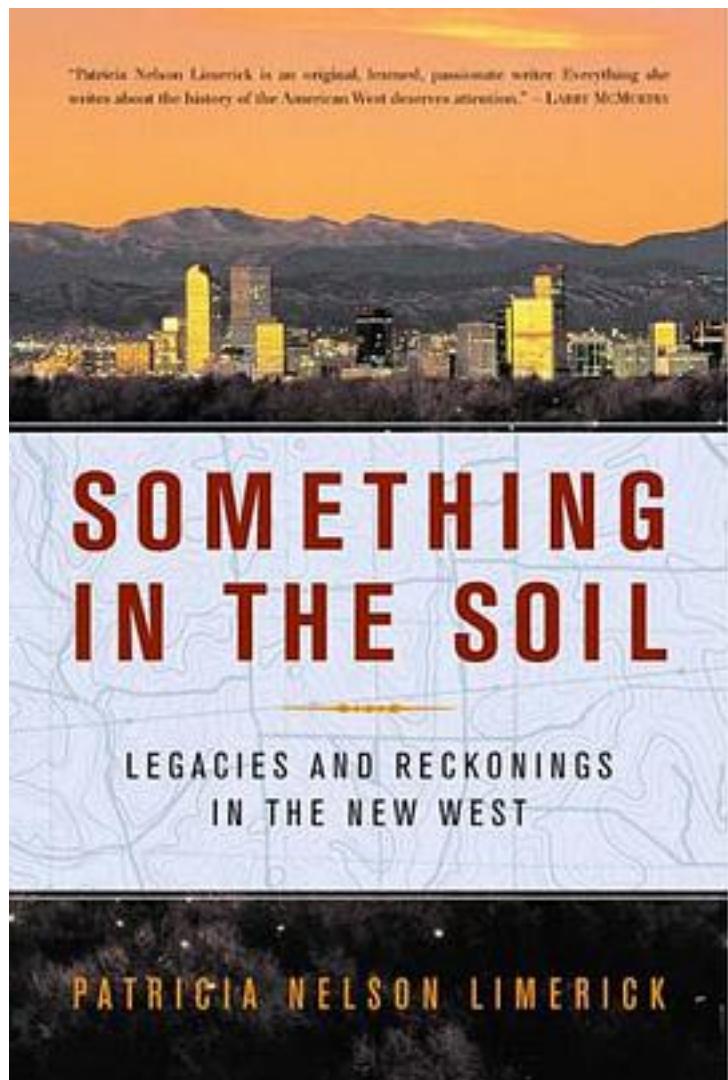


# Something in the Soil



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At the beginning of the 21st century, the American West is a region of great views and great fiction, vigorous growth and equally vigorous conflict. In this wide-ranging collection of essays and arguments, Patricia Nelson Limerick continues the project she began with "The Legacy of Conquest", travelling 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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