

BUUF Racial Justice Ministry

Suggested Video of the Month – April 2021

Unspoken: America's Native American Boarding Schools (2017, 56:43).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yo1bYj-R7FO>

Information about the video

For many, boarding schools may be a familiar chapter in Native American history in the US. This video adds to that chapter by a first-person perspective. It is a documentary produced and aired by KUED, a PBS affiliate in Utah, and uses the stories of living former and present boarding school students and their relatives to describe the history, operation and legacy of the Federal Boarding School system used by the US government to “civilize” Native Americans. Note that some of the students in the video are teen-agers and young adults, indicating that boarding schools are not strictly a thing of the past.

Questions to consider and discuss with others

- What part of the video had the greatest emotional impact on you? Why that part more than other parts of the video?
- Some of the individuals in the video are teen-agers and young adults; some are older. Think back over their stories. What similarities did you notice? What differences? What implications does this history have for relations between Native Americans and non-natives now and in the future?
- What, if any, signs of hope have you seen over the past 5 to 10 years? Consider personal experiences, news reports, and popular media (books, movies and television programs). Do you see signs that there has been progress or could be progress going forward?
- What in the video has challenged something you thought you “knew” about Native Americans or leaves you curious and wanting to learn more? What might be your next steps?