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The Last Billion Years: A Geologic History of Tennessee

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Book Reviews

Kathy Campbell, Book Reviews Editor

Byerly, D. W. (2013). *The Last Billion Years: A Geologic History of Tennessee*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press. 212 pages. ISBN: 9781572339743

Don W. Byerly, professor emeritus of geology at the University of Tennessee, has received many awards for his contributions to the causes of earth sciences and conservation. His latest book, *The Last Billion Years: A Geologic History of Tennessee*, is an easy-to-understand manual about the geological history of Tennessee and the Earth whose audience is scholars of geology, as well as, school and college-aged students.

The Last Billion Years contains 16 chapters. The first four chapters cover basic geology, including the general geology of Tennessee, the five spheres of the Earth found in the "Earth Systems Science" model, various materials and processes of the Earth's geology, and geologic time. Chapter five discusses past and present geologists who have made the study of geology what it is today and the remaining chapters deal with Tennessee geology specifically.

The book includes a table with the Chronological Outline of Tennessee Geology. There are 176 illustrations, varying from diagrams of cross-section cutouts, photos, sketches, maps, and graphs. All illustrations and graphics are in black and white; it would be nice if they were in color since it is hard to observe details in a black and white image. Photographs seem dated, making the reader wonder if these photos resemble present conditions.

While I do not suggest elementary schools purchase the book, it should be considered by high school and academic libraries since the book is a non-threatening read. Scientific explanations are simple enough for the non-geologist to understand and important terms are bolded throughout the book. It should also be considered by public libraries that serve patrons with an interest in Tennessee's geology.

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