

63. Fünf Bücher von Janne Teller (Englisch)

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I find it very difficult to choose five, because so many more books have made lasting impressions on me, only it depends on the period of my life. But here are some among those that I always return to.

[The Wild Palms](#), William Faulkner

One of my absolute favorite novels of all time. It's written in an amazingly beautiful stream-of-consciousness, and the insight into human nature seems endless. It's about human frailty, particularly when we love or feel responsible for others, but also how exactly that very loving is what gives us our humanity - and the core of where life lies. It's about the choices we make and the destinies that follow from these. Like when one of the main characters, a life time prisoner, during the Mississippi River floods chooses to save a pregnant woman, otherwise unknown to him, instead of taking his once in a lifetime chance to flee ...

[Marie Grubbe](#), J.P. Jacobsen

A wonderful, deep and captivating novel about a Danish aristocratic woman who - in a very undanish manner - dare to go all out for her passions, choosing to follow her Leidenschaft over social convention. She pays a high prize for it, ending at the rung of the social ladder - yet, she has no regrets and is so vivaciously alive in her low-life muddy existence, that the reader ends up with the question: who is making the better choice in life here?

[History](#), Elsa Morente

A very interesting book about life in Rome during World War II. Though telling the history of the war in details, the novel succeeds in making the history of the life of the individual, and not least of a little somewhat special boy, appear much more important than the entire world history. Reminding us, I believe, about what is truly important.

[The Fall](#), Albert Camus

A very simple, but important and poetic - and not least shocking - little novel about how human egoism and vanity can be the drive behind even the best human behavior. I have read it many times and yet, keep discovering new aspects of it. And though I can't contend the novel's conclusion that all human beings are morally fallen - it became the source of inspiration for my own novel KOMM which raises the question: to which extend can we decide how morally fallen we wish to be.

[A History of Western Philosophy](#), **Bertrand Russell**

I know it's not a novel, but I've included it because it made such a huge impact on me when I read it at the age of about 18 years, and I've often gone back to it since then. Here you have a summing up of the social, economic, political and most of all philosophical history since the ancient greek that have formed the foundations of the Western society of today. Yes, it has its faults and omissions (not least Kierkegaard), but it's still such an impressive and wide-reaching piece of work that though first published in 1945, I have personally to this day not found a book doing it better.