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Review of *Earth and Sky: Visions of the Cosmos in Native American Folklore* Edited by Ray A. Williamson and Claire E. Farrer

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Earth and Sky: Visions of the Cosmos in Native American Folklore. Edited by Ray A. Williamson and Claire E. Farrer. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992. Introduction, black and white illustrations and photographs, epilogue, index. 289 pp. \$16.95 paper.

This is a book for a wider audience than folklorists or anthropologists, though both will find substantive materials here for future research. It is a work that integrates a number of disciplinary perspectives—including ethnohistorical sources, archaeology, social theory, myth studies, religion and ritual, and astronomy—with remarkable economy and focus. The editors, Ray Williamson (from the United States Congress's Office of Technological Assessment) and Claire Farrer (an anthropologist at California State University at Chico), have illustrated the depth and complexities of Native American "Blue Archaeoastronomy" as a source for enhancing our understanding of diverse mythic worlds. The volume's essays range from the southwestern Zuni, Mescalero Apache, Navajo, and the Yuma-Piman peoples of Agua Caliente, to the California Cahuilla and Ajumawi, to a rapid survey of the Northwest, including Quinalt, Kwakiutl, Bella Coola, Tlingit, and most cogently the Tsimshian. Blackfoot, Lakota, and Pawnee celestial lore are also discussed, and in the Northeast the Seneca and the Ojibwa. An essay on the Alabama rounds out the circle.

Narrative materials, both archived and newly collected for this volume, illustrate the close ties linking narrative traditions, ritual activities, and celestial phenomena to the well-being and health of a people. A majority of the articles use narrative materials as a basis for reflections on the social and religious significance of stellar, lunar, and solar events. Several incorporate archaeological investigation with historical narratives, showing how Native peoples have long observed the night sky as a template for primordial values and social-religious practices recorded in visible structures such as the Pawnee Earthlodge, the

Navajo Hooghan, the Ojibwa Shaking Tent, or the more than two thousand petroglyphs and some fifty ground figures at Sears Point in Arizona.

Native American observers demonstrate a keen, clear-eyed awareness of naked-eye astronomy that requires special efforts on the part of non-native observers. While camping one clear night, Von Del Chamberlain, director of the Hanson Planetarium in Salt Lake City, discovered that the stars of the Chief's Council (Corona Borealis) as recorded on the nineteenth-century Skidi star chart do indeed consist of twelve stars and a thirteenth "fire-tender" in the center. He later confirmed this observation by stellar photography. Similar constellations are found in Navajo dry-paintings, each with its own narratives tied to religious rituals. First-hand observation among star-watchers linked many celestial formations with significant patterns of social and religious organization and regular events, such as solstitial sunrises and sunsets, and became the basis for many large-scale religious ceremonies.

All in all, this is an excellent book with much valuable information that adds increasing significance to the age-old practice of sky-watching and clearly illustrates the centrality of sky-lore within many Native American religious traditions.

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