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The Nobel Prizes in natural sciences have developed to become a unique measure of scientific excellence. Using archival documents, which have been released (50 years secrecy) for scholarly work, the author expertly traces the strengths and weaknesses of the Nobel system as exemplified by individual prizes. Surveys of the more than 100 years that the Prizes have been awarded are also presented.

This book discusses the most important prize in the world of science and gives unique historical insights into how the laureate selection process has developed to secure optimal choice.

No other book has been published which draws from previously classified archival materials to the extent that this book does. It indirectly deals with factors that foster scientific discoveries viz. the role of both individuals and institutions and thus provides invaluable insights for researchers, institutions and anyone interested in science.