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Klisjé

“En klisjé er et uttrykk som er så velkjent og velbrukt at det har mistet sin originalitet. I stedet framstår klisjeen som forslitt og uoriginal, og begrepet er ofte negativt ladd. Ordet stammer fra trykkekunsten, hvor en klisjé var en plate som ble brukt til å lage gjentatte framstillinger av ett og samme motiv. På samme måte kan den språklige klisjeen sies å representere gjenbruk av en etablert uttrykksmåte.” (Claudi 2010 s. 85) Klisjeen er ofte det første som faller oss inn når vi skal beskrive eller karakterisere noe.

“Betydningen er oprindelig metaforisk, hentet fra typografernes tryk-plade til bilder. Dvs.: En sammensatt meddelelse uttrykkes med ét hurtigt præfabrikeret middel” (Lars Brink i *Språknytt* nr. 1 i 2018 s. 14).

“A cliché is a saying, idea, or element of artistic work that is overused in a culture to the point of losing its original, more significant, meaning. Clichés often are annoying to a listener or reader in that they display a lack of originality on the part of the speaker or writer. Some clichés are also examples of idiom that are simply far too commonly used in the language. The word cliché comes from French, and it is an onomatopoeic word for the sound of using a metal printing plate.

Interestingly, this printing plate was also known as a stereotype. Thus, the definition of cliché comes from the idea that the printing plates printed the same words repeatedly. [...] There are two main ways in which clichés are significant in literature in positive ways. The first is that many of our common, overused phrases actually come from works of literature. This is especially the case with phrases that William Shakespeare created, which are now repeated ad nauseum. [...] The other way that an author may use a cliché example on purpose is in dialogue to show a character’s triteness, or perhaps even for humorous effect. If an author writes a cliché knowingly, at times this may be a wink at the audience that the author is using tired conventions and perhaps playing off of them. This could be an effective usage of cliché in parody, for example.” (<http://www.literarydevices.com/cliche/>; lesedato 31.03.16)

“A cliché is a tired, stale phrase or idiom that, because of overuse, has lost its impact. What was once a fresh way of looking at something has become a weak

prop for writing that feels unimaginative and dull. Clichés are what you write when you don't have the energy or inspiration to think of a new way to express an idea. George Orwell in his Rules of Writing said: "Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print." Be creative and come up with something fresh. A new analogy or metaphor will make much more of an impression on your readers than a dusty old cliché." (<https://prowritingaid.com/art/306/What-is-a-Clich%C3%A9--And-Why-Should-You-Avoid-Them.aspx>; lesedato 27.09.16)

"Iblant går det fort i svingene (klisjé) for journalister, og vi ender opp med å bruke forslitte fraser (klisjé). Men klisjeer i språket er slapp journalistikk, og noen ganger bruker vi dem så lettvent at det blir feil. [...] Klisjeer er velkjente uttrykk vi tyr til i utrensmål, gjerne uten å tenke gjennom dem. Når en frase er brukt så mange ganger at man ikke lenger tenker gjennom den, er den også tømt for mening. I beste fall får klisjeer språket til å virke flatt og forutsigbart. I verste fall får det leseren til å stanse opp i teksten og/eller miste tilliten til journalisten. [...] Men vi bør likevel etterstrebe å skrive artikler så fritt for klisjeer som mulig. På det forfengelige plan kan vi si at teksten blir mer elegant uten klisjeer. Men viktigere er det at leseren lettere oppfatter budskapet om vi bruker ord og uttrykk som er fylt med mening, ikke tømt for innhold." (Sesselja Bigseth i <http://frilansliv.blogspot.no/2007/11/klisjeer-i-sprket.html>; lesedato 20.06.16)

"Det synes hevet over tvil at det neppe kan oppstå enighet om hva som er klisjeer, og hva som ikke er det. "Alle" skriveføre er samtidig enige om at klisjeer bør unngås. Men hva med oss andre? Hvorfor skal vi unngå dem, hvis de beskriver situasjoner og stemninger som vekker følelser i oss, og som vi kanskje kan hente styrke fra når det blåfrer i livets gardiner? Når det stormer som verst, når livet går oss imot, når vi har stor b r   b re, kan kanskje glimtet av en elg i solnedgang eller et slitent poprefreng v re det som f r oss til   l fte blikket og fatte nytt mot. Det som nok kjennetegner klisjeene mer enn noe annet, er at vi alle kan kjenne oss igjen i dem. Klisjeen uttrykker noe fellesmenneskelig, noe vi har hatt med oss i uminnelige tider. Kanskje er det derfor de er s  upopul re hos enkelte, fordi de signaliserer at den som bruker dem, er et gjennomsnittsmenneske? Noen ganger er det vel nettopp d t vi helst vil v re." (John E. B. Lindgren i *Spr knytt* nr. 3 i 2017 s. 5)

"Der kan siges mindst  n god ting om klich en. Den er en fin m de at signalere en venlig og beroligende indstilling p . [...] n r jeg h rer en klich , ved jeg, at min n ste er venligtsindet og uden farlige budskaber." (Lars Brink i *Spr knytt* nr. 1 i 2018 s. 15)

"[W]riters often use clich s in their first drafts and that's fine. Taking the time to think of a better metaphor can interrupt writing flow. When you switch to editing mode, go back to those clich s and brainstorm for inventive new ideas. A good writer may create and reject over a dozen images before finding the right one, so

don't worry if it takes you a while. [...] So how can you tell when you're using a cliché? One method is to slowly read your work out loud and try to develop mental pictures of your content. Are your points specific and clear, or do some ideas appear vague? If so, you might have used a cliché. Another technique is to analyze each sentence to see if what you wrote is likely to have appeared in anyone else's work. Since no one has the same experiences as you, your work should express your unique voice and your individual thoughts." (<https://prowritingaid.com/art/306/What-is-a-Clich%C3%A9--And-Why-Should-You-Avoid-Them.aspx>; lesedato 27.09.16)

En gammel tekst kan få klisjépreg hvis leseren glemmer at teksten er den historiske originalen og opprinnelsen til de senere klisjeene. Hva som oppleves som en klisjé eller ikke, er dessuten subjektivt, avhengig av leseerfaringer osv. Alle klisjeer har en gang vært nye uttrykk, beskrivelser osv.

“Some American buying their very first issue of a Japanese manga might find it new and unique, but in the home country of Japan, the same manga may not be considered unique. A person playing their first Role-Playing Game might not realize the Mysterious Waif is far from original. Even then, just through Popcultural Osmosis or a sort of “sixth sense”, people not familiar with the cliché might be able to spot it as such. In spite of the negative stigma, many clichés are fully accepted by the audience, for the same reason as something formulaic works: *because* of its familiarity. The sheer number of Police Procedurals, Medical Dramas, and Romance Novels with summaries that are practically interchangeable exist because people like them anyway, as they ignore the clichés and instead focus on the great stories and characters. [...] Expressions such as “the early bird gets the worm” and “raining cats and dogs” [...] clichés mutate over time and iterations. One person might say “The early bird gets the worm, but who wants worms?” or “It’s raining cats and frogs!” [...] Cliché Storm – When a work has numerous tropes with a definite pattern. [...] Troperiffic – When a work has fun with playing numerous tropes with a definite pattern.” (<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/Cliche>; lesedato 04.10.16)

“Clichés are expressions that either have a general meaning or have “lost their meaning” over time. These overused phrases do not provide a specific meaning or image. You are probably familiar with many of them, although you might find it difficult to pinpoint their exact definition. Some are idioms, where the figurative meaning of a group of words is different from the literal definition. For example, “The devil is in the details” should hopefully not be taken literally! Other clichés may once have possessed a precise meaning that made them creative metaphors, but they have now lost their edge because that specific definition has been forgotten or dulled through overuse. “Survival of the fittest” once evoked Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution through natural selection. Because readers have largely lost this unique context, the phrase has also lost the specificity which may have once made it a potent metaphor. Clichés can also obscure fully-developed ideas by serving as

placeholders for a more sophisticated discussion. Clichés lack specificity and complexity; therefore, they do not make distinctive or memorable contributions to your writing. [...] Clichés are usually not acceptable in academic writing, although some may be effective in daily conversation and less formal writing. [...] Clichés make you seem boring. By using a cliché, you're telling your reader that you lack originality, making them want to yawn and stop reading [...] Clichés make you lose credibility. Your reader will not trust you as an authoritative source if you can't come up with a better description than a cliché." (<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/cliches/>; lesedato 28.10.16)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Leslie Jameson "siterer Milan Kundera: "Kitsch rører oss til tårer over oss selv, over at det vi tenker og føler, er så banalt". - Det minner om hvordan noen, særlig kunstnere og skribenter, forakter klisjeer, forakter det som allerede er blitt sagt, setninger som føles som talemåter eller situasjoner som virker for velkjente. Noe av det er frykt for det faktum at så mye har blitt følt før, satt ord på før, tusenvis av ganger." (*Dagbladet* 13. januar 2015 s. 32) Det som allerede har vært sagt tusen ganger før, er en "frase-sump" (Karl Kraus).

Umberto Eco skriver i essayet "Casablanca, eller klisjeene holder fest" (1994): "To klisjeer får oss til å le. Hundre klisjeer gjør oss beveget. Vi aner svakt at klisjeene snakker *seg imellom*, og feirer en gjenforening." – "Two clichés make us laugh but a hundred clichés move us because we sense dimly that the clichés are talking among themselves, celebrating a reunion. Just as the extreme of pain meets sensual pleasure, and the extreme of perversion borders on mystical energy, so too the extreme of banality allows us to catch a glimpse of the Sublime." (Eco i Mathijs og Mendik 2008 s. 74)

"Da jeg første gang hørte, at NN hadde *begået en bog*, lo jeg høyt; det var ukendt og dermed ingen kliché for mig. Men dét blev det hurtigt. Jeg bryder mig stadig ikke om det, men må erkende, at det nu er blevet så almindeligt, at mange danskere med garanti ikke tilsigter nogen stil-effekt med det." (Lars Brink i *Språknytt* nr. 1 i 2018 s. 15)

"Clichés to Avoid – Or Reconstruct [...] While romance novels aren't always as clichéd as their critics claim, there are still some clichés that linger. Just because something is clichéd, that doesn't mean it won't sell – many of these clichés can be found on the new arrival shelves. [...]"

The Evil Other Woman

The Evil Other Woman (E.O.W.) is a species that shows up in all genres of romance, and in settings both contemporary and historical. As you might guess, she is often the former (or in some cases current!) mistress of the hero, or failing that, she is an acquaintance or employee of the hero who secretly lusts after him. The E.O.W. is prone to fits of jealousy, and when the heroine steps into the picture, the

E.O.W. extends her claws and attacks. In many books, the E.O.W. even creates the contrivances that drive the hero and the heroine apart.

Are there ways to make the E.O.W. trope new and fresh? Well, why does she have to be evil all the time? After all, what does it say about the hero if he consistently dates (or hires) evil women? Surely he should have better taste than that, not to mention common sense. Also, keep in mind that many readers hate the E.O.W. cliché because the E.O.W. is so frequently presented as a strong, assertive woman, while the heroine is meek and unassuming. To see what a great writer can do with a potentially clichéd character, read Anne Stuart's *To Love a Dark Lord*. In that book, Lady Barbara Fitzhugh appeared to be the mistress of the hero, but the truth is much more complex, and thus makes a better story.

The Evil Ex-Wife

A subspecies of the Evil Other Woman is the hero's evil ex-wife. In most books, she is no longer on the scene. Like Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca*, she may even be dead. However, she still influences the plot because she was an evil manipulative grasping nasty (get the picture?) woman who made the hero's life miserable. In return, the hero trapped in this cliché returns the favor by making the life of the heroine miserable. His ex-wife was evil, so all women must be evil, and he must remind the poor heroine of this at every turn.

But wait! *Rebecca* was a classic. So what sets most of these books apart from *Rebecca*? Well, for one thing, while Max DeWinter is haunted by his marriage, he doesn't hate all women because of his experience with Rebecca. Though he and his wife sometimes have their share of tense moments, he doesn't spend the entire novel accusing her of having an affair with his estate manager, Frank Crawley. Like Daphne Du Maurier, inject your heroes with inner strength, common sense, and personality. That way, they will be people both your heroines and your readers can easily fall in love with.

Evil Relatives

Romance heroes and heroines can face nasty, evil relatives ranging from manipulative overbearing mothers to avaricious stepbrothers. It's hard to imagine how they can cope with living in such dysfunctional families, yet they put up with these Relatives from Hell for years, or at least until they end up in the plot of a romance novel. Most unbelievable of all are the heroes and heroines who have lived with these evil relatives for all their life and yet never realized they were greedy, deceitful, or even psychotic. That smacks of the TSTL (too stupid to live) character.

Evil relatives can be a powerful part of a romance plot. A heroine who is bullied or coerced by a greedy relative can quickly gain reader sympathy – we all understand

what it feels like to be in that position. However, relatives who exist for nothing else but to make the plot move along and have no personality are like empty boxes of chocolate – they look great until you realize there’s nothing inside. Ask yourself if your evil relatives have to be so very evil. In real families, good people clash, but that doesn’t mean that one side or the other is necessarily evil. Even if you decide to put evil relatives in your story, that doesn’t mean they can’t be interesting. Evil relatives deserve love, too.

The Country Mouse Theme

This is a cute name for an often annoying story – one that is very prevalent in series romances. Almost always, it goes like this: The heroine lives in the city, but she visits the country and meets the rough-hewn hero. He, of course, thinks all city women are vain and weak and scared of horses, but she proves herself by working on his ranch/farm/feed lot. Eventually, she learns to like the country (or small town), and he learns that she is nothing like his ex-wife, who deserted him for the big city the moment she got dust on her black pumps.

There are several reasons this plot often falls flat, and many of them involve big misunderstandings. On top of that, these stories are rarely about the *true* version of rural America. They are, instead, about a pastoral wonderland where the neighbors are either cute, eccentric yokels or cruel gossips. They never acknowledge the real problems of modern day rural life, and to make matters worse, “city folk” are also painted with a broad brush.

So does that mean you can’t write stories with this plot? Not at all. However, be aware of what has been done before. Put your own touch on those “country mouse” stories. Do you like living in the country? Then present a truer picture of rural life. Do you prefer the city? Then consider writing a “country mouse” story in reverse, where the hero moves to the big city and learns to fit in.

The Naive Virginal Heroine

As the novels of Diana Palmer will attest, there are still fans of naive, virginal heroines. However, many readers are getting fed up with this type of character. So what’s wrong with the virginal heroine? Like so many other clichés, what’s wrong is that these heroines are so prevalent and often so alike. These heroines are often virgins not because of a moral choice but because they were burned by a bad relationship. Just as bad are the “near virgins” – heroines who had sexual experiences but never enjoyed it until the hero came along.

If you want to write about a virginal heroine, then do so. Many readers will be grateful. However, avoid the trap of making her innocent of sexuality, sweet, adorable, and kind to animals on top of that. Virgin or not, a contemporary heroine should be aware of her body – after all, we live in an era where sex can kill. Even

in the past, most women were aware of the physical aspects of sexuality, unless they were extremely well sheltered. Also, try to give your heroine a better reason for retaining her virginity.

The Duke of Slut

[...] He is usually paired with the naive virginal heroine. Because in true cliché form, although he has known nothing but harlots, only the naive virginal heroine can tame him. Suddenly, the rakish hero can no longer enjoy the pleasures of philandering, so he settles down with that one special woman.

This story line wouldn't seem so bad if the heroes were believable. Often, it's hard to accept that these heroes are ready to reform or that, if they did decide to settle down, they would do so with a virginal heroine. Some aren't even believable as rakes. Some aren't even true rakes, giving rise to the term "the fake rake" – the hero who was unfairly classified as a reprobate. This is not to say that heroes can't be experienced. Rakish heroes who reform are extremely popular, in both historical and contemporary romances. These stories can be quite complex, as in Mary Balogh's *The Notorious Rake*, Carla Kelly's *Reforming Lord Ragsdale*, or Patricia Gaffney's *To Have and To Hold*. Readers also love charming rakes such as the heroes in Stephanie Laurens' popular *Bar Cynster* series.

The Will Stipulation

All too often, the hero and heroine of a romance novel are thrown together because of a stipulation in the will of a well-meaning relative, usually in an attempt at matchmaking behind the grave. They are often forced to marry, or forced to work together, or forced to manage a business together. If they fail, the inheritance will go to an undeserving relative. However, readers tend to roll their eyes at this contrivance – especially when it's used in contemporary novels. Many readers are finding it harder and harder to believe that a relative would write a will with such a stipulation.

Many popular books use will contrivances, such as Rachel Gibson's *Truly, Madly Yours* (a contemporary romance) and *Courting Julia* by Mary Balogh (a Regency romance). Will stipulations can be a fun way to push characters together. However, instead of a will stipulation, why not find another way for matchmaking relatives to push them together? For one thing, relatives don't have to be dead to turn into matchmakers, and living relatives working behind the scenes can make more interesting characters than dead relatives working from beyond the grave.

Amnesia Plots

Just like soap operas, romance novels also have their fair share of amnesia plots. These are particularly popular in series romance, although they appear in other

subgenres as well, from historical romances to romantic suspense. There's only one problem – amnesia has turned up so often in romances that some readers think there's an amnesia virus on the loose in romance novels. Also, most romance novel cases of amnesia are about as unrealistic as the episode of *The Addam's Family* where Gomez lost his memory after being clubbed on the head.

Amnesia can be a powerful story line, and indeed, there have been some great romances with this plot. For example, *Uncommon Vows* by Mary Jo Putney and *Until You* by Judith McNaught. Before writing a book with an amnesia plot, ask yourself what the draw of this type of plot is, and then make sure you can bring that element to your story. Many readers love amnesia plots because they bring to life the fantasy of making love for the first time all over again. In romantic suspense, amnesia plots can help make the heroine's dilemma even worse. How does she know whom to trust if she can't even remember her own name?

The Silly Big Misunderstanding

[...] Just as is true in real life, characters *can* have misunderstandings. How they deal with them can decide whether your novel is an emotionally wrenching read or a manipulative one. If your big misunderstanding can be unraveled with a brief discussion, then your plot might have some holes in it. Ask yourself an important question: Are your characters flesh and blood, or are they made of an old sock with plastic eyes glued on? [...]

If you spend a lot of time looking at the romance bookshelves of your local store, you will find a lot of these clichés. In fact, you will find some of them in spades. There are many reasons for this. For one thing, just because a plot is a cliché, that doesn't mean no one wants to read it anymore. However, don't use this as a reason to write your own amnesiac virginal heroine on the ranch book, unless you can make it new and vital.” (Anne Marble i <http://www.writing-world.com/romance/cliches.shtml>; lesedato 03.11.16)

“7 Romantic Cliches Girls Secretly Love [...] Romance novels and romantic comedy films continue to recreate the same old stories year after year, with stereotypical characters and overdone situations. Some of these media clichés are terribly overrated, but here are a few that girls actually want to experience (even if they won't admit it):

1. Stopping everything and staring into each other's eyes

One of the most popular romantic comedy clichés, this scene is usually paired with an exaggerated overture soundtrack and flawless close-up shots. The world completely ceasing to exist around you seems like an impossible wish, but if you do this right, it seems to really happen. [...]

2. Watching the sunset and stargazing [...]
3. Kissing on top of a ferris wheel [= pariserhjul] [...]
4. Having a candlelit dinner [...]
5. Jumping into his (or her) arms and being spun around [...]
6. Being sung to (perhaps with an acoustic guitar) [...]
7. Going on a cliché dinner date

Picture it now: you arrive at her house, all dressed up, ring the door bell, give her flowers, open her car door for her, and take her to a fancy restaurant. This is the most cliché depiction of a date in any novel or film, but it's a great way to show your chivalry to your girl in a classy way. Adventure dates can be fun, but never underestimate the power of a simple dinner out – she secretly loves it every once in a while.

These romantic comedy clichés might appear in every chick flick in theaters, but it's okay to be stereotypical every once in a while.” (Michelle Adams i <https://www.scholarshippoints.com/campuslife/7-romantic-cliches-girls-secretly-love/>; lesedato 14.11.16)

“Alfred, Lord Tennyson was an English poet writing during the Victorian period (i.e., during the reign of Queen Victoria, or 1837-1901). Tennyson was one of the most popular poets of his period and was named poet laureate in 1850 [...] Many of his poems seemed to resonate with readers – people found what he said to seem so universal that lines [...] got taken out of context and repeated until they started to sound cliché.” (<http://www.shmoop.com/break-break-break/>; lesedato 11.11.16)

Tennysons dikt “The Gardener’s Daughter” har “a superfluous ornateness with a deliberate use of rather flat clichés. Tennyson later added a headnote apologizing for the over-richness of the poem’s language, but his apology is hardly to the point. It is not that lines like “She stood, a sight to make an old man young” (l. 140) or phrases like “She, a Rose/ In roses” (ll. 141-42) are too ornate; it is that they are unparticularized. Any emotion they might evoke is completely unfocused. Words like heart and love and rose occur over and over, floating along without a real context, seeking to call forth the most undifferentiated response possible. The poem is, in other words, a deliberate cliché.” (James R. Kincaid i <http://www.victorianweb.org/victorian/authors/tennyson/kincaid/ch9b.html>; lesedato 03.11.16)

Den franske forfatteren Gustave Flaubert ga i 1857 ut *Madame Bovary*, en roman der det bevisst er tatt med mange klisjeer. “Flaubert was intent that every aspect of his novel would ring true to life. He visited the places which he wrote about to make certain that his descriptions were accurate. After he had written the Prefect’s

speech at the agriculture show, a speech very similar to Flaubert's was actually given by a district Prefect: both speeches were filled with the same platitudes and same cliches." (<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/m/madame-bovary/critical-essays/realism-in-madame-bovary>; lesedato 01.11.16) "[D]et er en stor misforståelse å tro at klisjeene utelukker ekte følelser. Dette er et tema allerede i *Madame Bovary*. Flaubert viser at ingen greier seg uten klisjeer, fordi alt språk er fullt av dem. Det betyr likevel ikke, sier han, at vi legger akkurat det samme i klisjeene, eller at et klisjéfyllt uttrykk nødvendigvis er et tegn på overfladiskhet." (professor Per Buvik i *Morgenbladet* 28. juni – 4. juli 2013 s. 40)

"Kirsten Thorups digtsamlinger *Love from Trieste* (1969) og *I dag er det Daisy* (1971) har fremmedopplevelsen som en del af deres form. De er skrevet i et glat og køligt overfladesprog, hvis klicheer og gentagelser giver dem et præg af udvendighed. Men lige under glasuren er der psykiske opløsningsprosesser, jęgtab, sammenbrud, menneskelige forlis." (Skyum-Nielsen 1982 s. 212)

I anmeldelsen av en novellesamling skrev kritikeren Bernhard Ellefsen: "Novellene klarer ikke å trenge gjennom til de eksistensielle betingelsene for familielivet, slik de tilsynelatende har ambisjon om. I stedet sender de klisjeene ut på en ny runde i den litterære sirkusmanesjen." (*Morgenbladet* 27. april – 3. mai 2012 s. 39) Den amerikanske action- og boksefilmen *Hands of Stone* (2016; regissert av Jonathan Jakubowicz) er ifølge anmelder Aksel Kielland nesten bare "satt sammen av sjangerklisjeer og billige triks" (*Dagbladet* 16. september 2016 s. 32).

Fortelleren i tyskeren Daniel Kehlmanns roman *Jeg & Kaminski* (2003; på norsk 2014) er en usympatisk framstilt kunstkritiker som skriver en biografi om en maler ved navn Kaminski. Jeg-fortellerens mål er å bli berømt. Kehlmanns roman er satt sammen av klisjeer fra kunstkritikk og journalistikk, og dette fungerer satirisk rettet mot kunstsektoren (Joch, Mix m.fl. 2009 s. 242).

I diktsamlingen *I stedet for blomster* (2017) tar Arne Borge "i bruk et språk poeter ellers gjerne forsøker å styre unna: Klisjeene. [...] I Borges debutsamling er det tilsynelatende ikke "hans" ord vi leser, men ulike fraser og uttrykk vi til daglig omgis av og strør om oss med uten å tenke videre over det ("på sine premisser", "til å ta og føle på", "det er selvsagt mer komplisert"). Det automatiske og forslitte språket er tatt ut av sammenheng og kjedet sammen i korte strofer: "et episk forløp / det skaper forbrødring – vi må ta debatten / kraft og besluttsomhet – vår sekulære tid – en veldig kort introduksjon / frarøvet grunnfortellinger / det åpner opp for nye muligheter". Hensikten synes klar: Å stille ut dagligspråket i all sin blasse meningsløshet, gjerne ved å sette plattheter og klisjeer sammen på en litt underfundig måte. I diktet over blir for eksempel innholdet i én linje ("frarøvet grunnfortellinger") slått ihjel i den neste – liksom nullet ut – av en enda mer velbrukt frase ("det åpner opp for nye muligheter"). Resultatet er en gjennomgående mistillit til ordene. Dagligspråket er bare en hanglete motor som igjen og igjen kveles av våre smådesperate forsøk på å få den til å føre oss frem,

eventuelt bort (hvor som helst, bare ikke her!). I stedet blir vi stående på stedet hvil, pustende i stadig dårligere luft, uten å få frem det spøtt. Borge minner oss på det innarbeidede språkets tilkortkommenhet, men denne velkjente poetiske øvelsen kan da ikke være alt han har å by på? [...] Klimakrise, fornybarsamfunnet, sekularisering, tradisjonsbevaring, utrydning av arter og atomkrig nevnes, men det er likevel ikke dette det handler om. Snarere er det måten man snakker om disse presserende temaene på, og definisjonsmakten som ligger i den brede og vedtatte språkføringen, diktsamlingen kritiserer.” (*Morgenbladet* 4. – 10. august 2017 s. 43)

Amerikaneren John Harts krimbok *Syndenes forlatelse* (på norsk 2016) “består av en rekke parallellhistorier: Hovedpersonen er den beintøffe politikvinnen Elizabeth, som etterforskes for dobbeltdrapet på to bestialske voldtektsmenn. Samtidig slipper hennes ekskollega og venn, Adrian, ut av fengsel etter å ha sonet 13 år for drapet på sin kone. Alle i politiet hater ham. Men var han egentlig skyldig? To tenåringer – voldtektsofferet Channing og sønnen til et drapsoffer, Gideon – har sentrale biroller i dramaet. En fengselsdirektør – så grusom at det bikker over i parodien – svever som en blodtørstig hauk over det hele. Og selvsagt: I en serie med korte, kursiverte kapitler (jo, takk – en krimklisjé) møter vi en navnløs og hensynsløs kidnapper og seriemorder. Selv om det høres ut som en opphopning av klisjeer, turnerer John Hart dette mylderet av litterære figurer og ulike handlingstråder med sedvanlig eleganse og autoritet. Fremfor alt er det så godt skrevet at jeg, nølende, godtar svakhetene.” (Tom Egeland i *VG* 22. oktober 2016 s. 51)

Den amerikanske forfatteren Brian Panowichs roman *Bull Mountain* (2015) “er en bok jeg gledet meg til å lese etter til dels ekstatiske omtaler, men under lesingen snek det seg inn en skuffelse. For all del: Boken er ikke elendig, og den har sterke partier. Alt i alt blir det likevel for mange klisjeer, for mange unøyaktigheter, for mange stolte dueller og unødvendig brutale drap som synes mindre motivert av karakterenes personlighet enn av hensynet til spenningskurven. Slutten er både usannsynlig, klisjéfyllt og påklistret etter alt mørke som har utfoldet seg ellers.” (Ola A. Hegdal i *Dagens Næringsliv* 2. januar 2016 s. 67)

Martin Campbells science fiction- og actionfilm *Green Lantern* (2011) “bringer ingenting nytt til sjangeren. Manuset er en visnen salat av klisjeer” (anmeldelse i *Dagbladet* 4. august 2011 s. 44).

Den britiske forfatteren og litteraturkritikeren Martin Amis kalte en samling av sine kritikker og essays for *The War Against the Cliché* (2001), “a title that, at once, seeks to elevate (himself) and to challenge (others). Look at my words and despair, he seems to say: you won’t find any ready-made formulation between these hard covers, nothing ordinary, banal or commonplace. So Amis is a self-styled gladiator of language, a warrior of words in daily battle against the forces of mediocrity, as represented by the journalist, the genre writer, the hack biographer and the instant opinion merchant, all of whom he remorselessly slays in this book, until there is

nothing left but their words: bad words, clichéd words.” (<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2001/apr/08/fiction.society>; lesedato 06.01.17)

Bildekunstneren Aune Sand “bryter totalt med ironigenerasjonens uttrykksformer. Å skrive uten å ironisere eller være sarkastisk er umoderne og vanskelig. Å utvikle nye klisjeer for å beskrive begjær og kjærlighet er risikabelt. Det blir lett oppfattet som plumpt eller svulstig. [...] Det er umulig å ikke registrere forakten romanen til Sand [med tittelen *Jordbærmus*] klarer å virvle opp hos kulturdommerne. De sterke reaksjonene handler om mer enn Sand sine romantiske klisjeer. I Norge er kultur-eliten ledet an av misantroper. Vi problematiserer, har et depressivt syn på tilværelsen og menneskets natur. Vi liker ikke farger. Vi holder oss til gråtonene når vi skal beskrive vår tilværelse. Ikke noe salsarytmer her i gården, vi er et folk uten hofter.” (Tonje Gjevjon i *Dagbladet* 15. august 2015 s. 56)

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