

Saving Language and Culture - Joseph Marshall III- OSEU 7

I find it, I don't know how this fits in with that aspect there, that particular one, but I find it interesting that when boarding schools were started and the government was attempting to kill the Indian and save the man, that the biggest instrument for that was education. It was the schools. Native kids were sent to schools who were forbidden to speak Lakota or any other native language. The boys' hair were cut, we were made to wear different clothes, all those things happened.

And we began to learn a different history, a different way of doing things. Now you fast forward to today and there are Lakota language courses, other native language courses in schools, we're doing what you all are doing. And there are, what now, 38 native colleges on reservations throughout the country, or so.

And as far as the Lakota colleges are concerned, since I was part of that process with Sint One of the reasons we did that was, one, to enable, to provide an opportunity for kids who otherwise wouldn't have, young people who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity to gain a college education while at home. And the second, and probably just as important if not more, was to preserve language and culture. So we were using the very instrument that was intended and designed to take it away from us to save it. So we're starting to come full circle.