

Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

Av Helge Ridderstrøm (førsteamanuensis ved OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet)

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Om leksikonet: https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om_leksikonet.pdf

Lesesirkel

Også kalt “boksirkel”, “lesegruppe”, “leseforening”; på engelsk “reading circle”, “book group”, “literature circle” og noen ganger “book club”. En gruppe personer som møtes regelmessig for å diskutere en bok som alle har lest før møtet. “The usual minimal definition would be a group of people who meet on a regular basis to discuss books.” (Hartley 2001 s. 2)

Hensikten er både sosial og litterær: en blir kjent med både hverandre og litteraturen. Noen lesesirkler konsentrerer seg om en sjanger eller et tema (krim, biografier, science fiction, feministisk litteratur o.l.). Møtene foregår ofte vekselvis i hjemmet til lesesirkelens deltakere, men kan også finne sted på en kafé, i et bibliotek eller andre mer offentlige steder. Ofte er det en innleder til diskusjonen og erfaringsutvekslingen. Deltakerne forteller om sine leseropplevelser, sier om de likte boka eller ikke (hvorfor? hvorfor ikke?) og kommer med innspill og innvendinger til de andres synspunkter. Deltakerne kan samarbeide seg fram til felles forståelse og samforståtte tolkninger av teksten (“negotiated interpretations”).

“The communities and the bonds created within them affect how interpretations proceed.” (DeNel Rehberg Sedo i <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/135485650300900105>; lesedato 15.03.24)

Hovedvekten kan ligge på leseglede og opplevelse, på nytelse av litteraturen, mer enn på hva tekstene kan lære oss. Eller deltakerne bruker tekstene til å bearbeide sin livsverden, til å forstå seg selv og de andre deltakerne bedre. Tekstene fungerer som “projeksjonsflater” for diskusjoner om en selv og andre mennesker, om samfunnet og verden (Putzer-Maier 2018 s. 30). Lesesirkelen skaper dessuten et sosialt nettverk (som en slags protest mot tap av nære nettverk i det moderne samfunn). Det foregår en kollektiv og samholdsskapende resepsjon.

Diskusjonene bidrar til at deltakerne “understand themselves in relation to the text”, der forholdet mellom deltakerne blir “solidified through discussion and sharing” (DeNel Rehberg Sedo i <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/135485650300900105>; lesedato 15.03.24).

“In reading circles, as in the Knights of the Round Table, it is the *circle* that is key; the circle both symbolizes and creates the equality among members, the lack of a hierarchy which creates a community capable of a certain type of discussion.” (Duncan 2013 s. 81)

“Det handler ikke om at beherske forskellige analysemodeller eller om at komme frem til en korrekt tolkning, men om den enkeltes læseoplevelser forankret i et levet liv. Målet er ikke kun at skabe en større forståelse af den aktuelle bog, men også at dele ens egne læseoplevelser med de andre” (Balling 2007 s. 6).

“Det finnes ikke så mange steder i vårt samfunn der mennesker med ulike bakgrunner og livssyn kan møtes i trygge omgivelser og utveksle erfaringer på like fot. Vi beveger oss i stadig større grad innenfor arbeids-, familie- og vennenettverk, der vi stort sett treffer folk som ligner oss selv. Veiene krysser sjelden hverandre, og de kontaktpunktene som finnes, er ofte forbundet med spenning eller konflikt. De bibliotekbaserte lesesirklene fungerer som en form for samfunnslim – et forum der man kan utforske folks forskjellige meninger i en atmosfære preget av gjensidig respekt. [...] ulike lesere kan møte hverandre til uformelle samtaler om leseopplevelsene sine. [...] de selv er eksperter på sin egen leseopplevelse” (Riel, Fowler og Downes 2011 s. 196-197).

“[A]cts of reading get co-produced by readers on a turn-by-turn basis. The reading that is performed in this setting is highly social and situated” (Peplow 2016 s. 8). I en lesesirkel “er oplevelsen til forhandling og under udvikling i kraft af det dialogiske element. Gennem samtale kan læserne, ved at høre andre perspektiver og forståelser, hjælpe hinanden med verbaliseringsprocessen og med at få præciseret deres forståelse og oplevelse af bogen [...] Dialogen, som den udspiller sig i en læsekreds, kan ses som en hjælp til at oversætte en fænomenologisk, psykologisk oplevelse til en sproglig bevidstgørelse af samme oplevelse. Eller rettere: frem for en oversættelse af en given erfaring kan dialogen medlemmerne imellem anskues som en sproglig forhandling om mening: Meningen med teksten, med læseoplevelsen, og – frem for alt – med de begreber, man vælger til at beskrive disse to fænomener. [...] At diskutere ens læseoplevelse med andre skærper nemlig ikke alene ens forståelse af bogen, men rummer i bedste fald en erkendelsesproces, som går ud over forståelsen af bogen til forståelsen af livet.” (Balling og Grøn 2012a s. 15-16)

“Reading group members say that being in a book club does the following:

- It gives status to the act of reading.
- It validates your spending time reading the books you enjoy and thus counters implied criticism of your reading tastes by nonreaders, husbands, and sometimes reading elites.

- It gets you out of the rut of your usual book choices and expands literary horizons by introducing you to new authors and unfamiliar genres you would never have read on your own.
- It provides helpful scaffolding in helping you stretch beyond your usual reading because you get a deeper understanding of the book when you talk with others about it.
- It gets you reading in a more reflective way.
- It provides an opportunity to compare your own interpretations with others, providing a diversity of perspectives and opinions.
- It's a supportive environment that gives you confidence in yourself as a reader and in your ability to learn.
- It's a way of learning about yourself and others.
- It provides a way of meeting a diverse group of new people who eventually become friends in the course of sharing booktalk and talk about their lives.
- And finally, the experience of meeting on a regular basis with an interesting group of fellow readers provides a high in itself. Club members talk of leaving the meeting with their minds racing, full of ideas sparked from the discussion." (Ross, McKechnie og Rothbauer 2006 s. 233-234)

Den felles lesingen gjør det mulig "for participants to 're-experience' texts through others, which in turn serves to 'alter or complicate' their own readings of a text" [...] such literary activity is embedded in social and interpersonal group processes" (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 88-89).

"[T]he social side of meetings is highly important to them and [...] literary reading helps people understand more about themselves, their own lives and wider social issues." (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 23)

1. Reading group talk is competitive and argumentative. The judgements of individual readers are often questioned.

2. At the same time, most readers are highly attuned to the face needs [behov for ikke å "miste ansikt", dvs. få mindre respekt] of others, packaging their comments to conform to politeness norms and allowing others to talk.

3. Reading group talk contains a lot of co-construction between readers, with collaborative floor generally the norm.

4. Issues of taste are foregrounded in these discussions, which is not surprising given that the fundamental purpose of the groups is to discuss and debate readings and interpretations of a shared object.

5. Related to taste, individual readers' identities are never far away from the discussions. These identities may be constructed by the readers themselves or may be imposed on individual readers by others." (Peplow 2016 s. 178)

"Many women join reading groups during the time when they find themselves isolated in the suburbs with young children. They talk about their reading groups as providing a "lifeline" out of their housebound existence into a world of adult sociability and intellectual conversation. One such woman told of standing in line in a bank with her boisterous toddler and confessing to the woman ahead of her that she was at the end of her rope: no substantive talk; hadn't read a book for months. ... The other woman recruited her for a reading group. [...] one by one, the group members used these books and the insights and support of their group discussions to negotiate a passage for themselves out of a house-bound existence and back into the world of professional employment (University of Texas Group, November, 1980). [...] Technical workers like engineers find, conversely, that their workdays are filled with purely specialized information. An Exxon engineer who had led a reading group for three years said, "You may not believe that engineers read, but we do," and told me about his coworkers' thirst for general and intellectually challenging reading. The group continued until corporate transfers dispersed the members." (Boyarin 1993 s. 198 og 200) Medlemmene brukte "books and their interpretation primarily as "equipment for living" rather than as occasions, for example, of expert display or professional advancement." (Boyarin 1993 s. 199)

"[R]eading group discussions encourage a repeated dialectic of social, moral, and aesthetic reflection. It is this process that lies at the heart of what keeps groups together and that can make them, when successful, a source of validation, support, and even personal transformation for their members." (Long 2003 s. 108-109)

Kvinner som deltok i en amerikansk lesesirkel "both discover their desires and articulate new possibilities for being, so these discussions are as productive as they are reflective. In expressing their own positions in regard to the broader historical currents of their time, women in reading groups are using literature and each other to stake out new subjective terrain." (Long 2003 s. 157)

"The discussion itself, then, can be a creative process, for it elicits a certain kind of value-oriented textual interpretation and encourages (through difference and disputation) a clearer articulation of partially formulated perceptions and implicit assumptions, whether about a specific book or about personal experience. This process is particularly enlightening for participants (and perhaps most innovative) when groups can forge a new consensus from the diversity of opinions represented in discussion. [...] Also, the general quality of the group dynamics can encourage an atmosphere of trust that seems crucial for the sometimes tentative and

exploratory openness – toward new ideas, about one’s own feelings – that characterizes critical reflection in reading groups. On the other hand, informal processes of social control can be extremely effective in silencing or stigmatizing members so as to enforce conformity. Joking and a lack of responsiveness appear to be most often used as enforcement mechanisms.” (Long 2003 s. 187)

Samtalene kan “move back and forth between using people’s remarks as windows into the text (the primary imperative of literary analysis) and using the text as a window into people’s lives or various aspects of the cultural and social lives we live together. [...] It is as if the discussion is a lens that reveals the books under discussion and the inner lives of coparticipants and, through this process, allows participants to reflect back on their own interior lives as well. In these conversations, people can use books and each other’s responses to books to promote insight and empathy in an integrative process of collective self-reflection. In that sense, reading group discussions perform creative cultural work, for they enable participants to articulate or even discover who they are: their values, their aspirations, and their stance toward the dilemmas of their worlds. The centrality of this intersubjective accomplishment helps explain several aspects of book discussions in reading groups.” (Long 2003 s. 145)

The Reading Groups Book (2002) av Jenny Hartley handler om mange kjennetegn ved lesesirkler. “Most groups have a clear sense of the right number of members, which is, on average, between six and twelve. Twenty-one per cent of groups have been meeting for more than ten years, while the Bristol Friendly Reading Society has been meeting since October 1799. [...] Most groups have difficulty choosing their books. Some use selections offered by magazines or online book clubs, some take turns to choose, some vote on suggestions and others have incredibly complicated methods of making selections, involving lists and ranks. Members often feel responsible for their choices, guilty or angry if others do not like their choices, and sometimes resentful if their choices/ideas are not used. Whatever the turmoil of book selection, Hartley reports the passion and energy of the discussions. Some groups have rules to keep discussions of members’ personal lives separate from discussions of the book, while others see these as one and the same. It is the discussion which these reading circle members value above all – the opportunity to exchange ideas, what members described as sharing a ‘common culture’, the ‘cross fertilisation’ of ‘spirited chat’ (pp. 128-129) with a loyal, supportive group of people who are (crucially) neither work colleagues nor family.” (gjengitt fra Duncan 2013 s. 89)

“Most commonly, groups meet in members’ homes, although libraries, bookstores, and cafés or restaurants are also popular venues. Meeting in members’ homes structurally limits most but not all groups to somewhere under twenty or twenty-five members. This also seems to be a “natural” ceiling for fostering informal discussion, although some groups are larger. Conversely, groups find it hard to meet if they are under seven or eight in number, for a group smaller than this will

become uncomfortably small if only one or two members are absent.” (Long 2003 s. 96)

“Book club meetings have a particular rhythm. Generally, they last about two hours, with the first twenty to thirty minutes passing in greetings and sharing of news. This chat ranges from personal issues related to work or home to events in the world of politics and culture. The last thirty to forty-five minutes move outward from the book discussion to more personal talk as members take their leave.” (Long 2003 s. 97) “[E]xcursions into the personal, unless they range too far afield, are a valued aspect of reading group discussions.” (Long 2003 s. 108)

Bøkene som deltakerne i en lesesirkel leser, velges ut på forskjellige måter, mer eller mindre i fellesskap og demokratisk. Jenny Hartleys studie av lesesirkler har et eksempel der bøkene velges ut av deltakerne én gang i året mens de spiser sammen på restaurant (Hartley 2001 s. 88). Selve lesesirkel-møtene gjennomføres på ulikt vis, med bare boklesingen som forberedelse eller mer enn det: “Some groups like to circulate written reviews or questions before the meeting, or discussions may follow a scheme of headings (characters, setting, structure, style) prepared by members in advance. One group discusses two books at each meeting – ‘we try for contrasts’. Or the group may decide that it wants to read aloud: - We have evolved a method of choosing relevant passages which are read aloud in the group.” (Hartley 2001 s. 86) Det forekommer at det tas notater eller føres referat eller logg: “- At the end I write down each person’s (short) opinion. So I keep a ‘log-book’ and sometimes add details: who turned up with a baby, what we argued about.” (Hartley 2001 s. 88) Møtet kan ha en fast leder, eller lederskapet roterer, eller det er ingen leder. Underveis i møtene må det takles forskjellige utfordringer og praktiske problemer, f.eks. hvis ikke alle har klart å lese ferdig boka: “Some members never finish the book – it means we can’t discuss the ending.” (Hartley 2001 s. 96)

“[T]he groups I have attended structure their own discussions. Some simply begin or, in the words of one member, “We all just jump right in.” Others follow a format I am most familiar with from the early days of the women’s movement with its consciousness-raising groups: in order around the room, each member is afforded a time period in which to express her own opinions and questions without interruption, and then the meeting is opened for discussion. The majority of groups, however, welcome at least some delegation of responsibility for leading the discussion. For some, this means that there is a designated discussion leader who provides some biographical and critical information about the author and the book. Usually, this task falls to the woman who has been responsible for suggesting the book, but almost equally often the duty is simply rotated without regard for “whose” book is under discussion. Just how much scholarly preparation is expected varies widely from group to group. Other groups highlight the importance of raising good questions for discussion rather than setting the text in its historical, biographical, or literary critical context. [...] insights from the text that could be

brought to bear on contemporary issues or enduring philosophical problems.”
(Long 2003 s. 106)

Elizabeth Long vektlegger lesingens “sosiale infrastruktur”, som blant annet avgjør hva som er verdt å lese og hvordan dette bør leses. Hun intervjuet en lang rekke personer fra ulike lesesirkler, og fant ut at det var samtidslitteratur og klassikere som ble valgt mest, og grunnen var disse bøkernes “discussability”. “When asked about what makes a book discussible, a member of Belles Lettres said, “It’s a book people can take different opinions on and find evidence in the text to support” (conversation, 4 October 1983).” (Long 2003 s. 118)

“Good books for discussion have multidimensional characters who are forced to make difficult choices, often under difficult situations. They present the author’s view of an important truth and sometimes send a message to the reader. Books that are heavily plot driven, where the author spells out everything for the reader, leave little to discuss. Most mysteries, Westerns, romances, and science fiction/fantasy fall in this category.” (“Choosing Good Books for Discussion” fra Seattle Public Library’s online guide, sitert fra <https://journals.ala.org>; lesedato 07.10.24)

“Deciding on a program, even informally, makes book selection rather serious business. If the group delegates the responsibility for organizing the program to a committee or an individual, then one’s reputation as a literary provider for the group can be at stake. So this method appears to engender the most dependence on cultural authorities, whether bookstore owners (who sometimes help plan an entire year’s program), college professors, or respected journals and lists of notable or award-winning books. Working with such authorities appears to alleviate the responsibility for picking several months’ reading and to add luster to the choices the selectors finally present to the entire group for approval. Yet the program planners must not simply represent the dictates of cultural authority to their group but represent the group’s interest and desires as well.” (Long 2003 s. 98)

“Some well-to-do groups hire a professional reading group leader such as Rachel Jacobsohn, but most share the job of discussion leader among group members, each of whom takes a turn. Some groups treat the book discussion as if it were a well-structured graduate seminar, and others prefer casual, free-flowing conversation that wanders off the chosen book to other books and other topics. Some groups pick their books a whole year in advance, often at the last meeting of the year before breaking for the summer. Others prefer the flexibility of picking books as they go along. Eating and drinking is an important element for many reading groups. One long-time, reading group member who had traveled three thousand miles to attend the twenty-fifth anniversary of her reading group advised, “Never have a feminist activity without food.” Rachel Jacobsohn’s *Reading Group Handbook* includes a whole chapter on food, but some reading group members warn against allowing refreshments to become so elaborate that preparing the food becomes a chore.” (Ross, McKechnie og Rothbauer 2006 s. 227)

“Some groups elaborate the metaphoric link between reading and eating as a central part of the group experience. The Meadows Book Club, a group of married couples, connects the subject matter of the book to the cuisine for that month’s meeting: when reading Kafka, they ate sauerbraten.” (Long 2003 s. 96-97)

I en lesesirkel “looking through the customer reviews from Amazon was an important part of each meeting and seemed to afford members of the group the most pleasure. The librarian Lucy brought along these Amazon customer reviews for the readers each month, typically printing off a selection of 5 ⬢ reviews [5 stjerner av 5 mulige] of the book and a selection of 1 ⬢ reviews. Roughly half-way through meetings the readers in the Forest Group turned to these reviews [...] and comparing their own textual responses to those of the Amazon customers. [...] this practice helped to facilitate a good discussion of the book. [...] The Amazon reviews afforded the group the opportunity to react to, and have a form of dialogue with, specific reviewers’ comments – both positive and negative.” (Peplow 2016 s. 67-68)

“Readers generally talk about the book they read from memory, or occasionally from notes, but only open and refer to the actual book itself in a few circumstances. These take place when there is confusion about the events or chronology of the story, when readers agree on having enjoyed the book and have little else to say about it than “isn’t this passage great?” and want to pick apart the devices used to achieve a certain result, and when such discussion is part of their standard repertoire of inquiry. In each of these cases, direct consultation with the physical book assists the readers in appreciating or trying to comprehend what the author has accomplished or in evaluating the attempts of cultural authorities, such as reviewers and publishers, to influence the perspectives or tastes of readers.” (Joan Bessman Taylor i <https://journals.ala.org/index.php/rusq/article/view/2811/2835>; lesedato 07.10.24)

“It is often remarked that the best book group discussions result from conversations about books that were liked by some members and disliked by others.” (Joan Bessman Taylor i <https://journals.ala.org>; lesedato 07.10.24)

“Through conversation, groups can find the consensual authority to reevaluate books or to reconsider the criteria for literary worth.” (Long 2003 s. 150) “Groups tended to have a greater focus on evaluation – what they liked and/or disliked about the book – towards the beginning of their book discussion, leading in to a greater focus on interpretation – discussing the meaning of the text, plot, characters and so on.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 21) Det er “evident that in debating the merits of literary texts the readers are engaged in heightened acts of classification involving hierarchies of taste. Responding to art is necessarily a ‘relation of distinction’ (Bourdieu, 1984: 224) and this is even more apparent in the public space of the reading group.” (Peplow 2016 s. 179)

“[A] woman who was the newest and least conservative member in My Book Group, as well as the only person in the group who had not finished college, proposed an autobiographical book by Shirley MacLaine and expressed enthusiasm for it because of the author’s mysticism and defiance of social conventions. She was met with a blank and sustained interval of silence. The suggestion disappeared like a stone dropped into a well, and the group’s founder proceeded with the discussion of what to read as if MacLaine’s book had never been mentioned. Here, an informal mode of choice was coupled with informal group sanctions (the “silent treatment”) that not only effectively silenced one member but alienated her from the group as well. In fact, significant differences of opinion about selection are an important factor leading to discomfort, feelings of marginalization, and even departures from reading groups.” (Long 2003 s. 99)

“It becomes very difficult for members to speak plainly when someone dominates the conversation, takes too much group time to discuss personal problems, or otherwise behaves in ways that violate the group’s often unspoken assumptions about appropriate conduct, because there are no real rules to refer to. I have heard rumors of groups that were so reluctant to confront a difficult member that they pretended to disband the group and then started up again without her.” (Long 2003 s. 139)

“Given the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984) of literary critics as supposed reading experts, it is potentially difficult for a non-academic book group member to challenge such an authority single-handedly. [...] this action of dissent is not as difficult if undertaken as a group.” (Peplow 2016 s. 81)

“One reason these groups can be playful is that they are not held accountable for their interpretations in the way that “professional readers” and their students are. Group members do not have to assert their interpretations in a serious way or defend them with tightly reasoned arguments from the text. Indeed, women often expand on an opinion by discussing their personal reasons for making a certain interpretation, using the book for self-understanding and revelation of the self to other participants rather than for discovery of meaning within the book.” (Long 2003 s. 145-146)

“In a successful reading group, there is no need to produce an authoritative reading of a book. This notion is almost inimical to the kind of conversation that reading group members value.” (Long 2003 s. 147)

“Through the process of filling in where the author did not or making suggestions for features that would make a book better, readers share ideas about how to bring the work read closer to their ideal, usually advocating for fuller character development and more closure on the major issues or conflicts presented.” (Joan

Bessman Taylor i <https://journals.ala.org/index.php/rusq/article/view/2811/2835>; lesedato 07.10.24)

“When reading for pleasure, readers may find gaps in a narrative distracting or disruptive, but these same gaps become seeds for negotiating options, improvising, and creating flights of fancy within the group context. When endings are left open-ended, or the lives of characters not fully explained, readers create their own explanations for what could happen.” (Joan Bessman Taylor i <https://journals.ala.org/index.php/rusq/article/view/2811/2835>; lesedato 07.10.24)

“The success of discussion is less about whether everyone in the group liked the book, and more about whether the book invited them as readers to fill in its spaces or consider more deeply the implications of the situations it described. Many times readers will say outright at the beginning of a discussion meeting that they disliked the book chosen and maybe the characters in it, too. At the end of the discussion, the same readers will remark that they are glad to have read the book. On some occasions this represents a change in opinion, in that the discussion made them decide they liked the book after all because they are now able to see aspects they had missed when reading on their own. More often, however, it is not that the person’s disposition toward the book has changed – they may still vehemently dislike the book – but they appreciate the negotiations with other readers that the book encouraged. They learned more about the possible directions a work could take and why different readers might enjoy those varied directions. They learned something about books, about other people, and perhaps about themselves.” (Joan Bessman Taylor i <https://journals.ala.org/index.php/rusq/article/view/2811/2835>; lesedato 07.10.24)

Mye forekommer i og med lesesirkler, uten å være svært vanlig: Gruppene kan få forfatterbesøk, eller skrive til forfattere for å spørre om noe: “- We once wrote to an author in the USA and received a reply from him” (Hartley 2001 s. 100); “Groups write poetry, publish reviews in the local press, correspond with authors, and invite them to meetings” (Hartley 2001 s. 127); “A member who lost her sight is kept in her group by a ‘noble retired teacher’ who reads the books on to tape for her. Members who move away often travel long distances for book club nights, or join in by post – for over ten years in one instance. Groups also keep in touch with ex-members through annual newsletters; this is contact with staying power.” (Hartley 2001 s. 130) Noen deltakere viser hverandre sine notater som de har skrevet før møtet. En deltaker i en britisk lesesirkel forteller om et tilfelle av dette: “Half of the group had felt the need to re-read the novel [Alice Hoffmans *The third angel*] to clarify many of the relationships and consequences and agreed that the more you analysed it, the more you could read into the lives of the various families. Not everyone had picked up on all the links and so it made for a lively discussion and debate as we compared notes.” (i magasinet *Booktime*, redigert av Ruth Hunter, juni 2008, s. 31)

Vellykkete lesesirkler gir hver deltaker mulighet til både å diskutere sine egne synspunkter med andre og få input fra andre som har lest samme bok. Deltakere i lesesirkler understreker også hvor viktig det er med en god atmosfære i gruppa: “It’s non-judgemental and non-competitive so there’s no fear of ridicule”; “We let our hear down and learn to trust each other – it’s OK to be ‘different’ and have different opinions from each other”; “A friendly and non-threatening atmosphere; we are careful to maintain a supportive, non-confrontational atmosphere” (sitert fra Hartley 2001 s. 83). Om hva som skjer som følge av bokdiskusjonene har noen lesesirkel-deltakere sagt: “Hearing different people talk about it [dvs. boka] brings it alive”; “I enjoy hearing the book’s story from another angle”; “The evening enlarges the book” (sitert fra Hartley 2001 s. 84). ”We’re reading books we would never have tackled independently.” (sitert fra Hartley 2001 s. 126) “Often it will send me back to re-read the books with a different viewpoint.” (sitert fra Hartley 2001 s. 127) “Of course choice of reading is a very personal matter and inevitably we have to digest books which we would not have chosen ourselves but this is no bad thing as it broadens our horizons and gets us out of our comfort zone.” (en britisk lesesirkel-deltaker, gjengitt fra magasinet *Booktime*, redigert av Ruth Hunter, juni 2008, s. 31)

“In her twenty-five-question survey of 350 reading groups in the United Kingdom and America, Jenny Hartley asked readers to answer the following two questions: “Could you name one book which went well and explain why? Could you name one book which went badly and explain why?” In many instances, readers reported times when a well-liked book fell flat in discussion. For example: “Strangely enough, *Captain Corelli’s Mandolin* went badly. Those of us who’d finished it liked it so much that there was too much agreement,” and “We all enjoyed *Pride and Prejudice* so it didn’t provoke a lot of discussion.” Hartley also quotes times when a disliked book provided much to discuss: “We had a good discussion on *A Confederacy of Dunces*, which we disliked with a passion,” and “The characters of Joanna Trollope’s *A Village Affair* were felt to be stereotypical, the story novelettish, and the background hackneyed. Interestingly, though, a vigorous discussion was provoked – most highly critical!” An interesting outcome of Hartley’s investigation is that “quite a few books, and most of the top ten, distinguished themselves as crossovers, i.e., going well in some groups and badly in others.” This leads one to conclude that discussibility may be more than just a feature of books, but a precipitate of the mixing of particular books and particular readers.” (Joan Bessman Taylor i <https://journals.ala.org/index.php/rusq/article/view/2811/2835>; lesedato 07.10.24)

“An all-female Canadian reading circle of ten members [...] Each member chooses a novel that she has already read and feels confident that the group will love. She then leads the session where that novel is discussed. One member thought it was ‘crazy’ for a group to choose books that no one had read: ‘What if it turned out to be a waste of time?’ The important thing, she explained, is sharing ‘wonderful experiences’. The all-older-male rural English circle operates similarly, taking turns

to recommend books and then leading the discussions of their own recommendations.” (Duncan 2013 s. 91)

Litteraturlæsingen kan foregå på mange måter og ha en rekke ulike formål og funksjoner for gruppa: “we don’t read for pleasure but to bond [...] we have to be able to deal with ambiguity [...] we have to negotiate, to select, to conflict, to resist [...] we negotiate life choices and identities [...] we play, leap, compare, relate to fiction and life narratives as other possible lives [...] we articulate new possibilities of being [...] we want to narrate [...] we imagine” (http://www.participations.org/Volume%205/Issue%202/5_02_huion.htm; lesedato 03.06.14). Deltakerne lager koblinger fra bøkene til eget liv, til forfatterens liv, til andre bøker, til en historisk situasjon osv. “In many of the groups we studied, the discussions covered not just issues that might be regarded as ‘personal’ but also wider social, cultural, historical and moral issues.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 21)

“In one case discussion took place round a dining table over a meal. In another case food matched a theme or setting in the novel – seed cake for Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Cranford* and nachos for John Steinbeck’s *The Pearl*, set in Mexico.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 20)

“An all-female Japanese group meet fortnightly and aimed to get through a novel every two months. They set a number of pages or chapters to read between sessions, start each session with a drink and spend one hour taking turns reading aloud from what they have already read at home, before eating dinner together. After dinner, over sweets and tea, they discuss the novel, including predicting what might have happen next. They have been following this pattern for five years. The predictive discussion is the highlight of their time together.” (Duncan 2013 s. 90)

“[A]n American woman told me that a friend of hers recently joined a reading circle specifically for couples: ‘they rotate houses and discuss books over dinner ... She just started going this year and really enjoys it’. At this group, members enjoy socializing with their partners while also talking about books.” (Duncan 2013 s. 91)

“At nogle medlemmer er mere lyttende og knap så snakkende, er ikke et ukendt fænomen i fysiske læseklubber. Dem har der altid været plads til, og det skal der fortsat være. Ofte vil disse medlemmer kun byde ind med kommentarer direkte adspurgte, men tilkendegiver ikke desto mindre at de får meget ud af at deltage, og de møder frem år efter år.” (Balling 2007 s. 23)

“[T]he books are chosen for their “narrative” and “character-interest” [...] rather than for their “textuality,” “experimentation,” or “literary distinction” [...] Solitary readers also identify with characters, but within a reading group this identification becomes more powerful because the reader hears the reactions of her fellow members and their personal narratives. Thus, the “characters become a prism for the interrogation of self, other selves, and society beyond the text” (Long, 2003, p.

153). The reading mode is what Booth calls “coduction,” emphasizing the comparative process by which readers unavoidably perceive and judge any person or story against the backdrop of all other people and stories they have known (Long, 2003, p. 26) [...] their own life experiences as a basis for speculation on characters’ motives in much the same way they might engage in gossip about real people [...] readers connect to other possible lives.” (Patricia Huion m.fl. i http://www.participations.org/Volume%205/Issue%202/5_02_huion.htm; lesedato 03.06.14)

Det er ifølge en forsker på lesesirkler svært vanlig at deltakerne snakker om det som skjer i bøkene “as though it were real life” (Peplow 2016 s. 9). “Mimetic reading involves readers responding to fictional characters as ‘possible people’ and to the narrative world as like our own” (Peplow 2016 s. 139).

En god måte å få i gang en diskusjon på har vist seg å være spørsmålet “Which character did you like the most and why?” (Long 2003 s. 126)

“In accounting for how readers assess fictional characters, [James] Phelan distinguishes between three components that can make up their judgement: mimetic, thematic and synthetic. These three components are not exclusive and readers can move between them in their reading of a character at any one time. Phelan defines the mimetic, thematic and synthetic in the following ways:

- Mimetic responses ‘involve an audience’s interest in the characters as possible people and in the narrative world as like our own’.
- Thematic responses ‘involve an interest in the ideational function of the characters and in the cultural, ideological, philosophical, or ethical issues being addressed by the narrative’.
- Synthetic reactions acknowledge the constructed and artificial nature of literary texts. These reactions are possible ‘because any character is constructed and has a specific role to play within the larger construction of the narrative’.” (Peplow 2016 s. 141).

“[T]he normative mimetic reading form allows readers to move relatively easily between aspects of their own lives and the lives of fictional characters. Far from being simplistic, this occasionally maligned form of reading allowed readers to self-disclose personal information through discussion of the text” (Peplow 2016 s. 179). “[R]eaders frequently talk about fictional worlds in terms of real-life norms and expectations; for instance, seeing fictional characters as reminiscent of, and directly comparable to, real people, and judging them on these terms. [...] readers’ personal experiences often worked to strengthen textual interpretations. [...] seeing continuity between art and life” (Peplow 2016 s. 171-173). Men noen vil heller

“focus on literary texts as constructed works rather than as directly representative of real life” (Peplow 2016 s. 157).

“Long found that readers frequently slipped between real-world and fictional character identities, with readers bringing ‘the weight of their lives’ to their encounters with books (2003: 29) [...] The readers move seamlessly between the world of the text and their own real-world beliefs and experience” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 64). “Often in face-to-face reading group discourse readers make links between their own experience and the texts that they are discussing, ‘recognising’ (Felski 2008) themselves or their experiences in the fictional worlds. We found that readers frequently judge these narratives in terms of real-life norms and expectations, for instance seeing fictional characters as reminiscent of (and directly comparable to) real people and judging these characters accordingly.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 87).

“Discussions of character provide an especially powerful basis for challenging critical authority because groups are confident in their expertise in “reading” and judging character in the world beyond books. A way of discussing books that encourages an ontological parallel between literary and real “personalities” gives groups a certain authority as readers. [...] Discussants in these groups usually enjoy hearing a plurality of views about characters, because members’ responses serve as windows into the personalities of other participants and this contributes to the sharing of group discussions. This means, however, that groups do not usually achieve a wholly collective response to books or become transformed themselves into long-lasting interpretive or textual communities. Moreover, because groups remain committed to middle-class individualism, both in regard to textual response and in general, they only approach systemic issues rarely and indirectly.” (Long 2003 s. 156)

“One reader said in a discussion about the three heroines (or three aspects of one heroine) of a Latin American novel *The Girl in the Photograph*, “I found myself closest to the one who wanted to listen to music, yet I found her despicable. Of the three, she was the one I could most change places with.” It later became clear that she despised this character because of political apathy, but her self-recognition in the mirror of the character enabled her to question whether she should become more politically involved: a reflective process implicating social action (My Book Group, April 5, 1983).” (Boyarín 1993 s. 199)

Lesesirkler “offer the possibility of inhabiting other subjectivities. [...] Novelistic characters are central to this process, for they often engender very powerful personal responses. In fact, the consideration of characters often dominates reading group discussions. Discussions gain depth when readers respond to fictional characters almost as if they were real people, analyzing their emotional responses to them and associating outward from them to aspects of their own lives or those of kin and friends. Indeed, to be able to relate to characters in this way is what makes

a novel “real” to many of these readers. [...] characters become a prism for the interrogation of self, other selves, and society beyond the text. [...] Emotional proximity and distance from characters, then, form a crucial axis for moving through novels, and “identification” often means not just recognition but closeness. This closeness can occur even when someone disapproves of a character. [...] In a typical example, one woman reader encountering Jane Austen’s *Emma* was able to accept her own envy of others’ accomplishments because of empathic identification.” (Long 2003 s. 152-154)

“A member of the mixed-gender Irish circle was particularly interested in talking about how discussions of the book and discussions of their personal lives merged. She explained that they decide on the books to read a year in advance, meet monthly, read one book a month and spend all their meeting time in discussion, ‘but we are really talking about ourselves’.” (Duncan 2013 s. 90) “[T]alking about a book is an opportunity to talk about the other things that we long to talk about, including who we are or who we want to be (Long, 2003).” (Duncan 2013 s. 185)

“Women in reading groups also use character evaluation to question their own values. For example, because most members of My Book Group stayed at home when their children were young, they generally disapproved of heroines who are mothers and yet have careers. Margaret Drabble’s novel *The Realms of Gold* led to a debate about that issue focused on the heroine, a successful archaeologist. By defending the novel’s main character, one woman, who had to work to support her children, first articulated and then successfully challenged the group’s underlying assumption that good mothering requires all-encompassing attention and devotion to children. Thus the same readerly stance that seems circumscribed because of its tendency to treat characters as “real people” with whom readers can relate can also provide the transformative power of deep connection.” (Long 2003 s. 154-155)

“Because amateur readers pursue essentially personal goals, notes Long, such readers are free to discuss a text in ways that would not be considered appropriate in the classroom: “One reason these groups can be playful is that they are not held accountable for their interpretations in the way that ‘professional readers’ and their students are. Group members do not have to assert their interpretations in a serious way or defend them with tightly reasoned arguments from the text. Indeed, women often expand on an opinion by discussing their personal reasons for making a certain interpretation, using the book for self-understanding and revelation of the self to other participants rather than for discovery of meaning within the book.” ” (Wells 2011 s. 77)

En av “the chief differences between British and American reading groups is that the latter places far greater emphasis on the therapeutic dimensions of reading” (Collins 2010 s. 99).

Keith Oatley “focuses on readers’ emotional involvement in narratives, discerning three psychological processes that lead to readers experiencing strong emotions when reading fiction: identification, sympathy and autobiographical memory (1999: 113-114). [...] reading fiction can help us cope with events in our everyday lives that are difficult to understand. He states that when we read of a character’s problems, for instance, we run a simulation of this character’s predicament, experiencing a version of these emotions as prompted by the text. A reader’s feeling of emotion towards a character’s predicament will be stronger if the reader has experienced a similar situation to that of the character. There is not an impermeable divide between reading fiction and experiencing reality, and the ways in which readers experience the contents of literary texts are based on the same psychological processes that are run when they experience ‘real’ emotions and events (Oatley, 1999). Readers’ autobiographical memories can be primed by events in the text, and their simulations of the fictional emotions can feedback to their real lives, allowing them to re-evaluate their own, similar experiences” (Peplow 2016 s. 143-144).

“Within this repertoire the following functions are allocated to literature: to ‘understand and empathize with different worlds’ (Long, 2003, p. 152), to gain ‘recognition and insight,’ ‘to question their own values’ (Long, 2003, p. 154), to broaden a sense of possibilities (Long, 2003, p. 181), and to engage with the ‘pleasures of deep emotional involvement, meaningfulness, or illumination of their experience’ (Long, 2003, p. 130). [...] Reading groups seem to motivate self-disclosure as ‘less risky or less consequential than it would be among peers one sees every day’ (Long, 2003, p. 211). [...] Books help readers see the world through other eyes, the eyes of the character, who obtains the status of a real person. The borders between the real and fictional world are blurred. Readers seek to redefine their identities.” (Patricia Huion i http://www.participations.org/Volume%205/Issue%202/5_02_huion.htm; lesedato 03.06.14) Elizabeth Long “found that readers in book clubs tend to gravitate towards discussing aspects of character” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 11).

I en undersøkelse av lesesirkler gjennomført av Jenny Hartley “consensus emerged about the kinds of books that groups liked: ‘the premium is on empathy, the core reading-group value. This empathy can go three ways: reader-character, author-character, and between all the readers in the room’ (2002: 132).” (Hartley sitert Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 12).

“Such was the pervasiveness of mimetic reading that groups recognized and explicitly commented on it as a method of reading, referring to it as ‘reading for real life’, or something similar [...] Scholars from various fields have argued that readers of fiction often evaluate and interpret texts according to real-life values and expectations. [...] readers seek to identify with characters, feeling characters’ emotions and engaging with them intellectually.” (Peplow 2016 s. 141-142).

“Invoking personal experience or an aspect of personal identity in relation to a text often served to lend credibility to a reader’s evaluation or interpretation, while also offering the readers an opportunity to compare their own experience of a life event, a feeling, or an aspect of identity with other readers and fictional characters.” (Peplow 2016 s. 177)

“[T]he personal backgrounds that readers bring to meetings are interpreted as an important element in leading to a ‘good discussion’ (Hartley, 2001: 81-2). [...] various aspects of identity and personal experience are invoked by the readers: geographical (including nationality and experience of living in a village), employment (either the reader’s own job or the working experience of a parent), and experience of caring for an elderly relative. These category entitlements are often used rhetorically in order to bolster a reader’s interpretation or assessment of a text, especially where there is a split of opinion; however, on occasion readers play down their position of expertise. At all times, the category entitlements that are played up or played down are prompted by, and mediated through, the text under discussion.” (Peplow 2016 s. 160 og 162) “[R]eaders’ movement between real life and the text facilitates a sense within groups that particular participants are more entitled to assess a book by virtue of their life experience.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 63)

“For instance, someone who has travelled on the Congo would be expected to bring an enlightened perspective on Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, while a reader who has been married to an adulterous partner might illuminate a discussion of Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary*. Underlying these sorts of expectations is the assumption that certain categories of people have particular types of knowledge through possessing ‘epistemic primacy’ (Raymond and Heritage 2006: 694): dentists know about teeth, plumbers know about water pipes, mechanics know about engines, and so on. It is not just a matter of job roles, though; we also assume that people are entitled to know more about something (e.g. an event, a feeling, a place) if they have personal experience of that thing.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 73)

“[C]ategory entitlements are common in this context because readers have a tendency to engage in mimetic reading, often seeing direct connections between the lives described in the works of fiction that they discuss and their own lives. [...] In most reading groups none of the members possesses a palpable and objective entitlement to interpret texts in a ‘better’ way than the others [...] Category entitlements are legitimate in the reading group context because most readers are happy to conflate personal experience and elements of the fictional world, for example characters, themes and plots. Subsequently, category entitlements were generally taken to be a robust way of talking about texts, and the invocation of readers’ personal experiences often worked to strengthen their textual interpretation. Within meetings, for instance, the conversational floor tended to be yielded to those members whose real-life identity and experience closely related to some aspect of the text.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 73 og 88)

En lesesirkel-deltaker som i en undersøkelse kalles Ben, “draws parallels between his personal experience of being a ‘stranger’ in a village and the experience of the fictional character. This ‘similarity identification’ (Andringa, 2004) between reader and character allows Ben to invoke his entitlement to see the novel in a particular way as a result of his experience. [...] Ben’s experience of feeling like a stranger in a village seems to provide him with special access to the novel and ‘all the time’ during reading he was thinking back to the village he lived in. [...] the readers see continuity between the narrative worlds and the real world, and similarity between their experiences and those of the characters. This provides these readers with an entitlement to discuss certain aspects of the novels unchallenged. However, category entitlements are more evident in sequences of competitive talk (such as arguments), when this feature can be used to strengthen one perspective over another.” (Peplow 2016 s. 163 og 165)

“In an Australian study, Collinson (2009) asked readers outside the academy about their reading history, their reading habits, and whether they shared books with others. His findings suggest that these readers favour ‘everyday’ discourses of reading over academic discourses, preferring to see texts as continuous with life rather than as something rarefied and cut off (Collinson 2009: 83-84). In Bourdieuan terms, the ways that readers talked about texts was much more typical of ‘naïve’ and popular reading practices than the academic and aesthetic disposition.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 10)

“Contemporary reading groups tend to be more informal, with the discussion leader providing only a short introduction to the author and the book before initiating the discussion with an open question such as, “Well, what did you think about the book?” Nevertheless the concern remains for some that what they think about the book won’t be the right things. Shelley (student, twenty-six), quoted earlier as loving to talk about books, said, “Yeah, I would love to join a book club.” But she hasn’t joined one so far because she is worried her book talk won’t measure up: “I’m so afraid to join one because I’m afraid that the people in it would know a lot about books and be very well read. And the things I would have to say about them probably wouldn’t sound too intelligent. I still have this really bad fear that when I read something, I don’t understand it as much as other people.” ” (Ross, McKechnie og Rothbauer 2006 s. 229)

“Although reading groups read predominantly national literature written in their mother tongue, “orientalising” fiction, or fiction that seeks to understand other cultures as a primary focus (Devlin Glass, 2001, p. 578), belong to their reading fare. Recent reading groups even show a preference for the “consumption of texts by and about women living in the Third World” (Burwell, 2007, p. 282).” (Patricia Huion i http://www.participations.org/Volume%205/Issue%202/5_02_huion.htm; lesedato 03.06.14)

Jenny Hartley undersökte bl.a. hvorfor flertallet av alle lesesirkler består av kvinner (hennes funn viste at 66 % bestod av kun kvinner, 6 % av kun menn, resten var blandet). Hennes lesesirkel-informanter hadde blant annet disse kommentarene: “Women take more pleasure in verbalizing their feelings and reactions”; “Men don’t seem to enjoy the ‘process’ of discussion as much – they have a firm opinion on something and that is that”; “We enjoy being independent from men with meaningful, intelligent conversations”; “In a way the whole point is that we’re all women ... with a man present the whole tone would be entirely different. Not that we’d defer to male authority – not at all – but our discussions are somehow humane and intuitive and exploratory rather than cerebral”; “We welcome both sexes and find generally that the men always see the book in a different light to the women”. (Hartley 2001 s. 28-29) Det kan diskuteres om lesesirkler fremmer “kvinnelige verdier”: “It might be said that the reading group is a forum for the kind of talk associated with women: co-operation rather than competition, the model of ‘emotional literacy’ which values teamwork, listening, and sharing over self-assertion and winning the argument. Reading groups could, then, be seen as part of the feminization of culture, though they are not without their edge: members have to defend and justify themselves, argue their views.” (Hartley 2001 s. 137)

Det har blitt etablert “mother-daughter book groups” (Long 2003 s. 197).

En amerikansk lesesirkel med kvinner valgte ofte kjærlighetsromaner (romances), der kvinnene “are conscious of the stigma attached to romance reading. [...] More dramatically, the suburban group dealt with an insult to their genre by a symbolic inversion of the dominant hierarchy of literary value. One group member saw a sign in a bookstore that said, “Romance novels are like bubblegum for the brain.” [...] at the next meeting several women returned to the topic of “bubblegum for the brain” and decided that they were going to declare that bubblegum represented something positive to them. From that point on, Mary brought a bowl of bubblegum to every meeting. It sat on the table with the coffee urn, a concrete symbol of their open and collective challenge to the stigma of reading romances.” (Long 2003 s. 159)

“Bokcirklar kan organisatoriskt delas i två huvudtyper. För det första finns de cirklar som är knutna till ett folkbibliotek, ett studieförbund, en bokhandel eller en frivilligorganisation av något slag (till exempel Svenska kyrkan). Sådana cirklar får ofta stöd till sin verksamhet, exempelvis hjälp med val av litteratur, bidrag till ledararvode eller tillgång till lokal, och betecknas här *bokcirklar med huvudman*. Den andra typen utgörs av cirklar som lever och verkar helt utan organisatoriska band eller stöd utifrån. Det handlar om en grupp människor, t.ex. grannar, arbetskamrater eller vänner, som gått samman på eget initiativ och regelbundet träffas – ofta hemma hos varandra – för att diskutera litteratur. Denna typ benämns ibland “privata” eller “informella” cirklar. Jag har dock valt att benämna den *fristående bokcirklar*. Centralt för bägge typer är förstås boken, läsningen och *mötet*, där gruppmedlemmarna tillsammans samtalar om sina läsoplevelser; utan

dessa möten ingen cirkel.” (Kerstin Rydbeck i <http://bada.hb.se/bitstream/2320/12324/1/Libraries.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.14)

Noen lesesirkler begynner et møte med å la taletid “going round the room, allowing each person to have an initial say before open discussion began; this discipline, however was not always maintained. Other groups had an informal facilitator – a role that usually rotated amongst group members. But the majority of the talk in these groups was still relatively unregulated. Library, workplace and other public groups usually had a moderator who facilitated discussion.” (Peplow, Swann m.fl. i 2016 s. 20)

“Det går även att tala om öppna respektive slutna bokcirklar, efter hur cirkeln rekryterar sina medlemmar. Till en öppen cirkel kan vem som helst ansluta sig – det kan exempelvis handla om att folkbiblioteket eller en bokhandel annonserar om att man ska starta en ny cirkel och uppmanar intresserade att anmäla sig. Ofta känner inte deltagare i öppna cirklar varandra sedan tidigare och cirkelgemenskapen kommer då i främsta hand att byggas kring just läsintresset. En sluten cirkel består av människor som mestadels känner varandra och gemenskapen kan då byggas även på helt andra saker, t.ex. att man arbetar tillsammans, har barn i samma klass eller är gamla barndomsvänner. Slutna cirklar bestämmer själva över reglerna för rekrytering och tar bara in medlemmar som accepteras av de befintliga.” (Kerstin Rydbeck i <http://bada.hb.se/bitstream/2320/12324/1/Libraries.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.14)

“Det går också att dela in bokcirklar i sådana som träffas för möten IRL (“in real life”) som här benämns *traditionella cirklar* – av anledningen att det helt enkelt är den typ som funnits längst – och sådana som existerar på webben och för sina diskussioner i de nya sociala medierna: *virtuella cirklar*. Det är dock ett rimligt antagande att gränsen mellan dessa två typer successivt luckras upp alltmera. På exempelvis Facebook finns idag grupper med enda syfte att sammanföra människor som önskar delta i traditionella cirklar – bland annat finns en sådan gemenskap specifikt riktad till Facebookanvändare i Uppsala: “Bokcirkel i Uppsala”. Många traditionella cirklar har egna Facebook-grupper (ofta slutna) där de också kommunicerar. Och gissningsvis följer många medlemmar i traditionella cirklar även virtuella litteraturdiskussioner på forum och bloggar för att få tips och inspiration. En viktig fråga i projektet är att se vad de nya medierna innebär för traditionella bokcirkels sätt att arbeta idag.” (Kerstin Rydbeck i <http://bada.hb.se/bitstream/2320/12324/1/Libraries.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.14)

“Slutligen går även att klassificera bokcirklar efter deras val av litteratur. Den vanligaste modellen är sannolikt att alla i cirkeln läser samma bok till varje möte. Andra modeller kan vara olika böcker av en och samma författare eller böcker med ett gemensamt tema men av olika författare. Vissa cirklar fokuserar på en speciell genre, som lyrik eller science fiction. I allmänhet förknippas nog begreppet bokcirkel med läsning av skönlitteratur och det torde knappast råda någon tvekan

om att det stora flertalet främst är inriktade på fiktion. Men det finns även sådana cirklar som diskuterar övervägande eller uteslutande facklitteratur. En målsättning med projektet är just att få grepp om de övergripande mönster som finns ifråga om val av genrer och litteratur. Det avgränsas därför *inte* på basis av hur cirklarna väljer att lägga upp sin läsning eller vilken typ av litteratur de läser.” (Kerstin Rydbeck i <http://bada.hb.se/bitstream/2320/12324/1/Libraries.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.14)

Det har ifølge to danske forskere i danske folkebibliotek funnet sted “en stigende *socialisering* af formidlingen som et forum for udvekslinger af personlige læseoplevelser mellem ligestillede læsere. En tendens, som udviser grænserne mellem såvel institutionel og privat formidling som mellem formidler og modtager, og betoner bibliotekets rolle som scene for denne kommunikation.” (Balling og Grøn 2012b s. 59)

“En viss formell opplæring av de ansatte er nyttig når biblioteket skal starte med lesesirkler. Evnen til å få i gang en god diskusjon; holde roen selv om motstridende synspunkter blir uttrykt på en aggressiv måte; sørge for at alle får anledning til å si noe; og – til slutt – få deltakerne til å ønske å komme tilbake neste gang – alle disse ferdighetene kan læres.” (Riel, Fowler og Downes 2011 s. 202)

“Kirklees Libraries i Yorkshire kjøper inn flere eksemplarer av pocketbøker til lesesirklene. I tillegg har de temakasser med bøker med beslektet innhold eller emne. Disse har vært svært populære blant lesesirklene og har ført til noen av de livligste diskusjonene. En annen velprøvd metode har vært å bruke enkelttitler av samme forfatter, eller av forfattere som behandler lignende temaer på forskjellig eller motstridende måte.” (Riel, Fowler og Downes 2011 s. 207)

Noen bedrifter har støttet de ansatte i å lage lesesirkler, og ikke uten grunn: “Orange’s 1999 Orange Talks Books at Work was designed to promote reading groups in the workplace; Orange itself has twenty-two in-house reading groups. The company provides a room, lunch, and some free books and discounts to get groups up and running. [...] The interpersonal skills, flexibility, and openness to new ideas, the teamwork, and the ability to communicate so valued in today’s employees are exactly those qualities which reading groups can be so good cultivating. It can also benefit cross-cultural sensitivity and what have been referred to as ‘complexity skills’ – the ability to manage ‘ambiguous situations where many events and trends are interlinked’.” (Hartley 2001 s. 12-13)

I USA og Storbritannia har det blitt etablert lesesirkler på arbeidsplasser, f.eks. i det store London-firmaet Marks & Spencer, gjennomført både i pauser og etter arbeidstid (Putzer-Maier 2018 s. 28). Dette lesefellesskapet førte til at de ansatte som deltok verdsatte hverandre høyere enn før og at kommunikasjonen i bedriften ble bedre. Blant de leste bøkene var faglitteratur (Putzer-Maier 2018 s. 28).

Forlag prøver å hjelpe til og tjene penger på lesesirkler: “The UK has recently blossomed with guides, discussion notes, and biographical information, designed with a reading-group audience in mind. The idea comes from America: Back in 1993, when Doubleday was about to issue *The Robber Bride*, it realised that Atwood’s previous novels had been popular with women’s reading groups and decided to facilitate discussions by issuing a guide to Atwood’s work.” (Hartley 2001 s. 98)

“Even Cliff notes can provide discussion questions, and thereby shape modes of textual appropriation. The ironic comments these notes often excite, however, shows a refreshing distance from authority. For example, in one coed group discussion of *Huckleberry Finn*, a Cliff note question about the symbolism of the river precipitated gales of laughter and a hilarious discussion about nature symbolism in college literature courses and everyone’s favorite trick for getting ‘A’s. As one person said, “My favorite symbol was the ocean. It could mean death, sex, rebirth – you could do *anything* with the ocean” (Bookpeople, February, 1987).” (Boyarin 1993 s. 203)

En lesesirkel som diskuterte amerikaneren Nathaniel Hawthornes *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) “unanimously disagreed with a critical introduction to an edition read by several members that urged a balanced appraisal of the human qualities represented by Hester and Dimmesdale. The group enthusiastically declared Dimmesdale “a wimp,” mocked his fears, and doubted whether he had had enough passion really to father a child. Hester’s only major flaw, according to the group, lay in “playing the martyr too much” (meeting, 16 April 1984).” (Long 2003 s. 156)

“*The Book Club Bible* (2007), for example, consists of novel recommendations, including reviews written by other reading circles. Likewise, the *Bloomsbury 21* series includes ‘reading club guides’ at the back of each novel, containing information about the book and author, questions for discussion, suggested further reading and a list of the author’s favourite books.” (Duncan 2013 s. 92)

“Some guides are conveniently printed right in the back of the book, while an even larger inventory is available on publishers’ websites. The Random House website, for example, lists more than 100 book club study guides, all immediately downloadable. All these discussion guides, of course, are not just a selfless service to book clubs, but a very low-cost way to promote multiple-copy sales. [...] There are other sites that tell you step-by-step how to set up and run a book club. Even many traditional face-to-face book clubs have developed websites as a means of communicating with their members, keeping a record of their group’s work, and sharing the group’s ideas about books and about club procedures with a wider audience.” (Harvey Daniels i <https://1lib.sk/dl/810137/1e6bfb?dsource=recommen> d; lesedato 02.06.21)

Hvilke bøker skal gruppa lese? “One of the most enjoyable yet frightening aspects of a reading group is choosing the books. While it’s exciting to consider the options, make your list and winnow it down to those few select titles that you’ll read each year, picking good books for your group can also be intimidating. You want the perfect book: one that’s not too easy, not too hard, that will hold the interest of a diverse group of readers and will also inspire a lively discussion. Where on earth do you find books that are all that and more, and how do you pick which of these to read? Probably the best place to start looking for titles is your own members’ bookshelves. Some groups insist that those proposing a book have read it and can testify to its worthiness for the group. Other groups would rather that no one have read the book, making it a surprise for everyone; they choose books based on word of mouth from outside sources, reviews, or dust jacket blurbs. Is there a title that many of you have always wanted to read? A classic that some of you would like to revisit or have never quite gotten to? An old favorite that you’d love to share with your group? Are you looking for something a little different? Outside your normal reading curve? Try searching this site for a good book. All the books listed here have reading guides that can enhance your group’s discussion. Many publishers specialize in certain types of books, either by genre or literary style. If you find a book you like, search the publisher’s site for similar titles. [...] Be sure to include a variety of topics and voices in your selections so your group doesn’t get bored.” (fra www.readinggroupguides.com; lesedato 14.09.09)

Jenny Hartley hevdet i 2001 at det var mer enn 50.000 personer i Storbritannia som deltok i lesesirkler. “Uppgifter gör exempelvis gällande att cirka 500.000 bokcirklar fanns i USA i slutet av 1990-talet och drygt 40 700 i Canada. (Fuller, Sedo & Squires, 2011) I Storbritannien beräknades antalet vid samma tid till cirka 50 000 och australiensiska Council of Adult Education organiserade cirka 1 000 cirklar. (Hartley & Turvey, 2002; Taylor, 2007)” (Kerstin Rydbeck i <http://bada.hb.se/bitstream/2320/12324/1/Libraries.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.14)

Lesesirkler kan være digitale, og foregå på Internett. En deltaker i en digital lesesirkel “fremhæver netop dette som et gode, at rekrutteringen ikke er så homogen som tilfældet er i mange fysiske læseklubber og foreslår sågar at man skal undlade at have erhvervsbetegnelser på præsentationen af medlemmerne fordi fordomme snarere kan virke hæmmende for dialogen: “Men hvis jeg skal være ganske ærlig så tror jeg at hvis man holder folks uddannelse som en irrelevant del af læseklubben kunne det give meget mere. Folk kommer altid med fordomme om forskellige uddannelser og mangel på samme! Har arbejdet sammen med en rengøringskone som aldrig har lavet andet end at gøre rent og hun var mere belæst end nogen anden jeg har mødt (Den eneste jeg kender der har fuldstændt Ulysses – og nydt det!) – mens mange jeg studerer med ikke finder intellektuelt stimuli i andet end dameblade. Bedste råd ville være at undlade en jobbeskrivelse i læseklubben!” (kvindeligt medlem, 24 år)” (Balling 2007 s. 19) “For nogen kan anonymiteten oven i købet være en befrielse. På spørgsmålet om hvilken betydning det har, at man som medlem ikke er fysisk sammen med de andre deltagere, svarer en ung

kvinde: “At man ikke er bange for at komme med sin egen mening.” (Kvindeligt medlem, 19 år)” (Balling 2007 s. 21)

“[F]or some people, it may be easier to reveal themselves online than in person [...] Online “presence” is also not marked by annoying physical habits. In this sense, online groups may amplify the feelings of safety in distance (both because one is speaking through a book and because in most reading groups not all members are close friends) that often prevail in face-to-face reading groups. [...] All of the online reading groups discussed here also remain open to new members. Face-to-face groups, on the other hand, usually have very clear boundaries. After their formation, they tend to be closed to new members, except at specific times when they feel the need to recruit new members because of departures from the group or a desire to expand. Online moderators who have experience with many groups over time have informed me that there are many closed online groups, including some that evolve into closed groups and others that were initiated as private discussions.” (Long 2003 s. 211)

“[I]nformal processes of social control can be extremely effective in silencing or stigmatizing members so as to enforce conformity. Joking and a lack of responsiveness appear to be most often used “enforcement mechanisms.” ” (Boyarin 1993 s. 204) “[V]irtual members see the virtual environment as unthreatening [...] People might feel more comfortable ‘speaking out’ online, or, as one virtual member wrote, ‘people may be more likely to share their true feelings and opinions’.” (DeNel Rehberg Sedo i <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/135485650300900105>; lesedato 15.03.24)

“One woman who belongs to both a virtual club and a f2f [face to face] club says that the camaraderie and repartee in her f2f group is what gratifies her and allows her to learn more about the books, but points out that there is a lack of time to delve deeply into the book in the face-to-face setting. And so she does this in her virtual group, where meetings can occur over a period of two to four weeks, rather than just two hours. The virtual meetings allow the reader to transcend physical, geographical and time boundaries, enriching her interpretations of the book.” (DeNel Rehberg Sedo i <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/135485650300900105>; lesedato 15.03.24)

En kvinne som initierte en gruppelesing av Jane Austens roman *Mansfield Park* via en nettside, avsluttet med denne oppsummeringen. “We’re done! We finished! We read a very long Jane Austen book [...] You guys are the BEST. Thank you so much for reading along, and chatting it up in the comments, and being hilarious and heartfelt and wonderful. [...] Having now read every word, I think what makes *Mansfield Park* hard to swallow isn’t just Fanny’s insistence on being a total doormat (unless, and this is to her credit, somebody’s trying to force her down the aisle); it’s that nothing about her changes. Every other Austen protagonist – and protagonists generally, because this is fiction and there has to be an arc somewhere

– learns something. Grows up. Sees the error of her ways. Stops chasing the handsome rogue and falls for the old dude. SOMETHING. Fanny does none of those things. Personal change doesn't seem to be the point for her, somehow, which begs the question: What IS the point? Mrs. Fitzpatrick suggested that perhaps everybody ELSE is changed because of Fanny's golden presence, but upon further reflection, I don't see it; the only character redeemed at the end is Tom Bertram, and that's thanks to the power of the almighty virus more than anything else. Readers?" (en anonym "Miss Ball" 18. april 2012 på <http://austenacious.com/?cat=215>; lesedato 21.12.12)

Miss Ball skrev videre: "That said, I enjoyed it, in a pleasant and immediate kind of way. Fanny and Edmund's "romance" aside – I'm not sure what "a classic romance" means to the good people at Oxford University Press – Jane's ear for terrible people being terrible kept me entertained and ready for scandal to strike at any moment. Personal journeys of growth aside...that's good enough for me, sometimes. Various and sundry final thoughts: For all the crap Fanny takes nowadays about her shrinking-violet ways, her dear Edmund is, I think, way worse. He's controlling; he (I think) knows he's wrong about Mary, but refuses to pull the plug; he says he loves Fanny, but constantly abandons her; "I could never marry anybody but Mary Crawford," he moons, twenty pages from the end, and I want him to go to Thornton Lacey AND STAY THERE. You guys. Maria lives happily ever after (or something) ... with Mrs. Norris! I subsequently die of joy. Sue me; I still like Mary Crawford, "maybe it would be okay if Tom died, because then Edmund could have his money!" comment and all. She's shallow, but she's (usually) neither malicious nor clueless – the two great sins of Austenian women. She's neither rewarded nor truly punished in the end, which seems fair, and I hope she lives to liven up many a party. By which I mean "novel." And now, let's all have snacks (BYO) and read something trashy! Class dismissed." (<http://austenacious.com/?cat=215>; lesedato 21.12.12)

"A rich resource concerning the engagement of amateur readers with Austen's works can be found at the Austen fans' website The Republic of Pemberley. Since 1996, the website's registered members have regularly taken part in "Group Reads," which are discussions paced according to a preset reading schedule, with approximately six weeks typically allotted per novel. Works by Austen have been read by Republic of Pemberley groups more than forty times; the group occasionally varies its diet with other classics and works about Austen. Recent Group Read" discussions, which are archived by discussion thread, have averaged between 1500 and 2500 postings over the course of the scheduled weeks. [...] Participants comment on and debate the meanings of individual lines of text, compare views on characters (e.g. "Is Wickham a compulsive liar?"), and float more extensive interpretations of themes (e.g. an allegorical interpretation of Elizabeth Bennet as representing nature and Darcy as art). [...] And participants do sometimes support their interpretation of characters or events with references to their own lives: one reader of *Pride and Prejudice* compared Darcy's lack of self-

awareness to an episode of her own history in which, as she explained, “it wasn’t until some social fallout that I realized how I appeared to others.” ” (Wells 2011 s. 78)

I digitale lesesirkler blir diskusjonen vanligvis mindre intens i enn fysiske lesesirkler, og kommentarene er kortere og mer forenklende når deltakerne ikke sitter sammen fysisk (Balling 2007 s. 25). Det blir lettere misforståelser når diskusjonen foregår skriftlig (Balling 2007 s. 27).

Fysisk lesesirkel:	Digital lesesirkel:
Gruppeorientert	Individorientert
Muntlig	Skriftlig
Symmetrisk kommunikasjonsform	Asymmetrisk kommunikasjonsform
Ansikt til ansikt	Anonym
Bindende (tilhørighet)	Flyktig (tilhørighet)
Forpliktelse	Fleksibilitet/frihet
Stedspesifikk	Stedsoverskridende

(oversatt fra Balling 2007 s. 35)

Wattpad “is a platform available via web and as a mobile app, on which people can add comments in the margins of books in the public domain, writing their own response to what they are reading and engaging in discussions with other users that commented before them [...] reader response changes and is shaped by the progression of reading. What the reader might think or feel in relation to the first chapter of a book can be drastically reshaped and reconfigured when reading the following chapters. Therefore, in contrast to a review, the comment in the margin can offer a “real-time” insight into the reading experience. [...] over 42,000 comments to [Jane Austens roman] *Pride and Prejudice*.” (Simone Rebora og Federico Pianzola i https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327954876_A_New_Research_Programme_for_Reading_Research_Analysing_Comments_in_the_Margins_on_Wattpad; lesedato 19.01.23) “[A]nalyzing the comments in the margins enables the comparison between a specific part of the text and the effects it has on readers. Not just a few readers, but millions of readers, in some cases” (Simone Rebora og Federico Pianzola i <https://digitcult.lim.di.unimi.it/index.php/dc/article/view/67>; lesedato 15.06.22).

“The TikTok Book Club will serve as a virtual space for the TikTok community to discuss new titles together and the best thing about the TikTok Book Club is that anyone can join. [...] Each month, a new book will be announced and we are inviting fellow book-lovers to read along and come together in-app to share their experiences. There will also be a #BookClub hub in app, so users can easily find out about the month’s title, and start creating and sharing their own reviews, book aesthetics or newest literary crush! The first book for discussion in July is Jane Austen’s *Persuasion*, a 1817 romantic classic and soon to be released in a new

Netflix adaptation. This choice recognises the #BookTok community's passion for the classics, with other much-loved titles like #thegreatgatsby and #prideandprejudice also finding a fanbase on TikTok. Jane Austen herself, even has a dedicated community of followers on TikTok who share their love her books collectively under the hashtag #AustenTok which now has 16.2m views. But that's not all, we are also introducing a team of BookTok Laureates, to help us along the way! Our five appointed BookTok Laureates @li.reading, @jackbenedwards, @cocosarel, @Bmercer and @edenreidreads are passionate about literature and will help guide the #BookClub over the month, taking the community on their journey as they dive into the novel and share their thoughts in a content series in-app. At the end each month, this will culminate in a co-hosted LIVE to discuss the novel in depth. [...] The TikTok Book Club will continue throughout the Summer and beyond, with new titles being announced every month, allowing readers to discover new authors and genres, share and connect with likeminded people and embrace their creativity, wherever they are in the world. As TikTok becomes a cosy corner where communities can experience the joy the reading together." (<https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-gb/the-tiktok-bookclub>; lesedato 26.05.23)

"Joining the TikTok book club couldn't be easier. It's something anyone can join and everyone can take part in. All you will need to do is buy the book in question and read as much or as little as you desire. Unlike traditional book clubs, there aren't really any focuses on chapters so you can go at your own pace, although be careful of any spoilers when scrolling." (Jessica Filby i <https://www.dexerto.com/tiktok/tiktok-book-club-what-it-is-and-how-to-join-1875890/>; lesedato 26.05.23)

"James Joyces roman *Finnegans Wake*, historiens mest uforståelige bok. [...] Den begynner midt i en setning og avsluttes midt i samme setning. Altså starter den samme sted den slutter, og omvendt. Dette betyr at man kan begynne hvor som helst i romanen, og lesingen kan gjerne være sirkulær. En lesegruppe i Zürich har tatt konsekvensen av dette. Gruppen startet opp i 1984, og gikk løs på de første ordene: "riverrun, past Eve and Adam's, from swerve of shore to bend of bay". Hva betyr de? Elv, elveløp, løpe langs en elv, livets elv, å krysse elven, Eva og Adam, en løpetur langs historiens gang, eller gjennom Bibelen – eller noe helt annet? Gruppen brukte elleve år på å komme seg igjennom boken. "Da vi var ferdige, tenkte vi: Hva nå? Vi bestemte oss for å starte på nytt igjen. Det var ingen vits i å slutte. Nå holder vi på med tredje gjennomgang", sier en av deltagerne, i filmen *The Joycean Society*. Filmen er en del av [Dora] Garcías utstilling, og den beskriver lesesirkelen, som fortsatt holder på 31 år etter starten. [...] Det fine med *Finnegans Wake* er at alle stiller på like fot. Det betyr intet om man er professor eller hattemaker, for ingen skjønner noen ting, og ingen tolkninger er gale." (*Morgenbladet* 24. – 30. april 2015 s. 50-51)

Den kanadiske journalisten og forfatteren Malcolm Gladwells bok *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (2000) gir bl.a. en forklaring på hvorfor noen bøker blir bestselgere. Et eksempel hos Gladwell er den

amerikanske forfatteren Rebecca Wells' roman *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood* (1996). "[T]he San Francisco area is home to one of the country's strongest book-group cultures, and from the beginning *Ya-Ya* was what publishers refer to as a "book-group book." It was the kind of emotionally sophisticated, character-driven, multi-layered novel that invites reflection and discussion, and book groups were flocking to it. The groups of women who were coming to Wells's readings were members of reading groups, and they were buying extra copies not just for family and friends but for other members of their group. And because *Ya-Ya* was being talked about and read in groups, the book itself became that much stickier. It's easier to remember and appreciate something, after all, if you discuss it for two hours with your best friends. It becomes a social experience, an object of conversation. *Ya-Ya*'s roots in book-group culture tipped it into a larger word-of-mouth epidemic. Wells says that at the end of readings, during the question-and-answer session, women in the audience would tell her, "We've been in a book group for two years, and then we read your book and something else happened. It started to drop down to a level of sharing that was more like friendship. They told me that they had started going to the beach together, or having parties at each other's houses." Women began forming *Ya-Ya Sisterhood* groups of their own, in imitation of the group described in the book, and bringing Wells pictures of their group for her to sign. Wesley's Methodism spread like wildfire through England and America because Wesley was shuttling back and forth among hundreds and hundreds of groups, and each group was then taking his message and making it even stickier. The word about *Ya-Ya* was spreading in the same way, from reading group to reading group, from *Ya-Ya* group to *Ya-Ya* group and from one of Wells's readings to another, because for over a year she stopped everything else and toured the country nonstop. The lesson of *Ya-Ya* and John Wesley is that small, close-knit groups have the power to magnify the epidemic potential of a message or idea." (Gladwell sitert fra <http://www.fspcol.com/>; lesedato 30.07.14)

"Forlagene er nå svært bevisst på det potensialet som ligger i å bruke lesesirkler til å skape såkalte *whisper books*, eller hviskebøker – bøker som *Ya-Ya-jentenes hemmelige nedtegnelser* og *Kaptein Corellis mandolin*, som ble bestselgere etter at ryktet om dem hadde spredt seg til tross for at de hadde bare begrensede markedsføringsbudsjetter og fikk lite oppmerksomhet i mediene da de først ble utgitt." (Riel, Fowler og Downes 2011 s. 194)

"Ifølge New York Times fins det nå mellom fire og fem millioner bokgrupper i USA. Mange er ledet av en profesjonell bokgruppeleder. Nye romaner, som håper å appellere til bokgruppelesere, har samtale spørsmål trykket bakerst i boka." (*Dagbladet Magasinet* 7. februar 2009 s. 55)

I USA har det foregått "online reading of David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest* by a group who called their undertaking of his unwieldy and profound novel from June through August of the year the author passed away "Infinite Summer" (Coscarelli

2009). This movement's taking place online and not live and in print suggests the compatibility of serious reading discussions with popular social media. [...] One of the 154 topics introduced by readers on the forum, for example, received 41 replies to a post on "Movie Adaptations of *Infinite Jest*." The critical discussion that ensued ranged from speculation about which directors could possibly pull off such a feat – David Lynch, Terry Gilliam, and the Coen Brothers topped the list – in terms of the resonance of their aesthetic with that of Wallace's, a concern problematized by the translation of his seemingly unfilmable and unwieldy narrative into a motion picture. The difficulty of such a project raised the question of what specifically in Wallace's novel could speak to its essence on film, releasing a tide of suggestions on which parts of the novel were indispensable and which could be omitted. Indeed, the seemingly profound and intractable incompatibility between Wallace's work and the medium of film presented readers with a conceptual challenge they embraced as an occasion to immerse themselves in the finer points of the novel. [...] They create Google maps that display the GPS coordinates of where individual members are reading" (David Dowling i <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/8/2/000180/000180.html>; lesedato 10.02.17).

“Da opptøyene brøt ut i Ferguson i USA, ble vinduene på alle bygningene i hovedgaten knust. Bortsett fra biblioteket til Scott Bonner. [...] Urolighetene i Ferguson begynte etter at den unge, svarte og ubevæpnede mannen Michael Brown ble skutt og drept av politiet 9. august 2014. Da barneskolen stengte i byen i halvannen uke, hjalp Bonner noen frivillige å åpne en provisorisk skole i biblioteket. [...] - Noe av problemet når vi snakker om rase i USA, er at vi har flere samtaler om rase mellom folk som ikke deler virkelighetsoppfatning. Det er den hvite og den svarte samtalen – den rike og den fattige. Alle snakker forbi hverandre. Dermed oppsto ideen om skape et forum der folk kunne få et felles språk og ha mer meningsfylte samtaler. Litt over 20 mennesker er med [...] [i lesesirkelen Readings on Race] – vanligvis regner bibliotekarene seg heldige om det er fire stykker som møter opp. Noen ser på seg selv som hvite, noen har mørk hud. Gruppen har både fattige, rike, folk som protesterte og folk som støttet politiet da det sto på som verst. [...] [Lesesirkelen] har lest James Baldwin og Ta-Nehisi Coates. Sakprosa og polemikk. Men også journalistikk om det som skjedde i Ferguson og forskningsartikler. Snart skal de lese kommisjonsrapporten om Ferguson.” (*Morgenbladet* 29. januar – 4. februar 2016 s. 44-45)

“Lesesirklene kan utgjøre en utømmelig ressurs i forbindelse med leser-til-leser-kampanjer og regelmessige “dette velger lesesirkelen”-utstillinger i biblioteket. [...] Flere britiske bibliotek som har en lesercentrert tilnærming, har ordninger der lånerne kan utveksle kommentarer om det de har lest gjennom oppslagstavler for leserne (reader's noticeboard) eller kommentarslipper i bøkene.” (Riel, Fowler og Downes 2011 s. 198)

Mange skjønnlitterære tekster berører livet i lesesirkler, f.eks. Elizabeth Nobles roman *Lesesirkelen* (på norsk 2006). Hendelser i lesesirkler står sentralt i filmer

som Robin Swicords *The Jane Austen Book Club* (2007). I denne filmen finner fem kvinner og en mann sammen i en lesesirkel samtidig som de representerer seks romanfigurer fra Austens romaner. I *Midsomer Murders*-filmene er episoden *Market for Murder* viet mord i en lesesirkel.

Spillefilmen *Dead Poets Society* (1989; regissert av Peter Weir), med den ukonvensjonelle læreren John Keating som hovedperson, kom på kino i Tyskland i 1990 og førte til at flere lesesirkler ble etablert, noen med navnet Dead Poets Society (Putzer-Maier 2018 s. 27). I filmen danner en gruppe gutter på en konservativ privatskole sin egen leseforening som en slags protest mot skolesystemet.

I Todd Fields film *Little Children* (2006) er det en scene fra en lesesirkel der de kvinnelige deltakerne diskuterer Gustave Flauberts roman *Madame Bovary* (1857). Hovedpersonen Sarah og en annen kvinne i lesesirkelen har helt forskjellige oppfatninger om romanen. Sarah oppfatter *Madame Bovary* nesten som en feministisk tekst, fordi Emma bevarer trassen i seg og lengselen etter et bedre liv, slik hun selv oppfatter det gode liv. Sarah er selv en ung, gift kvinne som har en datter og likevel føler en stor tomhet i tilværelsen sin. Også Sarah blir utro og vil flykte med elskeren. Hennes forsvar for Emma blir indirekte et forsvar for hennes egne valg. Og hennes analyse fungerer som et frampek. Den andre unge kvinnen i lesesirkelen framstilles som en svært konvensjonell, borgerlig kvinne. Hun forakter Emma for å gjøre kontroversielle valg som bryter med borgerlige normer.

“En bokring kan enklest beskrives som en lesesirkel som ikke har møter. Hver enkelt medlem i bokringen – det vanligste er tre-fire personer per bokring – velger ut en bok, skriver om den og videresender bøkene til de andre i ringen i et system som organiseres av bibliotekets ansatte. [...] Eit e-postbasert bokring-prosjekt ved hovudbiblioteket i København kan illustrere korleis ein kan gjere det beste ut av både digitale og fysiske kampanjar. Bokring-konseptet vart utvikla av Opening the Book for å utnytte det faktum at bibliotekbøkene vert overleverte frå ein lesar til ein annan. Bokringane er laga for dei som ønskjer inspirasjon til lesinga og ei kjensle av å vere knytt til andre lesarar utan komplikasjonane med å måtte møte folk dei ikkje veit om dei vil like. Biblioteka fungerer som formidlar og gjer det mogleg for dei einskilde lesarane å byte bøker og utveksle synsmåtar anonymt” (Riel, Fowler og Downes 2011 s. 209 og 230).

Norske lesesirkler

Det finnes mange “tradisjonelle” lesesirkler i Norge. Dessuten har Den norske bokklubben på sine nettsider prøvd å skape et forum for lesesirkler. Den 21. april 2008 lå denne teksten uten på nettsidene (www.bokklubben.no/lesesirkel):

“Del din leseopplevelse med andre! Alle bokklubbmedlemmer er glade i å lese bøker. Det blir enda morsommere når du kan dele leseopplevelsen med andre.

Bokklubbens lesesirkel er et gratistilbud til deg som er medlem. Her kan du komme i kontakt med andre lesere for å diskutere bøkene. Du finner lesetips og diskusjonstema til din egen lesesirkel. Her er også utdypende informasjon om bøkene, nettmøter med forfatterne og konkurranser. Vi sender jevnlig ut nyhetsmail med nye boktips. [...]

Tips for lesesirkler

1. Det første og viktigste tipset er at dere selv vet best hvordan dere vil ha det! De neste tipsene må derfor leses med dette i tankene
2. Begynn med å samle venner og bekjente som liker å lese. Gruppen kan bestå av fire medlemmer, men gjerne flere. Det er ikke alle som rekker innom hver gang
3. Finn ut hvilke bøker dere liker. Er det spesielle forfattere eller sjangere dere er opptatt av? Bruk dette som et utgangspunkt for å diskutere hvilke titler dere skal velge. Dere vil også finne mange gode lesetips – med tilhørende spørsmål til diskusjon – på bokklubben.no/lesesirkel
4. Ha faste tider, slik at dere sikrer en viss fremdrift uten at det blir stress. Mange synes ett møte i måneden er passende, mens andre synes det holder med annen hver måned. Sett av datoene god tid i forveien, slik at flest mulig kan delta
5. Ta gjerne utgangspunkt i konkrete spørsmål i diskusjonen. Alle bør notere seg diskusjonsemner mens de leser. I tillegg finner dere diskusjonstips på bokklubben.no/lesesirkel
6. Er det noe dere er veldig uenige om, eller lurer på, eller vil formidle interessant funn dere har gjort? På bokklubben.no/lesesirkel kan dere sende inn spørsmål og innspill til et diskusjonsforum. Her treffer dere andre som har diskutert de samme bøkene
7. Lag gjerne litt mat, vin og kos til klubben. Men la det ikke bli for ambisiøst. Da ender det opp som en gourmetklubb, og det kan gi prestasjonsangst
8. Vær åpne for alle innspill! Ikke vær redd for å si det du mener om en bok. En bok er et åpent rom, der mange tolkninger er mulige. Det finnes ingen fasitsvar!

[...] I løpet av Bokklubbens Lesesirkels levetid har vi hatt mange konkurranser hvor vinnerne har fått lov til å møte forfattere. Her er en oversikt over tidligere vinnere: På Verdens bokdag, den 23. april 2007, fikk Heidi Lundquist på Skarnes – og hennes lesesirkel TORA – besøk av Tove Nilsen [...]. Liv Haaland fra Hommersåk og hennes lesesirkel vant en middag på Theatercaféen med Anne Karin Elstad under Bok i Sentrum høsten 2006.

Les om middagen med Anne Karin Elstad [...] Det ble en uforglemmelig kveld på Theaterkafeen både for lesesirkel og forfatter – sjelden har vel Anne Karin Elstad måtte besvare flere spørsmål å kortere tid! 3-retters middag, favorittforfatteren til bords og en unik mulighet til å få vite mer om forfatteren og bøkene hennes gjorde sitt til at stemningen ble strålende. Praten gikk lett da “bokklubben”, som lesesirkelen fra Stavanger-traktene kaller seg, og Elstad samlet seg rundt bordet. “Hvordan jobber du med research”, “hva sier familiemedlemmene når du skriver om dem i Hjem”, “hvilke forfattere liker du å lese”, var spørsmål som ble stilt. Anne Karin Elstad svarte utfyllende på alle spørsmål og fikk knapt svelget før det neste ble sendt over bordet. Da kvelden var omme hadde damene fått både signerte bøker og ny inspirasjon til lesesirkelen!”

Den norske bokklubben oppfordrer og stimulerer altså til danning av lesesirkler. Et annet eksempel på en litterær institusjon som har satt i gang spesielle tiltak for lesesirkler, er Det Norske Teatret. I 2007 inviterte Det Norske Teatret medlemmer i lesesirkler til teatret. På en flyer fra teatret stod det: “Er du medlem av ein lesesirkel? Står romanen *Få meg på, for faen* av Olaug Nilssen på leseplanen denne hausten? Er du interessert i å sjå boken [sic!] bli teater og treffe dei som står bak framsyninga og på scenen? Onsdag 5. desember inviterer Det Norske Teatret alle lesesirklar til ein eigen lesesirkelteaterkveld.”.

“Harald Fougner, markedsdirektør i Gyldendal [...] [har] merket seg at engelske og amerikanske forlag synes å ha en mer aktiv service for private lesesirkler, ved å for eksempel inkludere forslag til diskusjonsspørsmål til slutt i en del av bøkene de utgir. [...] Denne våren har Aschehoug tatt aktivt i bruk en digital lesesirkelgruppe på Facebook, “Det du bør lese nå”, hvor de hver måned har fremmet en ny, oversatt roman fra sin katalog. Til høsten skal de gjøre det samme med nye norske romaner. Gruppen har per i dag over 2000 medlemmer. [...] trekker frem hvordan de med hver bok har en “lesehjelp” med kapitteloversikt og forslag til hvor mange sider man bør lese i uken for å komme gjennom den.” (Elise Dybvig i *Morgenbladet* 28. august–3. september 2020 s. 42)

Noen lese-/formidlingsprosjekter markedsføres som enorme lesesirkler. På e-postlista biblioteknorge@nb.no ble det 8. mai 2008 informert om at ”Stavangers befolkning har siden påske stemt på hvilken bok hele byen skal lese i kulturhovedstadsåret. Nå er vinneren klar: Det blir Arild Rein: Kaninbyen. Leseprosessen starter under Kapittelfestivalen i september. Til da vil et stort antall eksemplar av boka bli trykket opp og delt ut til byens befolkning. I september og oktober vil det være en rekke arrangement som fokuserer på Kaninbyen og temaer relatert til boka. Målet er at hele byen blir en gigantisk lesesirkel. [...] Stavangers befolkning har blitt oppfordret til å nominere romantitler de ønsker at hele byen skal få anledning til å lese. Blant disse gikk fem titler videre på stemmeantall, mens fem ble avgjort av en ekspertjury. Listen med 10 titler var klar etter påske, og befolkningen ble oppfordret til å stemme på sin favoritt blant disse.”

“Deichmanske biblioteks lesesirkelblogg startet 1. november 2009, og er et alternativ til den vanlige lesesirkelen i biblioteket. Her leser og diskuterer vi en bok hver måned. Vi publiserer også små forfatter-intervjuer, og har sitatkonkurranse med bokpremie hver torsdag klokken 1100. Alt foregår på bloggen lesesirkel.wordpress.com Hvis du vil bli lagt til som bruker på bloggen, kan du sende en mail til litteratur@deichman.no” (fra e-postlista biblioteknorge@nb.no 18.03.10)

“*Lesesirkelnotater* (Schibsted forlag) gir en rekke praktiske tips til hvordan man kan finne eller starte en lesesirkel og man får tips om valg av bøker og hvordan en lesesirkeldiskusjon kan ledes. Boken har også egne sider der man kan samle ønskelister for fremtidig lesestoff, skrive ned konklusjoner fra bokdiskusjoner, notere ned gode bokhandlere, nettsider osv. Boken er delt inn med skilleark, er innbundet i stoff og har en strikk som holder boken lukket. Her er også hendige lommer.” (Bok & samfunn og Notabene bokhandelkjedes gratismagasin *Bokvår*, 2010)

“Drammen lydbokklubb ble startet i 2011 og har som mål å sørge for at medlemmene får lest gode bøker. En god bok karakteriseres ved at vi sammen blir enige om at vi vil lese den til neste gang vi møtes. Klubben består av fem menn med delvis ulike referanserammer, noe vi bestreber oss på at skal gjenspeiles i bokvalgene vi gjør. Vi møtes en gang i måneden for å diskutere bøkene vi leser, men hovedhensikten er likevel at vi faktisk får lest litteratur! Navnet Drammen lydbokklubb ble etablert på april møtet 2013, ettersom vi da ble oppmerksomme på at hele gjengen nesten utelukkende bruker Amazon’s lydboktjeneste *Audible* til å komme oss gjennom bøkene.” (<http://drmlbk.wordpress.com/om/>; lesedato 10.09.13)

I fotballklubben Brann i Bergen hadde i 2008 “ei gruppe av spelarane danna ein lesesirkel. Dei kommenterte at det var med på å skape ein ny type fellesskap, noko som gjer det lettare å dra lasset saman under kampane.” (tidsskriftet *ABM* nr. 2 i 2008 s. 24)

I digitale lesesirkler møtes ikke deltakerne fysisk, og dermed kan terskelen for å møtes bli lavere. Personene kan delta fra sin egen stue. Digitalt går det an å skrive en henvendelse til moderatoren/lederen av lesesirkelen som de andre deltakerne ikke kan lese, f.eks. hvis en av deltakerne føler av noe er ubehagelig. “En annan fördel med digitala bokcirklar är att den som deltar kan välja att vara anonym. [...] Ibland kan det vara lättare för de som deltar att skriva om någon annan har kommenterat före, sedan är det bara att hänga på. Följdfrågor till andras svar kan också stimulera till fler kommentarer. [...] en av fördelarna med digitala bokcirklar är just det faktum att deltagarna kan välja själva hur aktiva de vill vara, det ska vara okej att bara vara en “osynlig deltagare” utan krav på prestation. För den personen kan läsupplevelsen ändå bli större genom att de får ta del av andras frågor och funderingar kring boken. [...] I våra cirklar läser vi varje bok i 4-6 veckor och publicerar diskussionsfrågor cirka en gång per vecka. Deltagarna läser i egen takt,

vi brukar inte bestämma vilka antal sidor som ska vara lästa till ett visst datum. Utöver bokcirkelledarens frågor kan även deltagarna ställa egna frågor. När vi läste Inlandet av Elin Willows så deltog författaren själv genom att både ställa egna frågor och svara på deltagarnas frågor.” (Åza Sjöstam i <https://bokcirklar.se/det-ar-roligt-att-bokcirkla-digitalt/>; lesedato 26.10.22)

“Författerforeningen lyser med dette ut forfatterbesøk til digitale lesesirkler. Åtte skjønnlitterære voksenbokforfattere lånes [i 2021] bort til åtte lesesirkler rundt om i landet. Disse lesesirklene kan gjerne være helt nye og være etablert som direkte resultat av muligheten til “å låne en forfatter” digitalt. Bibliotek med lesesirkler, skoler eller nabolag som oppretter egne lesesirkler kan også søke. DnF velger ut og formidler forfatteren og betaler honoraret, lesesirkelen organiserer møtet. Lesesirkler som har deltatt i prosjektet tidligere er velkomne til å søke igjen.” (<https://forfatter-sentrum.no/lan-en-forfatter/>; lesedato 21.04.22)

Historikk

Lesesirkler er ikke noe nytt fenomen: “The Romans did it, emigrants on board to Australia did it, Schubert and his friends meeting to read and discuss the poems of Heine were doing it. [...]” (Hartley 2001 s. 1) Fenomenet ble særlig kjent fra 1800-tallet av, noe som bl.a. blir tydelig gjennom epokens skjønnlitteratur: “In 1857 Elizabeth Barrett Browning has Aurora Leigh’s strait-laced ‘cage-bird’ aunt belonging to a ‘book-club’ which guards her ‘from your modern trick / Of shaking dangerous questions from the crease’ (*Aurora Leigh*, book I, lines 302-3). Edith Warton’s turn-of-the-century ladies who lunch deal in desperate games of one-upmanship in her short story ‘Xingu’, and P.G. Wodehouse has a terrific time with Mrs Willoughby Smethhurst’s pompous suburban literary society in ‘The Clicking of Cuthbert’ ” (Hartley 2001 s. 137).

“Mot slutet av 1800-talet började framförallt nykterhetsrörelsen och arbetarrörelsen [i Sverige] på allvar att fokusera på bildningsfrågan. År 1902 introducerade nykterhetsorganisationen IOGT:s riksstudieledare Oscar Olsson den metod för folkbildningsarbete som byggde på självbildning knuten till små lokala studiegrupper som han kallade *studiecirklar*. Grundprinciperna för cirkelarbetet var enkla: varje cirkel valde och inköpte vid verksamhetsårets början lika många böcker som medlemmar. Böckerna vandrade sedan runt i gruppen som regelbundet träffades för att samtala och reflektera över det lästa. Gruppen utsåg inom sig en studieledare och verksamheten skulle fungera som ett forum för ett aktivt kunskapssökande och en kunskapsutveckling i demokratisk samverkan mellan alla deltagare. Efter verksamhetsårets slut samlades böckerna till ett studiecirkelbibliotek. Studiecirkeln blev snabbt den dominerande studieformen inom de nya folkrörelsernas bildningsarbete och var avgörande för att detta utvecklades till en massrörelse i Sverige. [...] Olssons ursprungliga idéer kring studiecirkeln innebar att skönlitteraturen hade en central roll. Deltagarna skulle söka sig fram med den skönlitterära boken som det väsentliga bildningsmedlet och i praktiken kom

verksamheten nog att uppvisa många likheter med hur bokcirkelar arbetar idag. Olssons fria, processinriktade bildningsideal trängdes dock undan ganska snart inom de nya studieförbunden, till förmån för en mera målinriktad och planmässig studiecirkelverksamhet baserad på ämnesstudier, studieplaner och läroböcker samt en lärare i mera traditionell mening. Skönlitterärt inriktade studiecirkelar fanns fortfarande men i alltmera begränsad omfattning, under beteckningen *litteraturcirkelar*” (Kerstin Rydbeck i <http://bada.hb.se/bitstream/2320/12324/1/Libraries.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.14).

“Skönlitteraturens försämrade ställning inom studieförbunden illustreras väl av statistik från ABF – Arbetarnas bildningsförbund. Här utgjorde de skönlitterärt inriktade cirkelarna verksamhetsåret 1919/20 den ojämförligt största gruppen, med 48 procent. Därefter gick det snabbt nedåt, tio år senare hade de sjunkit till 10 procent och i slutet av seklet, 1992, utgjorde de mindre än en halv procent – även om det samtidigt måste konstateras att antalet bokcirkelar trots allt var betydligt större nu, eftersom volymen på studieförbundens cirkelverksamhet totalt sett ökat så mycket. (Johansson, 1995) Inom studieförbunden sammanställdes tidigt statistik över cirkelverksamheten, eftersom den tjänade som underlag för fördelningen av de statsbidrag som infördes redan på 1910-talet. Härigenom går det att få en relativt god bild av den studieförbundsanknutna bokcirkelverksamhetens kvantitativa omfattning och hur den utvecklats över tid. Parallellt med att studieförbunden utvecklade sin verksamhet under 1900-talets första hälft växte även de kommunala folkbiblioteken fram. Folkbiblioteken tycks emellertid länge ha haft en marginell roll som organisatörer av bokcirkelar, vilket idag kanske kan tyckas förvånande. Först efter millennieskiftet 2000 har biblioteken börjat driva bokcirkelar i större omfattning.” (Kerstin Rydbeck i <http://bada.hb.se/bitstream/2320/12324/1/Libraries.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.14)

I dag foregår noen lesersirkler på Internett, uten at personene møtes fysisk. “In the UK Bradford Libraries, pioneers in the field, launced a site in spring 1999 for ten virtual reading groups, attracting readers from all over the world.” (Hartley 2001 s. 4) Noen foregår også via TV: “Reading groups famously went mass media in 1996 in America with Oprah’s Book Club, one of the most staggering phenomena in the history of collective reading. The talkshow host Oprah Winfrey announced that she wanted to ‘get the country reading’, and she seems to have done just that. Each month she chooses a book, and a month later half a show is devoted to discussing it. The show receives as many as 10,000 letters each month from people eager to participate. By the time the segment appears, 500,000 viewers have read at least part of the book. Nearly as many buy the book in the weeks that follow. This approach has made Winfrey the most successful pitch person in the history of publishing. Since its debut in 1996, Oprah’s Book Club has been responsible for 28 consecutive bestsellers. It has sold more than 20m [= 20 millioner] books and made many of its authors millionaires. It has earned publishers roughly \$175m ... a vast experiment in linked literary imagination and social engineering. Toni Morrison calls it ‘a revolution’, because Winfrey’s rapport with the camera cuts across class

and race. The effect on the nation's reading habits has been palpable: Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* sold as many copies in six weeks as in the previous nine years." (Hartley 2001 s. 4-5)

"No single person gets more credit for the book club boom than talk-show host Oprah Winfrey, who founded an on-the-air book club in 1995, recommending one book a month for her viewers and holding periodic book discussion meetings on the show. Since that time, Oprah's Book Club has sparked the sale of tens of millions of books – and made a lasting contribution to our national literacy. The broadcasting of book club meetings has opened a window into a world that Oprah's audience might never have seen. These on-air discussions usually feature a handful of lucky viewers who have written in about the book, nominating themselves for the taping, along with Oprah and the book's author (who typically keeps quiet during the first phase of the discussion). [...] The meetings are held in Oprah's Chicago apartment, in restaurants, and other cozy locations, and they are casual, spontaneous, free-ranging. Far from being a dry, academic exercise with right answers and grades, these are informal, lively gatherings where everyone can speak their mind – but no one is forced to perform. It isn't unusual to see group members weep over a passage in a book, pass the tissues, hug one another, sit through a long silence, shout disagreements, or laugh uproariously. The sessions not only make you want to join a book club, but show you how to act when you get there: how to take turns, how to build on other people's ideas, how to use specific passages in the book to back up your interpretations, and scores of other discussion skills that are used by adults in effective book clubs." (Harvey Daniels i <https://lib.sk/dl/810137/1e6bfb?dsourc=recommend; lesedato 02.06.21>)

På slutten av 1800-tallet etablerte fire eldre kvinner i London en lesesirkel der de traff hverandre en gang per uke for å diskutere det de hadde lest. Etter deres død ble gravsteinene deres plassert slik i forhold til hverandre som de hadde sittet rundt bordet når de snakket om leseopplevelsene sine (Putzer-Maier 2018 s. 28).

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

Alle artiklene i leksikonet er tilgjengelig på <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no>