Booklover: #nobelliteraturelaureates

Donna Jacobs
Medical University of South Carolina, donna.jacobs55@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Jacobs, Donna (2017) "Booklover: #nobelliteraturelaureates," Against the Grain: Vol. 26: Iss. 5, Article 41.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6875

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
NEW INFORMS Journal

Strategy Science seeks to publish outstanding research directed to the challenges of strategic management in both business and non-business organizations. The first issue is scheduled to be released in early 2015.

Subscribe Today!

Email: IPOLcentral@INFORMS.org
Phone: +1.800.4.INFORMs
www.informs.org/subscribe

Subscribe to the entire 14-journal package of INFORMS journals including all online issues back through 1998. In 2015, Strategy Science and the series TutORials in Operations Research (2014-2012) will be added at no additional cost.

- Expanded content for 2015
- Save over $1,700
- Remote & campus wide access
- FREE 30-day trials available

www.informs.org/inst-pubssuite

Booklover — #nobelliteraturelaureates

Column Editor: Donna Jacobs (Retired, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC 29425) <donna.jacobs55@gmail.com>

If you are not living on the edge, you are taking up too much space — an interesting concept and one that prevails in the academic world. I lived in this world my entire career, a world where the cutting edge of ideas, technology, and theories are born. A heady space and much different from the world where these ideas, technology, and theories are put into practical use. The distance between idea and popular acceptance can be long and time consuming. I learned that “new ideas” on the front page of a newspaper could be decades old by my standards. Embracing new technology, change, and the learning curve that came with it was daily life, until now. Retirement is a new animal and with it a desire to sometimes be comfortable in old shoes of thought. So excuse me when I am ignorant of new stuff and how it works. One example is Twitter, tweets, hash tags and the effective minimalist use of words to deliver an electronic message. Directness is easy, but the subtleties of humor, and/or emotion sometimes need more than 140 characters. Which brings me to Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, the Norwegian author who was awarded the third Nobel Prize for Literature in 1903. His short story “The Father” is the perfect study for conveying an intense emotional message with a minimum of words.

Bjørnson, born in Kvikne, Norway on 8 December 1832, is considered with Henrik Ibsen, Jonas Lie, and Alexander Kielland as one of “The Four Great” (De Fire Store) Norwegian writers. Poetry was an early passion, and he pursued this discipline in his studies. Like Deledda, the subject of the previous Booklover column, he wished to use his literary skills to describe the life of the peasant for the national readership. His pen was not limited to poetry as he matured. Bjørnson’s words influenced the arenas of drama, theater, prose, politics, and even lyrics to the national anthem. He lived in a time of political and social transition for Norway and used his words to further the Left-wing movement. His affection for the life of the peasants and farmers heavily influenced his writings. Interestingly, Bjørnson was one of the original members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee. His tenure on this committee that awards the Nobel Peace Prize was from 1901-1906.

“The Father” was originally published in 1881. The story unfolds on four pages in an 8 x 6.5-inch hardback book or 62 lines on this Website: http://www.bartleby.com/195/14.html. It is a powerfully emotional story, one that I reread several times, embracing the minimalist use of words and yet the depth of understanding, and the complete life that was portrayed.

From the first request of the father to the priest: “I have gotten a son,” said he, “and I wish to present him for baptism.” To the last consoling statement of the priest to the father after the loss of his son: “Yes, I think so myself,” said Thord, “looking up while two big tears coursed slowly down his cheeks.” The reader knows in the fewest of words the life of this boy and the pride the father has in him. #skillfullycraftedwordsmakemehappy.