

experience of an IMAX Space Shuttle launch, because the Shuttle fleet is slated for retirement by the end of this year. Long before that, a decision will have to

be made on the next phase—if there is to be one—of America’s manned space program. Hopefully, those leaving the theater after watching “Hubble3D” will

have a renewed sense that this decision is not only one of national policy, but of mankind’s place in the universe itself.

The Slaughter of the Truth

by Gregory Murphy

“The Cove”

Directed by Louie Psihoyos
Documentary, 1 hour, 30 min.,
\$27.98 (PG-13)

“The Cove” is an Academy Award-winning documentary directed by former National Geographic photographer Louie Psihoyos, which plays fast and loose with the facts about dolphins, and heavy with the emotions—in much the same way as Al Gore’s comedy science fiction horror film “An Inconvenient Truth.” The film also has a Hollywood action thriller edge to it, which is meant to draw the audience in for the real message, which is not the purported slaughter of dolphins, but a rant against eating fish because of its alleged mercury content. As the reader will see, the mercury argument is a red herring and is based on a fraudulent study.

The real laugh of the documentary is that its chief expert is Richard O’Barry, a dolphin trainer on the 1960s “Flipper” television show. The other expert in the film is eco-terrorist Paul Watson, who was thrown out of Greenpeace in 1977 for being too radical. Watson currently operates Sea Shephard Conservation, which has a mission of shutting down whaling. A few months ago, one of Watson’s million-dollar boats was sunk trying to ram a Japanese whaling ship.

In “The Cove,” Louie Psihoyos and Ric O’Barry claim that 23,000 dolphins are killed each year in the bay near the Japanese fishing town of Taiji. In reality, there are only 800 to 1,000 dolphins killed, and the reader should keep in mind that part of the Japanese diet is eating whale and dolphin meat, much the same way that most people in the United States eat beef and chicken. This intentional mis-

stating of the numbers of dolphins killed is based on using the number of yearly permits the Japanese government issues for hunting dolphin and whales. It is a big leap from the number of permits issued to the actual number of animals killed.

The film gives the impression that bottlenose dolphins (like Flipper) are being killed, which is the emotional hook for the film. To make the hook catch, the



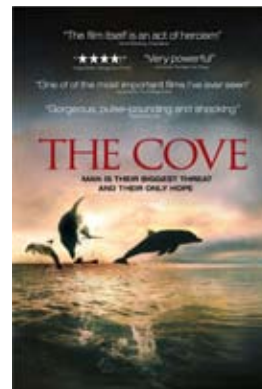
Flipper’s trainer Richard O’Barry.

film’s director keeps repeating the same footage of beautiful dolphins playing in the ocean and performing at ocean parks like Sea World. The truth is the Japanese fishermen have stopped hunting bottlenose dolphins.

Mercury Scare

The film spends much time talking about mercury in the dolphin meat, but here the dolphin is only a surrogate for all fish. The film cites a 1956 incident in Minamata, Japan, as an example of mercury poisoning. This documented poisoning at Minamata was caused by a factory blindly dumping chemical waste into the nearby bay, but this waste also contained PCBs and other chemicals in addition to mercury.

The mercury scare is based on a study of sea life near the Farne Islands, off the northeast coast of England. The methodology of the Farne Island study is full of intentional misrepresentations, so as to



make it more of a political document than a scientific study. But based on these data of mercury in sea animals, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration set the U.S. mercury limit to 5.8 parts per billion, which is extremely low. In comparison, the World Health Organization’s limit on mercury is 80 ppb.

In discussions with people in the fishing industry and others with extensive knowledge of marine life, one thing becomes clear: The real intention of the mercury scare is to stop people from eating fish and making use of its much needed protein. The people I talked with have said that so far, not one fish brought into the United States has even been close to



Ecoterrorist Paul Watson, the expert advisor to “The Cove,” along with O’Barry.



A typical "Cove" scene with its spy thriller approach to propaganda.

this excessively low mercury limit.

The point is that the Malthusian greens are using this issue for two reasons; one is the shutdown of coal power plants (which emit mercury) and the other is the removal of fish from the human diet. The green propaganda on mercury would have you believe the fairy tale that mercury levels in fish have steadily increased since the start of the industrial revolution. It's not true.

A study done in 1998, for example, compared mercury levels from yellowfin tuna caught in 1998 with yellowfin tuna caught in 1971. The interesting result was that there has not been a discernable increase in mercury. Another study a year later, using similar methodology but comparing striped bass, again found no discern-

able increase in mercury.

Coal power plants are blamed by the greens as the main source of the mercury. But this is simply not true. The mercury that accumulates in fish and animals is acquired in a different biological pathway; this bioactive mercury is different from the inorganic mercury that is expelled from power plants and factories.

More Fish Stories

"The Cove" also makes the claim that because of

overfishing, the oceans will run out of fish. The director uses as his proof for this outlandish claim a thoroughly debunked 2003 *Nature* magazine article written by Ransom Myers, (now deceased) professor of biology at Dalhousie University, and Boris Worm, then biodiversity professor at the University of Kiel, which claims that the oceans will be devoid of fish by 2048.

One marine biologist told this author that the *Nature* magazine article was debunked "about five minutes after it was published," and both *Science* (which published a similar article in 2005) and *Nature* have had to print rebuttal comments and papers over the past few years. The main problem with the *Science* article, he said, is that it was based on a

computer model. Apparently the authors believe that fish live in computers and not in the oceans!

A Scientific Perspective

If the reader is looking for a better assessment of the state of the ocean's fisheries, without falling prey to genocidal pipedreams of poisonous fish and magically disappearing fish, I would suggest reading *Climate Changes and Fish Productivity*, written by Alexey Lyubushin (Institute of the Physics of the Earth, Moscow) and Leonid Klyashtorin (Federal Institute for Fisheries and Oceanography, Moscow). Both authors have worked with the Food and Agriculture Organization, and their 2007 book deals with the relationship of climate cycles and the changes in fish populations. The authors also propose a method by which to forecast major changes in the oceans fisheries.

(The book is available at the following link: http://alexeylyubushin.narod.ru/Climate_Changes_and_Fish_Productivity.pdf)

In summary, viewers of "The Cove" should not be drawn in by the Hollywood-style spy thriller, which is designed to keep you interested so that you will be scared by the mercury-in-fish message and stop eating fish. This is a deadly trap.

I encourage readers to avoid genocidal propaganda like "The Cove," and instead to campaign for a truly science-driven economy with a real space program.

Exploring the Secrets of the Northern Lights

by Gregory Murphy

The Northern Lights: Secrets of the Aurora Borealis

by Syun-Ichi Akasofu (with Jackie Finch and Jan Curtis)

Portland, Oregon: Alaska Northwest Books, 2009

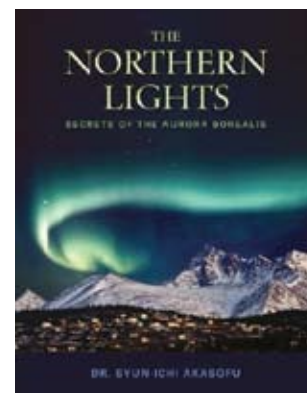
Paperback, 192 pp., \$18.95

Dr. Akasofu is the founding director of the International Arctic Research Center, located at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and through his research has become one of the world's foremost authorities on the aurora borealis. With this in mind, I was excited to read his

book and I was not disappointed in the least.

The book takes the reader on a short journey of what is known about the Northern Lights, punctuated by amazing photographs. In fact, the photographs alone are reason enough to buy the book.

The journey begins with the early myths about the aurora borealis, and quickly moves to the different theories that were proposed to explain this natural phenomenon. It concludes with a brief discussion of the role that the Sun plays in the Northern Lights.



The section on the Sun could have been longer, but it did highlight the recent NASA discovery that the Earth and the Sun seem to be connected by magnetic ropes, which solar scientists at NASA have theorized is one of the major factors in the production of Northern Lights. Akasofu tends to believe that this idea can explain some of the phenome-

non, but he doubts it can explain the whole.

Akasofu's book points to the past theories and his recent research into the Sun and other geophysical components of the Northern Lights, and concludes that several unanswered questions remain about their nature. One of the most interesting theories was put forward by Benjamin Franklin: that the Northern Lights are produced by an electric current. Askasofu notes that a large portion of the Northern Lights is produced by the interaction of the Earth's magnetosphere and the Sun's highly magnetic solar wind. With this in mind, it seems that Benjamin Franklin's idea was not far from being right.

Akasofu writes that as his research progresses, and as we gain a further understanding of the interaction between the Sun and Earth, it will become possible to better forecast aurora activity and to determine when the Sun's activity will become

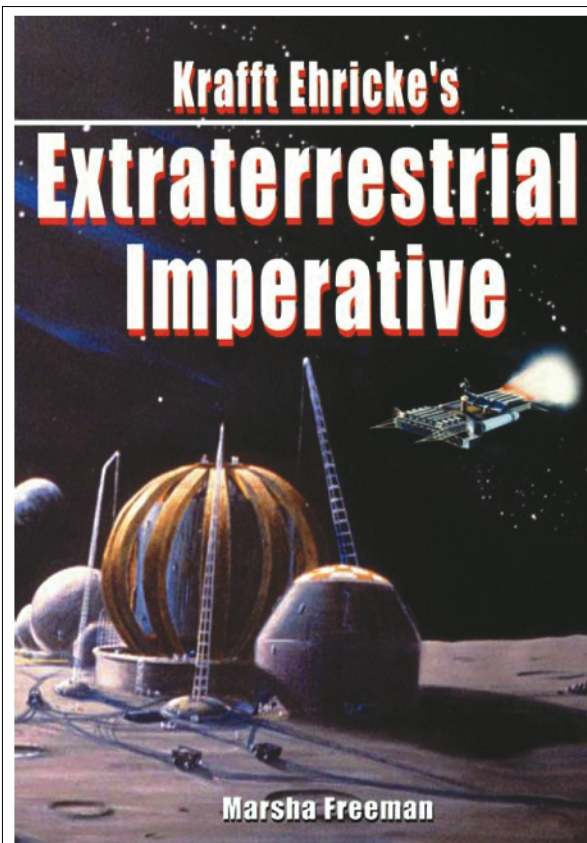


The Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights, above Bear Lake in Alaska.

harmful to satellites. It will also further our knowledge of the Sun-Earth climate connection as well.

I highly recommend this book. Apart

from the breathtaking photographs, the book can be used as a guidebook for serious Northern Light watchers and casual sky gazers alike.



**Krafft Ehricke's
Extraterrestrial Imperative
by Marsha Freeman**

ISBN 978-1-894959-91-9, Apogee Books, 2009, 302pp, \$27.95

From this new book the reader will gain an insight into one of the most creative minds in the history of space exploration.

Krafft Ehricke's contribution to space exploration encompasses details of new, innovative ideas, but also how to think about the importance and value of space exploration for society.

The reader will gain an understanding of the early history of the space pioneers, what they have helped accomplish, and how Ehricke's vision of where we should be going can shape the future.

At this time, when there are questions about the path of the space program for the next decades, Krafft Ehricke has laid out the philosophical framework for why space exploration must be pursued, through his concept of the "Extraterrestrial Imperative," and the fight that he waged, over many years, for a long-range vision for the program.

Readers will find it a very imaginative work, and a very up-lifting story.

Krafft Ehricke's Extraterrestrial Imperative is the summation of his work on encouraging the exploration and development of space. The book contains all of his reasons why we need to get off the planet and explore space.

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