

## Geology's Impact on Culture

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Most people consider geology boring, static and difficult. The fields of astronomy and physics have “rebranded” themselves with exciting programs formatted so as to be readily understandable to the general public. The same thing can be done for geology. My research on geology’s influence on other disciplines has resulted in a book, *Tweeting da Vinci*, in which I was able to show how geology affected Italy’s art, architecture, medicine, religion, literature, engineering and just about everything else.

The reaction to the book and my lectures by both students and the general public has been very positive, including four gold medals, with reviews and comments indicating that they never knew geology could be so exciting. The book is very user friendly, packed with facts, full-color photos, paintings, sketches and illustrations. Complex aspects of geology are presented in an easily understandable style. Widely diverse topics—such as gemology, folk remedies, grottoes, painting, literature, physics and religion—are stitched together using geology as a thread. Quoting everyone from Pliny the Elder to NASA physicist Friedemann Freund, the work is solidly backed scholarship that reads as easily as a summer novel.

The book can be used in classes such as physics, chemistry, literature, art history, medicine, Classical Studies, Latin, Greek and Italian. By incorporating a “geologic perspective” in these courses, it can be perceived as a more “all encompassing” discipline and encourage more students to study it.

The lectures I have given on college campuses have resulted in students seeing their own majors from a different perspective and some have even signed up for introductory geology courses. One college organized summer course to the Bay of Naples based on the book. We followed the geology as well as the culture of the area and the students were profoundly moved. To encourage dialog, the book is linked to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This has enabled followers from many disciplines to marvel at the inextricable link between geology and culture.