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Inventing the Earth, by Barbara A. Kennedy, 2006. Blackwell Publishing, 9600 Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2DQ, United Kingdom. 160 pages. Hardcover: price GBP 50.00, USD 89.95; ISBN 1-4051-0187-3. Paperpack: price GBP 19.99, USD 39.95; ISBN 1-4051-0188-1.



Geomorphology, the science of landforms and their development with time, is an important branch of curricula in geography and earth-system sciences. Numerous good text books of geomorphology have been published during the last few decades. Barbara Kennedy's book *Inventing the Earth* is quite different: neither it is a text book of geomorphology, nor it is a historical account of study of landforms. Rather the book demonstrates how successive generations of natural philosophers, geomorphologists, and geologists invented various views of the Earth over the last two and half centuries.

The book has been arranged in nine chapters. The first chapter is somewhat philosophical but critically examines the use of T.C. Chamberlin's methodology of multiple working hypotheses. The second chapter is concerned with the notion of 'deep time' as proposed by James Hutton and subsequently confirmed by the researchers of the twentieth century. The problematic aspects of Hutton's theory and the efforts of Charles Lyell to "discover" modern earth science are discussed in the third chapter. The next two chapters (chapters 4 and 5) critically evaluate the role of Louis Agassiz in discovering the Ice Age, and Charles Darwin's views of the modern earth-surface processes as a means of explaining the key geological questions in the mid-nineteenth century, respectively. The sixth chapter highlights the role of John Wesley Powell and Grove Karl Gilbert in discovering the fluvial landscape. The seventh chapter is concerned with the "synthetic genius" William Morris Davis and his great invention: the geographical cycle. Subsequent geomorphological research from a physical viewpoint questioned historical ideas and rejected most of them. The eighth chapter addresses the views evolved from the work of Robert E. Hutton, Arthur N. Strahler, Luna B. Leopold and their colleagues and associates. The last quarter of the twentieth century, according to Kennedy, marks important shifts in the way in which geomorphologists visualize earth-surface processes. The concluding chapter (Chapter 9) focuses, obviously, on changes in geomorphological thoughts from the late twentieth century and speculates about "*the ways in which key ideas may change as the twenty-first century opens*."

Barbara Kennedy chronicles evolutionary stages of generations of views of the discovery of our planet. The presentation is lucid and enjoyable. This highly readable book can be compared with Kenneth Hsu's book on *Physical Principles of Sedimentology*, which was published in 1994. Both books focus on key episodes/events in the development of their respective subjects. Such books are rare, indeed.

The illustrations are generally good and references are up-to-date. Some of the photographs, however, should have been printed in full color and/or on glossy paper (e.g. Fig. 5.4). The epilogue and the appendixes are reader-friendly. Students and professionals will find the book useful. I can recommend this book for the libraries of academic Institutions. The price of the book, particularly that of the hardback edition, is, however, fairly high.

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