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★ Walking the Clouds: An Anthology of Indigenous Science Fiction

Edited by Grace L. Dillon. Univ. of Arizona, \$24.95 (272p) ISBN 978-0-8165-2982-7

Dillon's superb anthology, the first devoted to indigenous SF, highlights long-overlooked authors alongside better-known figures such as Nalo Hopkinson and Leslie Marmon Silko. The categories include "Slipstream," a genre Native American SF helped create, and "Apocalypse," something many Aboriginal populations feel has already happened to them. Gerald Vizenor's "Custer on the Slipstream" (1978) is the first of several stories dealing with Custer and Crazy Horse. Native views of space and time and reversing the notion of first contact are likewise recurring themes, with both appearing in an engaging excerpt from Gerry William's 1994 novel The Black Ship. Another regular visitor is the Ghost Dance, meant to drive whites from the Americas; Sherman Alexie shows a world where this worked, albeit delayed, in "Distances" (1993). Every piece is a perspective twister and a thought inducer built on solid storytelling from ancient and newer traditions, and the anthology will encourage readers to further investigate indigenous speculative works. (Apr.) *Reviewed on: 02/06/2012*