

## Traditional Stories of Sexuality:

### Coyote's Carelessness

*(Wasco-Warm Springs)*

Coyote was going along and he came to a river where five pretty sisters were bathing and washing clothes some distance from each other. "What pretty girls," Coyote said to himself. "I wonder how I can enjoy them all." He thought a little and then turned himself into a baby laced up on a papoose board and set himself adrift on the river.

Pretty soon he drifted down to the oldest sister. "Oh! What a beautiful baby!" she said. She pulled it ashore and picked it up. Well, that Coyote turned back into himself and before she knew what was happening he had his way with her. Then he became a baby again and drifted down to the second oldest sister. "Oh, my! What a cute baby!" she said. "I must save it!" But when she picked it up out of the water, it was that Coyote! And so he went, fooling two more sisters along the way until he reached the youngest.

When she saw the baby drifting down she said, "There's something funny about this. Let me see." She held the baby in the water with one hand and quickly unlaced it with the other. Sure enough, it was that Coyote! It seems that when he turned himself into a baby, he forgot to change his penis, too. When the youngest sister saw he was no baby, she threw him far out into the river. He was careless, but she was careful.



## Traditional Stories of Sexuality:

### Coyote Dances with a Star

*(Cheyenne)*

Because the Great Mystery Power had given Coyote much of his medicine, Coyote himself grew very powerful and very conceited. There was nothing, he believed, that he couldn't do. He even thought he was more powerful than the Great Mystery, for Coyote was sometimes wise but also a fool. One day long ago, it came into his mind to dance with a star. He saw a bright star coming up from behind a mountain, and called out, "Ho, you star, wait and come down! I want to dance with you."

The star descended so Coyote could get hold of him, and then soared up into the sky, with Coyote hanging on for dear life. Round and round the sky went the star. Coyote got very tired, and the arm that was holding onto the star grew numb, as if it were coming out of its socket.

"Star," he said, "I've done enough dancing for now. I'll let go and be getting back home."

"No, wait; we're too high up" said the star. "Wait until I come lower over the mountain."

Coyote looked down at the earth. He thought it seemed quite near. "I'm tired, star; I think I'll leave now; we're low enough," he said, and let go. Coyote had made a bad mistake. He dropped down, down, down. After a long while, Coyote pulled himself up. He boasted, "Who besides me could dance with stars, and fall out of the sky and live to tell the tale? I am Coyote. I am powerful. I can do anything."

Coyote was sitting in front of his lodge one night, when from behind the mountain there rose a strange kind of star, a very fast one, trailing a long, shining tail. Coyote said to himself, "Look at that fast star, what fun to dance with him!" He called out, "Ho, strange star with the long tail! Wait for me; come down; let's dance!"

The strange star shot down, and Coyote grabbed hold. The star whirled off into the vastness of the universe. Again Coyote had made a bad mistake. This star was the fastest thing in the universe. It whirled Coyote around so swiftly that bit by bit, small pieces of Coyote were flung off, until at last only Coyote's right hand was holding onto that fast star.

Soon the strewn pieces of Coyote started looking for each other, slowly coming together, forming up into Coyote again. Coyote called out: "Great Mystery! I was wrong. I'm not as powerful as you. I'm not as powerful as I thought. Have pity on me!"

Then the Great Mystery Power spoke: "Friend Coyote. I gave you four lives. Two you have already wasted foolishly. Better watch out!"

"Have pity on me," wailed Coyote. "Give me back my right hand."

"That's up to the star, my friend. You must be patient. Wait until the star appears to you, then maybe he will shake your hand off."

"How often does this star appear?"

"Once in a hundred lifetimes," said the Great Mystery.



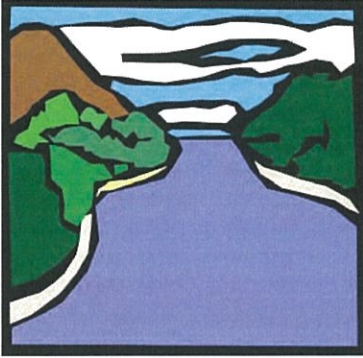
## Traditional Stories of Sexuality:

### Coyote & the Mallard Duck

*(Nez Perce)*

Coyote was traveling up the river when he saw five mallard duck girls swimming on the other side. He hid himself in the bushes and became aroused right away. Then he thought out a plan to satisfy himself. Coyote lengthened his penis and let it fall into the river. It floated on top of the water. Coyote didn't like this, so he pulled it back in and tied a small rock to it. This was just right. It floated just below the surface of the water where no one could see it. He sent it across to where the girls were swimming. He began having sex with the oldest girl. Now, these girls did not know what was wrong with their oldest sister, the way she was moving around in the water and making strange sounds. Then they saw what was happening and they grabbed the penis and tried to pull it out. When they couldn't, they got on the bank and held down their older sister and tried to pull it out that way, but they couldn't and they began laughing about it. When coyote had satisfied himself, he called over the girls and said, "My sister, what is the problem over there?" They told him. He said, "Cut the thing off with some wire grass." They did, and Coyote cut the other end off where he was, and the middle section of the penis fell in the river and became a ledge. The eldest girl became ill. Coyote went down the river a short distance, swam across the river, and then came upstream to the girls' camp, where the oldest girl was almost dead.

The girls recognized Coyote and said, "Coyote, the medicine man has come." They asked him to cure the sick girl. He told them that he would do it, but that they had to close up all the chinks in the lodge so no one could see and steal his medicine. He told them to leave him alone with the girl for a while. He got the sisters together around the lodge and told them to sing a song and keep time on a log with sticks. "Keep time on the log very carefully, for now I am going to take it out." Coyote began singing, "I will stick it back on, I will stick it back on." He went into the lodge and had sex with the mallard duck girl again and recovered the end of his penis. The girl was cured. After that, everyone said the medicine of Coyote was very powerful.



## Traditional Stories of Sexuality:

### Iktome & the Ignorant Girl

*(Brule Sioux)*

A pretty winchinchala—a girl—had never been with a man yet, and Iktome—Spider Man—was eager to sleep with her. He dressed himself up like a woman and went looking for the girl. He found her about to cross a stream. “Hello, how are you friend?” he asked. “Let’s wade across the river together.” They lifted their robes and stepped into the water. “You have very hairy legs,” said the girl to Iktome. “That’s because I am older. When women get older, some are like this.”

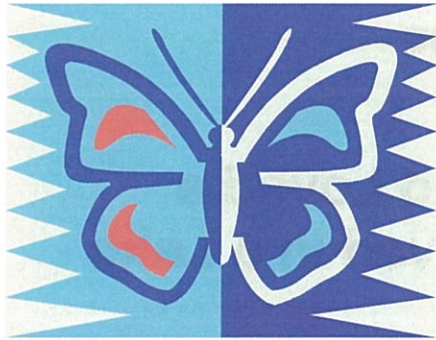
The water got deeper and they lifted their robes higher. “You have a very hairy backside,” said the girl to Iktome. “Yes, some of us are like that,” answered Iktome. The water still got deeper and they lifted their robes up very high. “What’s that strange thing dangling between your legs?” asked the girl, who had never seen a naked man. “Ah,” complained Iktome, “It’s a kind of a growth, like a large wart.” “It’s very large for a wart,” said the girl.

“Yes, oh my! An evil magician wished it on me. It’s cumbersome, it’s heavy; it gets in the way. How I wish to be rid of it!” “My elder sister,” said the girl, “I pity you. We could cut this thing off.” “No, no, my younger sister. There’s only one way to get rid of it, because the evil growth was put there by a sorcerer.” “What might this be, the way to get rid of it?” “Ah, the only thing to do is to stick it in there, between your legs.” “Is that so? Well, I guess women should help each other.” “Yes, pilamaye—thanks—you are very kind. Let’s get out of this water and go over there where the grass is soft.”

Spider Man made the girl lie down on the grass, got on top of her, and entered her. “Oh, my,” said the girl, “it sure is big. It hurts a little.” “Think how it must hurt me!” said Iktome, breathing hard. “It hurts a little less now,” said the girl. Iktome finished and got off the girl. The winchinchala looked and said, “Indeed, it already seems to be smaller.”

“Yes, but not small enough yet,” answered Iktome. “This is hard work. Let me catch my breath, then we must try again.” After a while, he got on top of the girl once more. “It really isn’t so bad at all,” said the ignorant winchinchala, “but it seems to have gotten bigger. It is indeed powerful magic.”

Iktome did not answer her. He was busy. He finished and rolled off. “There’s little improvement,” said the girl. “We must be patient and persevere,” answered Iktome. So, after a while, they went at it again. “Does it hurt very much?” the girl asked Iktome. “Oh, my, yes, but I am strong and brave,” answered Iktome, “I can bear it.” “I can bear it, too,” said the girl. “It really isn’t altogether unpleasant,” said the girl after they did it for a fourth time. “But I must tell you, sister, I don’t believe you will ever get rid of this strange thing.” “I have my doubts, too,” answered Spider Man. “Well,” said the ignorant winchinchala, “one could get used to it.” “Yes,” answered Iktome, “one must make the best of it. But let’s try once more just to be sure.”



## **Traditional Stories of Sexuality:**

### **Tolowim Woman & Butterfly Man**

*(Maidu)*

A Tolowim woman went out to gather food. She took her child with her, and while she worked, she stuck the point of the cradle-board in the ground and left the child alone.

A large butterfly flew past, and she started after it and chased it for a long time. She would almost catch it, and then just miss. She thought, "Perhaps I can't run fast enough because of this heavy thing," and she threw away her deerskin robe. But still she never could quite overtake the creature. Finally she threw away her apron too and hurried on, chasing the butterfly until night came. Then, her child forgotten, she lay down under a tree and went to sleep.

When she awoke in the morning, she found a man lying beside her. He said, "You have followed me this far; perhaps you would like to follow me always."

Without thinking of her child at all, the woman rose and followed the butterfly man. By and by they came to a large valley, whose southern side was full of butterflies.

When the two reached the edge of the valley, the man said, "No one has ever come through this valley alive. But you'll be safe if you don't lose sight of me. Follow closely." They traveled for a long time. "Keep tight hold of me; don't let go," the butterfly man said again and again.

When they had come half way through the valley, other butterflies swarmed about them in great numbers. They flew every way, all around the couple's heads and in their faces, for they wanted to get the Tolowim woman for themselves.

She watched them for a long time, holding tightly to her new husband. But at last, unable to resist, she let go of him and reached out to seize one of the others. She missed that one and she tried to grab now one, now the other, but always failed, and so she wandered in the valley forever, dazed and lost.

She died there, and the butterfly man she had lost went on through the valley to his home. And now when people speak of the olden times they say that this woman lost her lover, and tried to get others but lost them, and went crazy and died.



## Traditional Stories of Sexuality:

### The Woman Who Loved a Serpent Who Lived in a Lake

*(Passamaquoddy)*

There was a very beautiful woman. She turned the heads of all the men. She married, and her husband died very soon after, but she immediately took another. Within a single year she had five husbands. Even though these were the cleverest and handsomest and bravest in the tribe, each one died after marrying the beautiful woman. And then she married again.

This, the sixth, was such a silent man that he passed for a fool. But he was wiser than people thought. He came to believe, by thinking it over, that this woman had some strange secret. He resolved to find it out. So he watched her all the time. He kept his eye on her by night and by day.

It was summer, and she proposed to go into the woods to pick berries, and to camp there. By and by, when they were in the forest, she suggested that he should go on to the spot where they intended to remain and build a wigwam. He said that he would do so. But he went a little way into the woods and watched her.

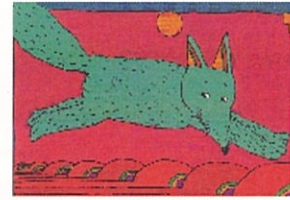
As soon as she believed that he was gone, she rose and walked rapidly onwards. He followed her, unseen. She went on to a deep, wild place among the rocks and she came to a pond. She sat down and sang a song. A great foam, or froth, rose to the surface of the water. Then in the foam appeared the tail of a serpent. The creature was of immense size.

The woman, who had laid aside all her garments, embraced the serpent, which twined around her, enveloping all her limbs and body in his folds. The husband watched it all. He now understood that, the venom of the serpent having entered the woman, she had saved her life by transferring it to others, who died.

He went on to the camping ground and built a wigwam. He made up two beds; he built a fire. His wife came. She was earnest that there should be only a single bed. He sternly bade her lie by herself. She was afraid of him. She lay down, and went to sleep. He arose three times during the night to replenish the fire. Every time he called her, and there was no answer. In the morning, he shook her. She was dead. She had died by the poison of the serpent. They sunk her in the pond where the snake lived.

## Coyote's Carelessness

- What was Coyote's motivation for his actions?
- Was Coyote's behavior acceptable?
- Why didn't the other sisters get suspicious?



## Coyote Dances with a Star

- What lesson do you think Coyote learned from his experience with the first star?
- What did he learn from the comet?
- Why didn't he learn his lesson after the first star and not try and dance with the stars again?



## Coyote and the Mallard Duck

- What was Coyote's motivation behind his actions?
- Was his behavior acceptable?
- What could the sisters have done differently to prevent this from happening?
- How was the sick girl healed?
- Did Coyote deserve to be recognized as a powerful?



## Iktome and the Ignorant Girl

- What was Coyote's motivation behind his actions?
- Was his behavior acceptable?
- Does the girl realize what is happening to her?
- What could have the girl done differently to prevent this from happening?
- What will happen to the girl now? How will she be treated? How will she behave?



## Tolowim Woman and Butterfly Man

- What did the woman hope to gain?
- Why didn't the woman hang onto the first Butterfly Man, as he instructed her to?



## The Woman Who Loved a Serpent Who Lived in a Lake

- Did the woman know she would kill her husbands if she had sex with them? Did she mean to kill her husbands?
- Why did the last husband get suspicious?
- What did she die from?

