

*Abstract: Whereas the reliance of literature and other arts on reality has been the topic of numerous studies, the equally significant indebtedness of life to fiction has received considerably less critical attention but has fortunately been of interest to a number of novelists and screenwriters. This paper will analyse a variety of literary texts and films that feature instances of reverse mimesis, including several of David Lodge's novels, in particular *The British Museum is Falling Down*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, John Fowles' *The Collector*, Jeffrey Eugenides' *The Virgin Suicides*, Jeremy Leven's *Don Juan DeMarco*, Peter Weir's *Dead Poets' Society* and Nicholas Hytner's *The History Boys*. The ultimate aim of focusing on some of the most memorable fictional protagonists whose lives are shaped by the discourses they assimilate is to establish the role played by literary identification in personal development and to observe its possible impact on sanity and survival.*