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We examine the historical relationship between humans and wolves as illustrated through stories of North American Indigenous Peoples, especially the Great Plains and Intermountain West, exemplified by Cheyenne, Lakota, Blackfoot, Pawnee, and Shoshone peoples. Indigenous stories have not been employed in scholarly examinations of the origins of 'dogs'. These tribal peoples were tough and resilient and wanted companion animals as tough and resilient as themselves. All Plains tribes examined closely have stories that describe wolves as guides, protectors, or entities that directly taught or showed humans how to hunt after humans arrived in the Americas. Indigenous stories provide insights into the process of domestication of wolves, and such stories may indicate at what stage different peoples were in their relationship with wolves. There appears to have existed a reciprocal relationship in which both species provided food for each other or shared food. This is important because it is often assumed by scholars from the Eurocentric tradition that the first wolves associated with humans scavenged or hung around camps waiting for scraps; thus, from this perspective, the process of domestication began with wolves being dominated by humans. In contrast, we argue for a coevolutionary reciprocal relationship between *Homo sapiens* and *Canis lupus* that existed from the early days of tribes until at least the nineteenth century. Our results do not mean that many tribes lacked fully domesticated dogs that were not wolflike in phenotype, but that the process of domestication may have taken a different path than is generally assumed.

Key words: wolves, *Canis lupus*, dogs, Indigenous people, cooperative hunting

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