



Something in the Soil: Field-Testing the New Western History

Patricia Nelson Limerick

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A wide-ranging collection of essays and arguments from the New West's landmark historian. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the American West is a region of great views and great friction, vigorous growth and equally vigorous conflict. In Something in the Soil, Patricia Nelson Limerick continues the project she began with The Legacy of Conquest, traveling far outside the usual academic circles to put Western history to use in reckoning with current dilemmas. Whether the topic is the changing mission of the national parks, the notion of "culture" as a sort of Frankenstein's monster, the resurgent boom in Western gold mining, the unexamined--and increasingly ineffective--rituals of American environmentalists, or current struggles over the standing of the "Great White Men" of the frontier past, Limerick operates on the principle that history is an active presence in the West today, quite literally "something in the soil." Her irreverence for conventional pieties coexists with her respect for the American West's long history as a magnet for dreams of a better life.



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