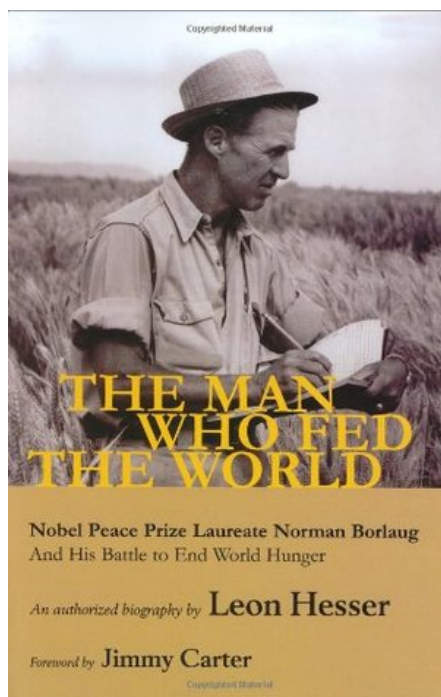




The Man Who Fed the World: Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Norman Borlang and His Battle to End World Hunger

Leon Hesser , Jimmy Carter (Foreword by)

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The Man Who Fed the World provides a loving and respectful portrait of one of America's greatest heroes. Nobel Peace Prize recipient for averting hunger and famine, Dr. Norman Borlang is credited with saving hundreds of millions of lives from starvation-more than any other person in history? Loved by millions around the world, Dr. Borlang is recognized as one of the most influential men of the twentieth century.

The Man Who Fed the World: Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Norman Borlang and His Battle to End World Hunger Details

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From Reader Review The Man Who Fed the World: Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Norman Borlaug and His Battle to End World Hunger for online ebook

Rrshively says

Everyone should know about this man and all that he did for the world in his lifetime. His story should inspire young people going to college to major in agriculture in order to help feed the world. This man is responsible for hands-on research and the push to put it into practice that saved millions if not billions from starving. At the end of the book, we find the need is still there to continue this type of research and organization. I greatly admire Mr. Borlaug and his vigor that lasted into his 90's. I gave it only 2 stars because the book became dry and statistic laden. I read every bit of it, and I'm glad that I did, but the inspiring story itself was hidden in too many details. I understand why Mr. Hesser was so thorough in his writing. I'm sure he wanted to give everyone credit for the green revolution that deserved it, and I think he is used to writing professional articles that need to be well documented. Also, I think he wanted to tell the whole story. However, this made the book more difficult to plow through. This was recommended to me by my Iowa aunt who is about Mr. Borlaug's age and is about as vigorous in her 90's as Mr. Borlaug has been.

Nancy says

The story gets a five star! The writing? Come on! Was there an editor involved in the Publication? I suppose not. The reader cannot tell if this was a biography, an interview, a editorial, or a report. It was all and none at the same time. Looking at the text holistically, the snippets of family life seemed to be inserted as an afterthought. Poor Margaret opens the book but then gets lost, when we see from her view again, it is in an absolute recreation of scene one. The first time I read, "you can't eat potential", it was clever and witty. The second time, it was repetitive, the third time it was annoying. I'm not supposed to notice the writing! The lack of secondary interviews from all of the many people that were led by Dr. Borlaug, or led him (they might have passed on but surely there is a quote from a newspaper?) showed a real lack of understanding of what can make a story come alive. "Borlaug says..." was seen far too often in the text. When did he say that, and why? The dedication to Borlaug's genealogy felt a bit excessive in the text but went over the top in appendix A, brought little the theme of the book and is emblematic of (maybe justified) hero worship. There was repetition in several areas of the book, the timeline jumped around (not in itself horrible), but the tone of the book morphed dramatically from the personable beginning to the fact based second half. Why did the author wait until page 179 to tell me how biotechnological techniques were changing seed traits, when the reader could have gained value from that in the 1970s timeline in the book?

Look to Doris Kearns Goodwin to keep an otherwise dry biography gripping, and Siddhartha Mukherjee to illuminate a dynamic advancement riddled with technical language.

Brutal critiquing aside, I must thank Leon Hesser for penning this account of Dr. Borlaug's contribution to humankind. Without it, my economics training has not been complete. It brought together the population scare I remember from my youth with today's votes on genetically modified foods. (Though it clarifies the hopelessness of wildlife and nature conservation given the needs of the population and the maximum yields of cultivated land).

Yes, too few people know of this remarkable man's contributions. Let's hope going forward we can all consider the great advantage Borlaug's temporary reprieve has provided.

Hoangkim says

"??i ng??i t?i thi?u ph?i ?n, k? ??n là h?c t?p, công vi?c, nhà ? và ch?m sóc s?c kh?e. Quanh ta còn nhi?u m?nh ??i b?t h?nh. Hãy luôn nh? ?i?u ?ó. " L?i c?a Th?y Norman Borlaug và di s?n c?a Ng??i v? cu?c cách m?ng xanh mãi mãi là ni?m tin và n? l?c c?a chúng ta !

<http://foodcrops.blogspot.com/2009/09...>

<http://cayluongthuc.blogspot.com/2007...>

The Man Who Fed the World: Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Norman Borlaug and His Battle to End World Hunger

Harley Gee says

The Man Who Fed the World describes the career of Norman Borlaug. The book is a bit clumsy and very light on the science but it does give an overview of the remarkable trajectory of Borlaug's career. Hesser's enthusiasm for his subject borders on hagiography. Borlaug was an extremely hands-on guy. But the Nobel Peace prize changed his life dramatically. Borlaug went from a guy who took primary pride in his work in the field to a leader and spokesman for a movement. Borlaug develops a reputation for straight talk and a man of principle from his earliest days. Hesser doesn't describe much of Borlaug's family life, his non professional interests or even his personality. Unfortunately almost nothing about the actual science that Borlaug performed, eg. how are varieties crossed and selected is detailed. The choppy narrative and minor redundancies are a distraction. This official biography could have used a better editor.

Justin says

Norman Borlaug has done more good on this planet than any person to ever live. I've had the privilege of getting to know him over the past three years. For someone who has saved ONE BILLION LIVES, he is an incredibly humble man. Admittedly, this book could be written better, but Borlaug's story is one of inspiration and not to be missed.

Hugo Åkerstrand says

An easy read with highs and lows. I decided to put a 3/5 grade to not devalue the overall grade. I thoroughly enjoyed reading the information about how Norman Borlaug worked to achieve his great advancements to agricultural development. The big politics behind the science is also interesting, as are the perspective about why certain areas are still struggling so much (eg sub-saharan Africa) and what was the great challenges where agricultural revolution was achieved. I frowned quite hard at statements such as (and I m paraphrasing here) the deforestation is decreasing in amazonas rainforest due to genetic engineered crops (which was referenced to an article back in the late 90s).

Mariana says

Dr. Borlaug is a huge inspiration for the world, we should all follow his steps towards ending world hunger.

Michael Connolly says

About the Author: Leon Hesser obtained a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Purdue University. Hesser worked for the U.S. Foreign Service supporting international agricultural research centers. In particular, in the 1960's, Hesser worked with Norman Borlaug in Pakistan to double wheat production in four years. After retiring, Hesser worked as a private consultant in Ukraine, transferring collective farms to the private ownership of the farmers.

Overview: Norman Borlaug was one of those scientists who, although not being a mathematical genius like Einstein, was able to save millions of lives. He did this by breeding better strains of wheat.

Early Years, Education and Marriage: Norman E. Borlaug grew up on an Iowa farm and was of Norwegian heritage. Borlaug is a small town on the Sognefjord in Norway. Norman Borlaug attended the University of Minnesota, where he was quite a good wrestler. Norman was advised to go into plant pathology by Professor Elvin Charles (E.C.) Stakman. Stakman was a plant pathologist who developed methods for breeding varieties of wheat that were resistant to wheat rust. Norman married Margaret Gibson in 1937. She raised their two children, and served as a nanny to their grandchildren.

Cooperative Agricultural Program: This was a joint venture by the Mexican Government and the Rockefeller Foundation. George Harrar was its director from its beginning in 1943 until 1952. George Harrar was later president of the Rockefeller Foundation (1961-1972). E.C. Stakman recommended Norman Borlaug to Harrar for wheat pathology. Margaret encouraged her husband to take this job in Mexico, even though it meant that he would be away much of the time.

Fungal Infections in Wheat: There are three main kinds of fungal infections of wheat:

- wheat stem rust
- wheat brown leaf rust
- wheat yellow stripe rust

Stem rust was the most damaging, so Borlaug concentrated on breeding plants resistant to it.

First Innovation: High-Volume Crossbreeding: In crossbreeding, pollen from one plant is placed into the pistil of a different plant. Only a tiny percentage of cross breeds have an improvement over the parent stocks. Norman's first innovation was the large number of crosses he made: thousands, instead of the usual dozens.

Second Innovation: Shuttle Breeding: Borlaug developed a way to obtain two generations of wheat each year, by working in two different locations in Mexico:

- Toluca (in the South, near Mexico City)
- Obregón (in the North, in the Yaqui Valley, in Sonora)

The two locations were at different latitudes and altitudes. Borlaug shuttled back and forth by airplane. Plants grown at one location were then taken to the other locations, in order to develop strains that grew well

at both locations. Shuttle-bred strains developed day-length insensitivity and grew well in a wide variety of conditions.

Third Innovation: Genetic Dwarfness: Dwarf strains of wheat have short and stiff straws. Norman Borlaug obtained his starting strains from Orville A. Vogel, a scientist who worked at the Agriculture Research Service at Washington State University. Vogel had developed dwarf wheat strains from crosses with the Norin 10 strain that he had obtained from Cecil Salmon in Japan. Two of Borlaug's best dwarf wheat strains were Sonora 64 and Lerma Rojo 64 (red-seeded). Advantages of dwarf strains:

- less likely to fall over when weighed down by rain, grain or fertilizer
- less likely to fall down before ripening
- less likely to suffer wind damage
- better for machine harvesting

International Spring Wheat Yield Nursery: The nursery was founded in 1958 in response to the North American shifty stem rust disease 15-B epidemic of the early 1950s. The nursery developed wheat varieties resistant to the 15-B strain of fungus.

El Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz y Trigo (CIMMYT)

- Trigo = Wheat
- Mejoramiento = Improvement
- CIMMYT was founded in Mexico in 1963 for training young scientists

Key People in India and Pakistan

- Ignacio Narváez, who helped introduce Mexican dwarf wheat into Pakistan
- Mankombu Sambasivan Swaminathan, an Indian geneticist, director of wheat research and father of the Green Revolution in India
- Chidambaram Subramaniam, Indian Minister of Food and Agriculture, supporter of the introduction of Mexican dwarf wheat

Key Policy Changes in India and Pakistan

- Borlaug fought for market prices for food, reversing the previous cheap-food policy imposed by the government to make food more affordable for the poor. Below-market prices force farmers to sell at a loss, thus discouraging production
- Borlaug also fought for the increased use of chemical fertilizer in Pakistan and India

Maize

- Henry A. Wallace was an early developer of hybrid corn (maize). He introduced the concept of hybrid vigor and in 1926 founded Pioneer Hi-Bred International. Wallace was Secretary of Agriculture under FDR during the 1930s and was a major force behind the Green Revolution.
- Edwin J. Wellhausen was a maize geneticist, in charge of maize breeding at the Cooperative Agricultural Program mentioned above.
- Surinder Vasal and Evangelina Villegas lead a research team at CIMMYT during the 1970s that developed Quality Protein Maize (QPM). QPM is the result of breeding maize to have higher levels of the lysine and tryptophan amino acids in its protein, without sacrificing flavor, texture, appearance, or resistance to infections and pests. Traditional maize suffers from a lack of the lysine and tryptophan amino acids. The CIMMYT team built on 1960s work of Purdue University scientists on opaque-2 maize.

Potato: John S. Niederhauser, plant pathologist, developed varieties of potato resistant to the late blight fungal infection (which had in the 1840s caused the Irish Potato Famine). In 1971 Niederhauser co-founded the International Potato Center in Lima, Peru.

Rice

- Henry M. (Hank) Beachell worked for many years developing rice strains at Texas A&M Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Beaumont. After retiring from Texas A&M, he worked at the International Rice Research Institute at Los Baños in the Philippines, where he helped develop the IR8 rice strain.
 - He Kang, China's Minister of Agriculture, ended rural communes, increased the use of chemical fertilizers, and helped China become self-sufficient in food
 - Yuan Longping is the father of hybrid rice, which has greatly increased the productivity of rice farming in China.
-

Rosa says

Norman Borlaug is an incredible man who dedicated his life to the elimination of world hunger. I was so excited to read about the emotion, the psychology of his passion--but the author of this biography couldn't carry the story. He stuck to the millions of USDA acronyms and scientific jargon, which is important, but it doesn't tell his personal story. Borlaug's story is amazing, I just wish this author would have written it from a different perspective.

Lisa says

Can not believe I have not heard of this man and he is nothing less than a miracle. Norman Borlaug was a walking miracle.

Melinda says

This book was very interesting, but hard to read. Norman Borlaug truly is "the most incredible man to you've never heard of." His work to create stronger, higher yield crops have literally saved millions of lives. He has won dozens of awards including the Nobel Prize, Presidential Medal of Freedom, and Congressional Gold Medal - to name a few.

Great man, great story. Here is the problem with the book. It is thick with details, it gets mired in them. Not that details aren't good, but the author goes over the top. It is literally exhausting to get through, but worth it if you have the stamina. If not...I guess there is always wikipedia.

Mary Beth says

here's the epitome of (a) great person(s) working on a great cause with unintended controversy arising years into the future. Yet if world food issues are not addressed the controversies shift into other complications.

What to do? An intriguing set of complications with many issues addressed. We live in an ever evolving world where no issue will ever truly go away.

Yin / Yang

Always

Can never be separated.

Period.

Arturo Carlos says

This book was very interesting, but at the same time I felt it had some chapters of irrelevant information. However, the work of Normal Borlaug is incredible.

Megan K says

A very inspiring story. It really shows how one great leader, who truly loves his work and keeps his hands dirty and himself connected with the people, can shape an entire world.

Ke Lun says

Elicits the thought of Malthusian view and how science and right policies is the way to go.

Also elicit the thought that you can't connect the dots going forward, only backward. Especially from his education background.
