher for a consumer-advice television program, lives with Gerrard, a paramedic. Harry is a confident swaggerer, Gerrard is gloomy and insecure, but both share the same expectations from the women they date: perfection in mind and body. The highly imperfect Gerrard even has a list of qualities of physique and personality that repel him. Harry and Gerrard live in an unrepentant perpetual adolescence and proudly belong to what Harry calls the born-again-sexism set. Their puerile perspective is challenged when they meet the wonderfully perfect Alice, the most beautiful woman Harry has ever seen. Alice, who licenses worldwide television rights, is immediately pursued by both men who do everything they can to sabotage each other. She agrees to date both before settling into a relationship with the overweight Harry whom she inexplicably, to him, perceives as cool. The reader is kept in suspense for the last half of the novel waiting to see how Harry will foul up. *Girlfriend 44* works because of its consistently self-deprecating tone. Not only is Barrowcliffe poking fun at his characters but Harry, who narrates and often addresses the reader directly, sees himself as a more than slightly ridiculous figure. This mocking humor makes the novel a delightful entertainment." (<https://www.enotes.com/topics/girlfriend-44>; lesedato 05.05.20) Bokomslaget viser et kø-lapp-apparat der neste kølapp har nummeret 44.

Den britiske forfatteren Matt Dunn har skrevet en rekke komiske bøker. I *The Ex-Boyfriend's Handbook* (2006) heter hovedpersonen Edward Middleton. "It's not me – it's you. You've let yourself go, so I'm letting you go too. [...] When Edward Middleton hears those words from Jane, his girlfriend of the past ten years, he knows he's in serious trouble. Determined to get her back, Edward must learn how to make women fancy him again. But what makes for a good boyfriend nowadays? Right now, he's the kind of man who puts the 'ex' into 'sexy'. One thing is certain: if he's to be Jane's Mr Right, he needs to turn himself into a bit of all right. From Atkins and Botox, Edward begins working his way through the makeover alphabet. But can cuddly Teddy really become sexy Eddie? Can he rise from the ranks of discarded exes? Or has his journey of self-discovery taken him in a different

direction entirely? [...] Edward comes home one day to an empty apartment and a note from Jane, who has headed off to Tibet for three months to ‘sort some things out’. [...] Dunn has perfectly captured the ‘other side of the coin’ if you will – chick lit from the male point of view. [...] His journey towards ‘the new Edward’ is by turns hilarious, heartbreaking and eye opening.” (<http://luanne-abookworms.world.blogspot.com/2010/12/ex-boyfriends-handbook-matt-dunn.html>; lesedato 05.05.20)

I amerikaneren Kyle Smiths *Love Monkey* (2004) “Tom Farrell, an editor in his early thirties at *Tabloid* (a thinly veiled version of the *New York Post*), can’t figure out how to navigate Manhattan’s dating scene. Tom knows women, but he has a Goldilocks problem: none of the women he knows are just right for him. In this chronicle of four and a half months in the life of a hapless, single city-dweller, Smith blends hilarity and cynicism in order to adapt the Bridget Jones formula to a male perspective. A brief detour into a post-9/11 subplot somewhat arrests the comic flow, but it is actually one of the book’s most interesting sections, and imparts to the hectic seduction games a nagging sense of unease, along with some genuine insight into the dilemmas of daily journalism. [...] his “most time-consuming hobby is collecting ex-girlfriends,” and the novel – which chronicles five months in Farrell’s life – is mostly a jumbled catalogue of his failed love affairs. [...] women looking for insights into the male psyche, the real potential readership here, may not take kindly to Smith’ unflattering dissection of his dates.” (<https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-0-06-057453-6>; lesedato 06.04.20)

Amerikaneren Zack Loves *Sex in the Title: A Comedy about Dating, Sex, and Romance in NY* (2013) har blitt beskrevet slik: “New York City, May 2000. The Internet bubble has burst, and Evan’s boss fires him with an email. The next day, his girlfriend dumps him, also via email. Afraid to check any more emails, Evan desperately seeks a rebound romance but the catastrophes that ensue go from bad to hilariously worse. Fortunately, Evan meets Sammy – someone whose legendary disasters with females eclipse even his own. To reverse their fortunes, they recruit their friends into a group of five guys who take on Manhattan in pursuit of dates, sex, and adventure. [...] With musings about life, relationships, and human psychology, this quintessential New York story about the search for happiness follows five men on their comical paths to trouble, self-discovery, and love.” (<https://bookmate.com/books/ZrNmLUjw>; lesedato 05.05.20)

“[I]t would be great to share a good book recommendation with your husband, or boyfriend, or male best friend, and have them actually agree to read it. Well, it turns out there is another whole section of romantic fiction that you’re probably missing out on and it just might bridge the gap. It’s called Lad Lit [...] The defining factor of Lad Lit is the less-than-mature twenty or thirty-something man finding his way in the world, and usually falling in love in the process. Wait, this sounds a lot like a movie or two you might have seen. That’s right. You’re already watching the film versions. [...] If you want to know what the men in your life are

really thinking, especially when it comes to women and love, try out these books. [...] Here are a few suggestions to get you started in the Lad Lit genre:

Postgraduate by Ian Shane

Who doesn't love a second-chance romance? Danny Jackson is a forty-something, recently-divorced man who goes back to his alma mater to relive some of his glory days. In the process, he mends some long-broken friendships and, oh yeah, just happens to reconnect with his college sweetheart. This book is mostly about the hero's journey from has-been to hope, but the love story, especially the flashback retelling, is prime romance material. Chances are, if you have a romance-phobic boyfriend or husband, he has no idea what he's missing by ignoring stories like this. Give him a copy of *Postgraduate* and read along with him.

Time for a Change by Adam Eccles

If you like your romances with fantasy elements, workplace meet-cutes, and nerdy heroes, this is the Lad Lit book for you. This book also features an age gap, so if that's your thing, snatch this one up, then tell your guy about the time machine in the garage (!) and see who turns the pages faster. Between the hero's complex and emotionally formative relationship with his late father, the accurate as hell depiction of the corporate grind, and the hotel sex, this romance was tailor-made for men, but there is much to love here for any romance fan." (Lauren H. Mae i <https://frolic.media/lad-lit-the-subgenre-the-man-in-your-life-needs/>; lesedato 31.03.20)

Den amerikanske forfatteren og komponisten Scott Mebus' *Booty Nomad* (2004) er "[y]et another hollow Nick Hornby knock-off [...] tells the story of David, a 20-something living in Manhattan who spends most of his time trying to get over his last girlfriend (the Eater of Souls, as he dubs her) while simultaneously looking for a new soul mate ("You need to find another love of your life to eventually screw over"). During the day, David pretends to work at a children's television show, but spends most of his time worrying about his fantasy baseball team. At home in his tiny apartment, he taps away at a screenplay ("I think I would be a fantastic screenwriter"), and every once in a while he practices his electric guitar by jamming through the wall with his neighbor. But for the most part David obsesses about women, the one he can't forget (his ex) and this week's girl of his dreams (the Goddess, who is on the rebound herself). Meanwhile, David's friends slack off at their own jobs, drag David to strip clubs and somehow still find time to ask the important questions concerning men and women: "You gonna get some?" Staccato pacing, tired references (Victoria's Secret, hot yoga chicks) and unfunny gags will lose most readers, despite occasional flashes of sharp urban observation." (<https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-1-4013-5204-2>; lesedato 05.05.20)

“What if publishers created a subgenre and nobody read it? In the case of “lad lit,” the answer appears to be that they would produce even more titles. Despite disappointing sales of fiction and nonfiction that turns chick lit’s self-deprecating gaze on young men and their dating woes, a slew of new books are on the way. Whether that’s a result of stubbornness or sexism, the bottom line for booksellers is “the only place lad lit exists as a viable genre is in the imaginations of publishers,” as Borders’s fiction buyer Leah Rex put it. [...] Kyle Smith’s first novel, *Love Monkey* (Morrow, Feb. 3 [2004]), has been covered everywhere from *Men’s Health* to *Time* and received both a daily and a Sunday review in the *New York Times*, yet the hardcover has sold only 1,716 copies in six weeks, according to Nielsen Bookscan. [...] While Helen Fielding’s *Bridget Jones’s Diary* (Viking, 1998), launched the chick-lit category after selling more than two million copies in hardcover and paperback, it took Hornby six titles in trade paperback to hit that level of sales. Hyperion executive editor Leslie Wells thought she had the next Nick Hornby when she edited *Men and Other Mammals* [2003] by British author Jim Keeble. By the time the trade paperback original came out last May, however, the announced 50,000-copy first printing had shrunk to around 15,000 copies.” (Natalie Danford i <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/print/20040329/30116-lad-lit-hits-the-skids.html>; lesedato 31.03.20)

“There don’t seem to be enough young male book buyers to allow the subgenre to survive without crossing gender lines. And so far, it hasn’t consistently attracted enough female readers to become commercially viable. For women, the appeal of lad lit may be “spying on the other side, getting a look into the locker room,” said Lynda Fitzgerald, events coordinator for the 10 Barbara’s bookstores in Chicago. [...] Morrow executive editor Henry Ferris [...] said, “Women have been wondering what men have been thinking for years, and we’ve got it between two hard covers for you right here.” ” (Natalie Danford i <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/print/20040329/30116-lad-lit-hits-the-skids.html>; lesedato 31.03.20)

“Call it a testosterone-driven Bridget Jones or call it “lad lit.” Whatever the name, a crop of books by male writers is picking up where “chick lit” left off. Men are writing fiction about how to win the elusive woman of their dreams and survive a shattered heart. [...] men were quietly documenting their failed and frustrating love lives. “I thought that women would like to see Bridget Jones on the other side,” says Kyle Smith, the 32-year-old author of “Love Monkey,” a hot new book about a tabloid journalist who collects girlfriends. [...] “We have the same worries about our waistlines, but we also worry about our hairlines.” The hero of “Love Monkey,” Tom, is distracted by many women but is smitten by only one, Julia. He wants nothing more than to have her stay with him forever. Julia, however, is torn: There are a few other guys. To alleviate his pangs of longing, Tom pursues a menagerie of ladies. [...] What draws readers to lad lit, [den amerikanske forfatteren Will] Leitch says, is that men are writing these books, admitting that they, too, struggle and question when it comes to matters of the heart.” (Pauline M. Millard i <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/2004/03/20/lad-lit->

anatomy-of-a-male-trend/87e6de9f-f946-48ea-852a-24518e88de8b/; lesedato 31.03.20)

Hovedpersonen i tyskeren Matthias Polityckis *Kvinnfolkroman* (1997; på tysk) leter etter en “kvinneformel”. Han heter Gregor Schattschneider og prøver å holde orden på sin “hormon-husholdning”. Han blir 32 år uten å ha avsluttet noen eksamen, men har konsentrert seg om “studiet av kvinner”. Skildringen er humoristisk og handler om et individ og en generasjon menn som føler seg “åndelig hjemløse” (https://www.revierpassagen.de/93625/ein-mann-sucht-seine-frauenformel-mathias-polityckis-weiberroman/19970806_1731; lesedato 10.08.20). Østerrikeren Arno Geigers *Selvportrett med flodhest* (2015; på tysk) handler om vanskene ved å bli voksen. Julian er veterinærstudent og tar seg av en dvergflodhest, forelsker seg i professorens datter og prøver å finne sin plass i samfunnet (<https://www.hanser-literaturverlage.de/buch/selbstportraet-mit-flusspferd/978-3-446-24761-1/>; lesedato 05.05.20).

Hovedpersonen i *Fullstendig idiot* (2004; på tysk) av Tommy Jaud er Simon, som er i slutten av 20-årene og fortvilet fordi han er single. Han opplever den ene pinlige situasjonen etter den andre. “Vennene” hans møter han med sarkasme og ironi, men vil egentlig hjelpe han (<http://buchlingreport.de/tommy-jaud-vollidiot/>; lesedato 17.04.20). I Jauds *Restferie* (2006; på tysk) reiser hovedpersonene fra Tyskland til Buenos Aires for å flykte fra sitt provinsielle liv. Han er en 37-årig bryggeri-manager som er lei av å være alene og høre foreldrene ønske seg barnebarn (<https://www.buecher-magazin.de/rezensionen/hoerbuecher/spezial/resturlaub>; lesedato 17.04.20).

Tyskeren Moritz Netenjakobs *Macho Man* (2009) har et ironisk bokomslag som viser en spinkel mann kun iført shorts. Oppdratt av 68-ere levde Daniel i 30 år som en myk mann, men så forelsker han seg i en tyrkisk kvinne som krever en annen type mann, eller gjør hun ikke? (<https://www.kiwi-verlag.de/buch/moritz-netenjakob-macho-man-9783462042115>; lesedato 10.08.20)

Litteraturliste (for hele leksikonet): <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/litteraturliste.pdf>

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