

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910254002703321
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Titolo	Silica Stories // by Christina De La Rocha, Daniel J. Conley
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cham : , : Springer International Publishing : , : Imprint : Springer, , 2017
ISBN	3-319-54054-8
Edizione	[1st ed. 2017.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (XI, 201 p. 39 illus., 1 illus. in color.)
Disciplina	550
Soggetti	Earth Geology Nature Environment Geobiology Geochemistry Marine sciences Freshwater Popular Earth Science Popular Science in Nature and Environment Biogeosciences Marine & Freshwater Sciences
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references at the end of each chapters.
Nota di contenuto	1. Introduction -- 2. The Origin of Life Was Brought to You in Part by Silicate Rocks -- 3. The Making of Humankind: Silica Lends a Hand (and Maybe a Brain). - 4. Mystical Crystals of Silica -- 5. Glass Houses -- 6. Chicks Need Silica, Too -- 7. Of Fields, Phytoliths, and Hippo Poo -- 8. Silica, Be Dammed! -- 9. No Such Thing as Normal -- 10. Geoengineering, aka Silica to Save the World.
Sommario/riassunto	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.
