



The Color of the Atmosphere With The Ocean Below: A History of NASA's Ocean Color Missions

Dr. James G. Acker

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(Black and White) *The Color of the Atmosphere with the Ocean Below* is a comprehensive history of NASA's "ocean color" missions. Written by James Acker with funding from the NASA Science and History Divisions, this book covers the science, technology, and diverse scientific personalities that allowed NASA to successfully extract measurements of light from the ocean surface using satellite instruments. These data allowed observation and determination of the complex patterns of biological activity in the oceans, which are directly related to mankind's understanding and utilization of the oceans. This research has also helped define the role that oceans play in local and regional ecosystems, as well in the changing global climate system. The history is extensively footnoted and referenced, providing unique documentation of this successful sector of NASA's Earth science missions. It covers a broad range of oceanographic research to which these vital data have been applied, and explains many scientific aspects. The history was augmented by individual and group interviews of scientists and engineers involved in NASA's three primary ocean color missions. The interviews and documents describe how diligent efforts and collaborations of oceanographers, physicists, satellite and sensor technicians, computer programmers, government agencies, and private companies combined to surmount remarkable challenges both at sea and in space to make this critical oceanographic data accurate and useful. Augmented with anecdotal insights into the missions – what made them work, and the different pitfalls and surprises frequently imperiling their eventual success – the book presents a detailed history of NASA's leading contribution to the observations of ocean color from space. It will both inform and entertain readers interested in science, oceanography, and remote sensing of the Earth.

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