

Fox and coyote and whale

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Native American traditional stories, folktales, are stories passed down from generation to generation by storytelling and performance. Native Americans emphasized the importance of living in harmony with the natural world. They had complex religious beliefs, sophisticated political systems, and strong morals. Some of the stories are creation myths, tales of heroes, and tricksters. Trickster tales are stories that have animals or human characters who engage in deceit, violence, or magic. Often trickster tales are said to explain why the world is the way it is.

"Coyote and the Buffalo" and "Fox and Coyote and Whale" are two trickster tales, retold by Mourning Dove, explaining how Coyote's action created changes in the world. In these two trickster tales, Coyote, the main character shares some similarities in morals, character, and transformation. Yet there exist differences in how these traits are presented. One similarity between these two trickster tales is that they both have purposes to teach morals. The moral teaching in "Coyote and the Buffalo" is to not be greedy.

An example would be when Coyote killed the cow for more food because he was tired of eating only the fat. As a result he gets the remains of the cow stolen and is left with nothing. In "Fox and Coyote and Whale", one of the morals is not to steal someone's wife.

Whale steals Fox's wife and takes her to his lodge which leads Coyote and Fox's wife. Whale ends up getting his head chopped off and thrown into the ocean. They both teach morals, just in different ways. One difference that these two trickster tales have is Coyote's character trait. For example, in "Coyote and the Buffalo", Coyote is portrayed as numbskull.

Actions like kicking the Buffalo Bull's skull out of revenge, killing the cow Buffalo Bull gave him thinking Buffalo Bull will never know, and trusting a stranger with the little food he had left to take a nap, all make Coyote a numbskull. In " Fox and Coyote and Whale", Coyote is smart and thoughtful.

When Coyote helps Fox outsmart the water maidens, into telling them where Fox's wife was located, they go on a journey to recapture Fox's wife from Whale. Even tho Coyote in one tale contrasts Coyote's character from the other they both did well people. Coyote from " Coyote and the Buffalo", got out of dieing by offering Buffalo Bull new horns.

Buffalo accepted so it was a win-win situaton for Coyote. In the other tale, Coyote helped find Coyote's wife by decieving the water maidens, and getting information before killing them. This helped regain Fox's wife's love.

The coyote in these tales had diiferent mentalities from one another, one being an idiot and one being smart. Another similarity that these tales have is that they both explain why the world is how it is. For example, in " Coyote and the Buffalo", when Coyote gives Buffalo Bull new horns, they become the horns that all buffalos would have from that point on.

Also, when Coyote kills the cow that was given to him by Buffalo as food he decides to go back to Buffalo to ask for another one but the cow that Coyote killed returned from the dead and refused to go with coyote again and Buffalo denies him another one.

This explains why there are no buffalo in the Kettle Falls on the Columbia Rive, all because of Coyote. In " Fox and Coyote and Whale", Fox and Coyote

go after Fox's wife who was taken by Whale. After Fox and Coyote rescue her, Fox's cuts off Whale's head and tosses it into the ocean.

This is why there are no whales in the rivers, and Whale could no longer make love to the wives of other men. This trickster tale also explains why Land people and Water people don't like each other. Coyote plays a role in how everything changed and how everything transformed.

From reading both trickster tales, I learned that by deceiving people you can get things out of them. These tales definitely taught many moral, such as respect the dead, don't take what you have for granted, the importance of family and fidelity, etc. It gave a background on how the world transformed.