In 2012, a group of Western U.S. sociolinguists came together for an informal meeting at Stanford University to discuss current research on Western U.S. English dialects. The initiative was an attempt to find ways to align their research interests and encourage more work on the vastly understudied English dialects of this American region. *Speech in the Western States* is a direct result of this initiative and the research presented at the resulting American Dialect Society panel. The chapters contained focus on how a number of regionally defining differences in vowels are instantiated in parts of the West with very different migratory histories and, in modern times, with very different senses of place and practice. *Speech in the Western States* takes the important first steps toward understanding the vowel changes that have moved through the Western U.S. this past century and that continue to shape speech in the Western states.

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