



Christina De La Rocha, Daniel J. Conley

# Silica Stories

- First book relating the scientific charms of silica to a general audience
- Presents a set of ten clearly written chapters on ten independent, multi-disciplinary topics on silica
- Intended to not only convey up-to-the minute scientific information, but to paint a picture of Earth as an interacting set of geological, biological, and chemical processes
- Shows Earth's interacting processes as interwoven into the pre-history, history, present, and future of human beings
- Written by two of the world's leading experts on silica in the biosphere and geosphere

Do you know silica, the tetrahedra of silicon and oxygen constituting the crystals of New Agers and the desiccant in a box of new shoes? It's no mere mundane mineral. As chemically reacting silicate rocks, silica set off the chain of events known as the origin of life. As biomineralized opal, it is the cell wall, skeleton, spicules, and scales of organisms ornamenting numerous lobes of the tree of life. Cryptocrystalline silica made into stone tools helped drive the evolution of our hands and our capability for complex grammar, music, and mathematics. As quartz crystals, silica is impressively electric and ubiquitous in modern technology (think sonar, radios, telephones, ultrasound, and cheap but precise watches). Silica is inescapable when we take a drink or mow the lawn and it has already started to save the Earth from the carbon dioxide we're spewing into the atmosphere. This book tells these scientific tales and more, to give dear, modest silica its due.

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