

My name is Judy Roy, enrolled member of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of Western Montana, my "pedigree" is 4/4. As a young child I was removed from my mom & dad and taken to a catholic boarding school where I was stripped of my cultural identity. My 3 sisters who were already there told me the only language I knew when I arrived was Salish. I was not allowed to speak it and if overheard my mouth was washed out with soap. My hair was cut off. As I grew older I remember been referred to as a heathen and a savage. They did a "good job" on me, I'm 73 years old and feel so out of touch, almost like a tourist whenever I go to Indian doings. I try to teach my grandkids but I don't know much and do not feel apart of the Indian community. At times when I think back to how we were treated I feel like I want to cry because I feel like a part of nothing and don't know where I belong. My three sisters have died, two from alcoholism. I wonder how it would've been if I was allowed to be raised Indian?