

“An inconvenient truth” – Review

Two climate change experts from the European Environment Agency in Copenhagen saw the sneak preview of ‘An Inconvenient Truth’ at Dagmar Theatre this week. Here is their review of the film.

This movie is remarkable in its simplicity and clarity of messages. It shows Al Gore travelling the world with a slideshow setting out key causes, effects and solutions to global climate change.

Gore clearly shows the evidence that the increase in global temperature over the last 100 years is, to a large extent, due to greenhouse gas emissions from human activity. He then presents the three ‘causes’: population, technology and barriers to new thinking.

To this he adds many examples, from the US and elsewhere, of current and projected impacts of climate change. He also discusses the possibility of abrupt climate change, which may cause, for example, melting of the Greenland ice sheet. This would lead to a global sea level rise of several meters. The consequences for low-lying countries and cities would be enormous. There is scientific uncertainty about the likelihood of such events, which he recognises.

Gore’s main point remains clear: whatever the eventual impacts, there is a need to act immediately to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This can be achieved with current technologies and in an affordable way, he says, although he presents few specific examples in the film.

The movie also gives a fascinating insight into the moral drive of one man to address this issue. Gore has long been an advocate of environmental matters but has struggled to get his message across. He reflects on this struggle and emphasises how he is still trying to do so: he has presented his slideshow over 1,000 times around the globe. In the end, he states that ultimately it is up to each individual to act upon the messages of the movie.

However, it is not until the credits role (interspersed with catchy slogans: “walk more, buy a hybrid car, demand green energy, expect more from your parents, pray,” etc.) that any real advice on action is given. Perhaps Al Gore and the film would be more effective if more time was spent on options for action and their implications for individuals?

Having said that, the film is convincing and Gore uses data from well established scientific sources, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to back up his points. He also succeeds in using these facts in a very transparent and convincing way. As a result, the film is a good lesson in communicating complicated science simply, but accurately.

So see the movie, help get the message across and encourage others to do so too.

For more information on the facts on climate change, see the IPCC web site (2001 report) <http://www.ipcc.ch/>. The IPCC will publish a fully updated new report in 2007. Furthermore see also the EEA web site, with information on climate change in Europe: http://themes.eea.europa.eu/Environmental_issues/climate
<http://epaedia.eea.europa.eu/>

(For more information on the film, *An Inconvenient truth*, visit: <http://www.climatecrisis.net/>)