

him, this is not always the case for us but we can still learn something about avoiding the embarrassment of getting snared. The desire to have others take our inclinations as universal is a wish to make frozen the constant movement in this moment preceding the void of non-life, to try to hush a screaming world into silence. If the political pessimist finds love privately in a clenched fist, social anarchists live to jerk-off on other people in the streets. The indigenous eroticism of trickster sexuality leads us to question who and what we should be defiling. Did the Cascades and the Columbia River consent to be bound and ravaged by glaciers? Are they proud to have survived their traumatic past or the beauty born from it?

The Ho-chunk trickster speaks about his sexual organ in the third person. His parts are more like individuated personas than the components of some discrete self reflective creature. Trickster is enacting a new game for humans to play that we could tentatively call hierarchy. In the space of these stories the tribe is becoming a body-like form that circles towards a hardening unity. The tricky-one *Wakjunkagas* sense-of-self is constantly fractured and his body is in metaphysical conflicts with itself. Always driven to feed his insatiable lust he wears a stone around his neck in order to get hard. When his penis is eventually severed the plants arrowleaf, *tokewe-hira*, *pqxe*, pond lily, and dog's tooth grow from his phallic root. Egoists sometimes gesture towards a self devouring urge to an expanding union that the Ho-Chunk "being of reversals" might recognize. To be clear we can become clowns in this world but never incarnate the trickster's irreverent flesh.

*Individualidades tendiendo a lo Salvaje* recently left an envelope containing an explosive device that was found by a young girl in Mexico City. Their communique expressed a desire for ever growing attacks on the social fabric in all directions. "May explosive love letters proliferate!" The love of the unhuman is a welcomed novelty in anarchist spaces but if we really want to be done with humanism, why not consider setting the ancestral forests aflame and blowing up the sacred mountains as well?

Although we inhabit the same streams and valleys, the different origin stories we draw from have a defining influence on how we perceive our world and what we are drawn towards. As coyote we are always starting anew. When we see the trickster he is always in midstep. The clown is a constant state of predicament. Omaha rabbit anally impregnated Iktinike when they became *winktes* (two-spirits) for a day. Stones transform one another. Cliffs turn to sediment. As we create our star maps we play them out and become part of them. We are always redrawing them, because the constellations are constantly shifting. What tales have we heard and which will we retell?

When we discover an unknown star we might find a path to the former world.

In Moby Dick, the savage Queequeg is from a place that is not on any map, because "true places never are." Melville's native wants to experience more from civilized society than the taxonomy of captive whales. The boundaries and borders of the New World and the Old World are drawn only by our navigational markings. They do not exist on any chart. Humans are animals. Cetacea can still be fish. Stones can fuck. When we cross oceans we can be sailors, boats, whales, or currents. In our search will we become salmon who shatter themselves on concrete dams, or warriors who throw ourselves from the Nochixtlan Rock to crash onto the conquistadors below, or something else entirely?

Suggested reading:

*Cataclysms on the Columbia*. John Eliot Allen and Marjorie Burns with Sam C. Sargent

*Living Sideways: Tricksters in American Indian Oral Traditions*. Franchot Ballinger

*Mirror of Heaven: Cross-Cultural Transference of the Sacred Geography of the Black Hills*. Linea Sundstrom

*Transmotion*. Gerald Vizenor

*How the Stirner Eats Gods*. Alejandro de Acosta

*An Invitation to Desertion*. Bellamy Fitzpatrick

*The Unique and its Property*. Max Stirner

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# The Erotic Life of Stones

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“*The uncertain, unsettled condition of this science of Cetology is in the very vestibule attested by the fact, that in some quarters it still remains a moot point whether a whale be a fish. In his System of Nature, A.D. 1776, Linnwus declares, ‘I hereby separate the whales from the fish’*” Moby Dick

What do stones want? What do we make of their insistent silence? There is a marked quality of difference in our existence and theirs but stones know something of the unfulfilling, predictable routines of daily life. For some of us finding meaning means being receptive to the language of phosphorescent trails left below the surface. If stones have desires they are likely to be as resistant to being expressed in words as ours are.

In Melville’s novel the science of classifying whales is shown in an unfinished state because scientific investigations are always insufficient, cursory, and in process. Ishmael feels that the study of cetology should be left incomplete like the “Cathedral of Cologne.” When we ask about the significance of the sea all rigid systems will eventually fail us. Even as we cast our nets the whale has already evaded capture. When the perceived world is torn from the worlds of our bodies and our intersubjectivity, we risk losing full participation in it all. But, if our purpose moves beyond detached inquiry to attunement with the sediment, we can embody the wildly civilized and primitively sophisticated. We can take human form to become flora.

During the Precambrian era, a major uplift occurred when two continents collided. The intensity of the pressure caused sedimentary rocks to turn to metamorphic rocks, magma to rise to the earth’s crust and the land to fold, break and tumble until it became the Black Hills. Volcanic activity contributed to the rise of the Northern Hills but to the south, massive sheets of granite intruded the preexisting beds of sedimentary and metamorphic rocks, including 2 billion year old quartzite, phonolite, and, most notably, dark, bountiful rhyolite. The granitic pegmatites that thrust into their elders were rippled through with crystals— quartz, feldspar, and beryl.

According to Lakota storytelling when the world was created everything was at peace. Every creature was a contented vegetarian. At some point the bison began to think they were the strongest and decided to kill the people and eat their meat. The humans said “That’s not right we should hunt you instead, it’s only fair.” To settle the matter a great race was held. During the race, to decide who could consume whom, a track became worn down and created the boundaries of *Paha Sapa* (the Black Hills). We all know who the victors were. We won our right to eat flesh.

1.8 billion years of watery caresses reduced this jumble of angles to rocky hillsides and clastic pebbles, sand, and clay, which in turn solidified into outlying beds of sandstone, spreading itself over the Dakota formation, the primary rock formation of the area, also sandstone, but born of sand from different rocks.

*“As one group replaced another over the last several centuries, these locations [in the Black Hills] continued to be recognized as sacred locales and to operate within a system of ethno-astronomical and mythological beliefs. The falling star myth cycle clearly illustrates a belief in a dual universe, wherein star people in the sky and humans on earth occupied analogous and sometimes interchangeable roles”*

Mirror of Heaven

For the Lakota, like many traditional cultures, the line between the earth and the sky is undifferentiated or even nonexistent. Looking up at the constellations, we can still find any pattern we are open to sensing. We can see one star as dried willow or a buffalo rib. One thing can contain a duality or be tri-fold. Animism—from *Anima*. the Latin term for life—signals the existence of spirit in all objects and phenomena. By this definition the stones are still breathing. We can have fervent threesomes with the clouds and mountains. We can be penetrated by deer antlers or dissolve in newly forming rivers.

If life is defined by death, reproduction, or movement, at what point does a hill become an orgy?

Love is open to interpretation like all experiences. Trying to define it with the precise use of language can never guarantee an exact answer. As with attempts at understanding the leviathan with Cetology our conclusions will always be incomplete. The erotic life of stones remains obscure to the scientific gaze.

Much more recently after the formation of the Black Hills, just 40 million years ago, on the other side of the same land mass— a crescent of granite mountains were born. They pushed themselves up above sea

level, as the land between them fell below it, creating the Columbia Basin. Many volcanoes erupted into the basin, spurting lava over and over again, flooding it with a thick layer of igneous rock— the Columbia Plateau. This flood of rock spilled the inland sea out into a river, slowly parting the mountains and dampening valleys.

Love takes the forms of agape (God), platonic (Friendship), or eros (Passion). Other times it is desire in a general sense. From *philos* we get philosophy, the love of wisdom or of knowledge as if these are necessarily equivalent. *Philia* from the greek denotes friendship. In this sense the use of words like pedophilia, or “friend of boys” could seem euphemistic. We know what one means by the cliché “I love the sunset,” but what if they intended to say “I am unbearably aroused by the Sun’s rays,” or “the ocean gets me so wet?”

38 million years later, the Ice Age brought massive glaciers, ranging in height from 5,000-10,000 feet past the Okanogan Valley. This dam of ice trapped the river channels, causing more water to flood into the Columbia Basin. With the original channel buried in ice, the Grand Coulee began to form. How this happened and the length of time it took remains a mystery. Some geologists believe a succession of floods carved it out, while others claim the Columbia River itself slowly eroded it away from the mountains in its search for a new path. It is impossible to know for certain.

The old Cascade mountains rose up from the earth, but were unable to stop the river’s search— a deep ravine, the Columbia River gorge, was formed. Whereas ice can halt the flow of water, rocks are destined to acquiesce to it.

In Colville Indian mythology, Coyote wanted to help his friend Kingfisher who wasn’t having much luck catching salmon. Four sisters had set up a trap preventing any big fish from swimming up the river. He changed into a small wooden bowl and floated on the water until he got caught in their trap. The sisters lifted the bowl from the river and used it to hold leftover fish. The next morning the bowl was found empty. At this point, one of the sisters became angry and threw a stone at the wooden vessel. On impact it turned into a baby boy. The sisters decided to keep the child because he would grow up and be helpful to them. When the sisters left to find berries the coyote changed into a man and started digging up the dam they had created to catch fish. Ever since then there have been new rocks and rapids in the Columbia River basin. Coyote had changed its course forever.

Arousal by thunderstorms is a little researched paraphilia. *Ichthyophilia* is the sexual attraction to fish. When bears masturbate they often fantasize about inflexible park rangers or lust after zookeepers in captivity, much like human prisoners imagine guards in leg irons, or how the bourgeoisie play with the idea of being possessed by sinewy lumpen beasts. Ecology is a love for living systems. But, when we speak of pleasure, suffering is never far from our lips. Love almost always conceals a will to sacrifice. Eco-extremists like *Reaccion Salvaje* communicate this when they seem to say “Fuck the World!”

Near the end of the Ice Age, volcanic cones formed the high Cascades. As the ice dams of the glaciers began to thaw and break apart, lakes as far as Montana broke free and washed over the mountains and the Columbia Basin, carrying with them large boulders and flooding the area in 400 feet of water, icebergs, and sediment. After the ice finally, fully melted and the floods ebbed, the river was able to return to its former bed, but the channeled scab lands and large coulees remain, torn through by cataclysm.

It is sometimes said that nihilists are masturbators. Instead of getting on with the hard work of existing the unbeliever revels in an empty space that absolutely nothing can fill. Nietzsche’s *die liebe zum leben* (the love for life) is offered as free of contradiction, but where is the instrument of love located if not the mind, the flesh, or the will? Physicist Erwin Schrodinger defined life as that which “delays the decay into thermodynamical equilibrium (death).” One popular definition of biological life is that it’s a sexually transmitted and inevitably terminal disease. Organic life is resistance to disorder (to order?) in the final instance.

The tribal trickster in native storytelling also affirms life, but almost always while upsetting the peculiarity of communal stillness. A story from Gros Ventre mythology describes how *Nixant* came upon an Elk-skull while he was going along (like he always does). He noticed some white mice dancing inside. In some versions told to anthropologists he wanted to stick his head inside so he could dance with them, in many others he inserted something else and it got stuck. He may be used to changing into water-monsters to grab young girls but sometimes he gets caught. Spider acts like he does because death is unknowable to