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Review of Casey, Susan: Voices in the Ocean: A Journey into the Wild and Haunting World of Dolphins

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Voices in the Ocean

The author, a journalist who has written several previous books on marine topics, explores evidence of a unique bond between humans and dolphins throughout history. The art and legends of ancient civilizations, such as the Minoans and Greeks as well as native American peoples depict dolphins helping humans. Prior to the 2004 Indonesian tsunami a pod of dolphins prevented a group of sightseeing boats from heading to shore, and ushered them back out to safety. Swimmers and surfers in Hawaii and California have reported that dolphins saved them from shark attacks. Casey admires their x-ray vision, echolocation skills, high-frequency communication, sociability and swimming speed. They have been harmed by marine pollution and overfishing which reduces their food supply. She made contact with marine mammal conservation groups and travelled to marine parks in Hawaii, Dominican Republic, Japan, and Canada in which dolphins are kept in captivity under harmful conditions. She writes eloquently of their social organization, swimming in groups in the wild and forming long-term attachments with others. VERDICT : This book does not provide scientific background as does Justin Gregg's "Are Dolphins Really that Smart?" (2013), but will interest general readers, young adults and nature lovers. They will lose their eagerness to visit dolphin shows and may be motivated towards further reading on the subject. A bibliography of books and videos, as well as notes documenting each chapter are provided. A list of scientific and environmental groups and their websites are included. Photos not seen.