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Booklover -- Dreams

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Booklover — Dreams

Column Editor: **Donna Jacobs** (Research Specialist, Transgenic Mouse Core Facility, MUSC, Charleston, SC 29425) <jacobsd@musc.edu>

Dreams. We all have them. Whether they scare us to wake in the middle of the night or pleasantly occupy our mind during a dreary day, our dreams can define us. The dream of doing something significant, award-winning, inspiring is probably one that most of us have. So when my friend **Jim** asks: "Why this specific interest in **Nobel Laureates in Literature**, why not **Pulitzer Prize winners**?" I have to confess, that dream of doing something significant, award winning, and inspiring is also mine.

"This is my ticket to Stockholm" is an often muttered-under-the-breath comment of a research scientist laboring in the lab. Labeling tubes, repetitive aliquoting, collecting samples, recording and interpreting data, and writing grants can sometimes seem mind-numbing until that "Eureka!" moment. We constantly joke as we brainstorm theories, experiments, and hypotheses that this will be the "definitive" concept that will win that storied trip to Sweden, an invitation to a black tie dinner, and a few extra dollars. Humor and dreams abound in some labs. I have been fascinated with books AND science since I was knee high to a microscope. In the library or in the lab — I'm at home. So the fascination with

Nobel Laureates in Literature is a natural extension of the dream for recognition. No mysteries here. The mystery is in how the same words are sometimes award-winning and sometimes boring. I'm sure **Jim** will not be satisfied by this abridged explanation, although he did point out that Oneirology is the science of dreams. Now I have something else to add to the research list.

The two labs where I work are located on opposite ends of the **Medical University of SC (MUSC)** campus. One reward of the numerous daily treks between locations is I get to walk by the library. As I walked between labs a few weeks ago I noticed a poster on the library doors advertising a "Get Connected Technology Fair." I marked the date in my calendar. I arrived on time to discover that I was first in line to enjoy "toy day" in the library. **Sympodia, Tegrity, Adobe Connect, Moodle, Wii, Wiki, Kindle, Facebook, Medica, Lowcountry Digital Library, PASCAL, Rosetta Stone, Flip** videos, digital cameras, pocket-size projectors for laptops were all there for us to put our hands on and experience. **PASCAL** was one service that really caught my attention. **PASCAL (Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries)** is a consortium

of academic libraries in South Carolina designed to address the information-access needs in South Carolina. "You want to try it?" asked the librarian. "Sure!" I said. So we entered '**Nobel Laureates in Literature**' in the keyword search box and a short list of books appeared on the screen. "Do you want to order one?" she asked. "Of course," I said. With a few registration questions addressed I was on my way to having "*The Dreams*" by **Naguib Mahfouz** in my possession. Five days later an email announced that the book had arrived from **Columbia College** and was ready for pickup at the **MUSC** library circulation desk. I'm sold.

"*The Dreams*" is a small book with a Translator's (**Raymond Stock**) Introduction, 104 dreams, and a glossary. This hard back version has an unbroken spine. My curiosity was uncontained as I opened the book while walking to my car. In the Translator's Introduction I read "On Friday, October 14, 1994, an Islamist militant, allegedly acting

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on orders from a blind Egyptian cleric **Omar Abd al-Rahman**, stabbed **Naguib Mahfouz** twice in the neck with a switchblade as he sat in a car outside his Nile-side home in Greater Cairo." Wow. How fast can I drive home in order to continue?

Once home, I continued with the Introduction: "The young man who attacked the then 82-year-old author, the first Arab to be awarded the **Nobel Prize in Literature**, clearly intended to silence him forever. Though the assault, which damaged the nerve that controls his right arm and hand, did prevent him from writing for over four years, the fanatic's mission failed. Not only did **Mahfouz** survive this nightmarish crime — he lived to tell us his dreams." Twenty-five dreams later, I forced myself to momentarily set the book down to absorb what I was reading in this incredible gem of a book.

Just as we learn cause and effect in science, **Mahfouz's** literature provides the same illustration. "*Children of the Alley*," the serialized fiction that provoked the attack, is set in Gama'liya and follows mankind's corrupt ascent from the days of **Adam** and **Eve** to the era of modern science. "*The Dreams*" is the result.

Each dream is short, yet some how busy. You awake with him in the middle of a scenario carrying some meaning, defining a feeling of his about the world and its conflicts. He is on the street, at his house in Abbasiya, praising God, looking for love, bathing naked in the shadow of a crescent moon, hungry — "faint with starvation yet enticed by hope."

As I read the dreams I found myself marking Dreams 5, 20, 30, 55, 57, 77, 84, and 85 with bright orange post-it notes. I re-read these marked Dreams several times while writing this column as I wanted to include one dream in the text. I narrowed the mental debate to Dreams 5 and 57. Unable to choose I finally decided to leave you with both Dreams.

"Dream 5. — I am walking aimlessly without anywhere in particular to go when suddenly I encounter a surprising event that had never before entered my mind — every step I take turns the street upside-down into a circus. The walls and buildings and cars and passersby all disappear, and in their place a big top arises with its tiered seats and long, hanging ropes, filled with trapezes and animal cages, with actors and acrobats and musclemen and even a clown. At first I am so happy that I could soar with joy. But as I move from street to street where the miracle is repeated over and over, my pleasure subsides

and my irritation grows until I tire from the walking and the looking around, and I long in my soul to go back to my home. But just as I delight once again to see the familiar face of the world, and trust that soon my relief will arrive, I open the door and find the clown there to greet me, giggling."

"Dream 57. — I walked around the fort twice — a citadel of stone whose windows were like tiny holes. From each window appeared a face that I not only knew, but adored. Some had been traveling a long while; others had departed our world at different times. I stared with passion and grief — and imagined that each one was begging from its depths for me to set them free. After looking hopelessly at the stone fort's gate, I went to the authorities to ask for help.

I left them feeling satisfied, clutching a pole made of steel, and returned to the fort. I brandished the pole, and the faces peered out as I struck a mighty blow at the door, which split apart and collapsed. The faces banished from the windows as shouts of joy and pleasure rose up, and I stopped, my heart beating hard — waiting to meet the dear ones with longing and desire."

If you want to read the other 102, **PASCAL** is very user-friendly. 🐼

@Bunning: People & Technology

At the only Edge that Means Anything / How We Understand What We Do

by **Dennis Brunning** (E Humanities Development Librarian, Arizona State University) <dennis.brunning@gmail.com>

News Analysis

The Internet is Dead...Long Live the Internet!

Recently, a much downloaded *Wall Street Journal* article drew our attention to the Internet's death. Dead? **James Altucher**, a portfolio manager and columnist for **Dow Jones Newswire**, told another *Wall Street Journal* reporter, **Simon Constable**, that the investment play for **Google**, **Facebook**, and other Internet companies is dead.

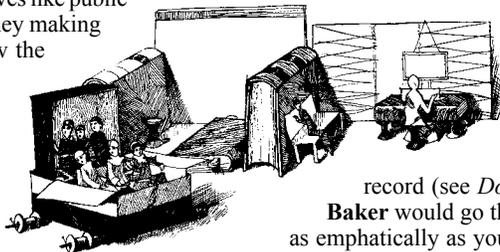
Altucher wasn't dismissing the Internet's value — like others he admitted he lived on the Internet — working, writing, leisuring and whatever else we do 24/7. The problem with making money on the Internet, though, has changed. Now, the Internet behaves like public utility with the EBITA, Beta, and other money making dynamics of a — yawn — necessity. Now the Internet isn't so exciting anymore.

So **Altucher** doesn't buy Internet companies for his portfolios and doesn't recommend them to customers. If he trades them, he treats them like ConEd — you know those low priced black and white properties on the Monopoly board. He is short on **Google**.

Instead, **Altucher** argues, the Internet is no longer significant as business; it has matured and become part of our quality of life.

Take note **ATG** readers. Business drives all and one way to look smart is to pronounce on key trends. Say with a wink (or sigh) that however cool Library 3.0 is, too bad, so sad, it has no business model. Won't sell in this world.

Flip side of this coin: the library is business durable. It has buildings, books, the Internet. It delivers quality no matter what the business trend. And no ticker symbol.



Your link: <http://seekingalpha.com/article/140485-would-buffett-consider-google-a-great-investment>

Panic in Kindle Park

It is the Summer of the eBook, the Summer of Kindle...

@Bunning is addicted to the **Kindle**. We don't endorse it for library consumption; we're just saying it's got great stuff, junk that we need. We don't even search **Amazon** anymore; we **Kindle** the **Store**. Our man **JeffoB**, fixes us on \$9.99 (special books extra). The **Amex** is teetering on its own subprime crisis...

Not everyone is addicted thank **God**. Read **Nicholson Baker's** bibliocentric **Kindle** profile in a recent *New Yorker*. **Baker** asks if the **Kindle** can improve on the book.

No.

Now you might, having read **Baker's** book on how librarians are jeopardizing the written record (see *Double Fold* — you can buy on **Kindle**), suspect **Baker** would go thumbs down on the **Kindle**. He does — but not as emphatically as you might think. **Baker** has it all down including limited content, quality control issues, cold comfort, a stupid name. But **Baker**, a bibliophile, reader, and good writer knows the "e" writing is on the wall. He knows a bad sign: good enough for his kid, good enough to change history...

And now, the summer eBook news is that **Amazon** has competition. The enemies at the gate include **Barnes & Noble**, **BeBook**, and others.

Not every critic is keen on **Barnes & Noble's** line in the sand. **David Pogue**, the **CNBC** tech guy, concludes **B&N** markets a paper

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