

Interviewer: All right, so the Department of Religious Studies of the University of Kansas is conducting a research project that seeks to preserve the history of religious experience in Kansas. We would like to record your memories of your experiences with religion and/or religious organizations. We expect that each interview will take about 1 hour. We assure that you are not obligated to participate and may discontinue your involvement at any time. Since we are trying to create a public record of Kansas religious history we are primarily interviewing persons who agree to let their interviews be available to the general public through our website and to be identified by name as the person who is interviewed. Should you have any questions about the project, please contact Professor Tim Miller at 785-864-7263 or [tkansas@ku.edu](mailto:tkansas@ku.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may call the Human Subjects Protection Office at 785-864-7429 or email [mdenning@ku.edu](mailto:mdenning@ku.edu). \*sniff\* Could you please state your name and your tribal affiliation?

Jimmy Beason: Uh, Jimmy Lee Beason II, Osage Nation.

Interviewer: Um, so could you talk a little bit about the traditional territory of the Osage Nation?

Jimmy Beason: Um, well traditional territory, um, encompassed most of Missouri, Arkansas, um, parts of uh, Kansas and Oklahoma, or the eastern, um, uh, areas of, you know, so, those states, you know, but uh, there's also, um, some stories that indicate that, um, we might have migrated from the east, like around the east coast area, um, so there's, uh, so just pretty much just the whole area we're at now is, uh, traditional Osage territory though, so. {interview took place in Lawrence, Kansas}

Interviewer: Um, and, are there any stories about first contact within the Osage Nation? Or is it mostly just settler histories?

Jimmy Beason: Uh, as far as I know, um, yeah, mainly just comes from, uh, documentation that, uh, early French fur traders had done, um, indicating their, uh, trade with, um, the Osage, um, so, as far as, like, stories being passed down, uh, within the Tribe, I'm not too aware of that. Most of that stuff is just, um, uh, documented through, uh, um, Europeans so.

Interviewer: Um, at what point were there religious institutions, um, or individuals coming to proselytize to the Osage Nation?

Jimmy Beason: At what time was that? Um, as far as I know, they're in the late 1700s, early 1800s. Uh, um, the United States had begun sending missionaries out to Osage Territory, um to, one: uh, gather intelligence, because a lot of times, um, what a lot of people don't understand is that missionaries, Christian missionaries at the time, were funded by the War Department. So, they were essentially working in collusion with the United States government at that time to kind of gather intel, um, and then they would, uh, have these accounts amongst the Osage, and they would send those accounts, um, back to, uh, people within the war department, um, and most of that was, uh, to kind of get the disposition of the Tribe, the numerical strength of the Tribe, um, and to try to just kind of gauge, um, just their overall, um, are they willing to trade, are they going to be hostile, that kind of stuff, you know. Um and then there was another component to it, um, another was to destabilize the traditional spiritual, um, belief system that Osages had. You know if you can, um, basically alter their belief system, um, then, you know, if you change that, you can, uh, then you made headway into disrupting them and, you know, to me it all comes down to, kind of, war tactic, you know, you're going to send people out, missionaries, and kind of destabilize them, um, try to alter their social organization a little bit, and then,

once you come in later, they'll already be come to the point, um, you know, where they won't be able to fight back, 'cause you've gathered all that information and are using it. Um but yeah, that was early 1800s/late 1700s when they started doing that, um, so yeah.

Interviewer: Do you know the denominations of the missionaries that were sent?

Jimmy Beason: There was a few, uh, Quakers, Protestants, um, a lot of the information I looked up personally, um, uh, I have a really good source, um, it's a journal, it's, uh, books. Protestant journals among those agents, so that was the kind of stuff he wrote, and that's how I found that they were, uh, in direct communication with, like, the War Department and stuff like that so, um, but yeah, there was Quakers, Protestants, uh, later the Catholics came in, and they were the ones who kind of stuck  
\*laughs\* so, 'cause most Osages down in the Oklahoma territory are Catholic, a lot of them are Catholic, so.

Interviewer: Um, so what specific methods did they use to achieve the things that you were talking about, uh, with infiltrating ...? -- I don't know if that's the right word — uh, the Osage Nation?

Jimmy Beason: Well, in the early 1800s, um, the Osages were pretty strong, uh, with their, um, belief system, and, you know, they wouldn't really, uh, overall they wouldn't budge on trying to convert, although there was some, um, sources that indicate that there were some Osages who kind of took up, um, you know, farming and stuff like that. Uh, but, overall, too, I think people don't understand is that the Osages, uh, they had their own intentions of sometimes inviting, uh, missionaries out, because it gave them access to tools, and stuff that they wanted. And, a lot of times, if they met with government officials, they would bring a priest along. And the Priest was kind of there to kind of, you know, um, basically, uh, kind of give the Osages a better bargaining position because if the, you know, U.S. officials saw that, they'd say, 'Oh, they're, they have priests with them' so, it kind of let-let them put their guard down when they would negotiate and stuff like that, so they had their own use for them. Um, so it-it wasn't just straight, um, missionaries coming in and trying to disrupt them. But, because they had them around, uh, their villages and, uh, settlements, but, um, they didn't really, um, get into it, it was kind of more like, on their end, there was-there was a tactic as well, to use them, you know, to get access to tools, things like that, that the missionaries could bring to them. Um, but, overall, from my understanding, the missionaries did try to come in, and they would walk around and try to talk about, you know, the Bible and stuff like that and, um, it would just fall on deaf ears, you know, but, um, of course that was before boarding schools, um, and, uh, when the native people in general were pretty much still strong in their beliefs and the traditional ways and value systems, um, but yeah, that was one way that, um, missionaries would try to come in and, um, you know, I guess infiltrate like, as you said, um, 'cause they knew that they had things that the Osage wanted, but then they, but of course, the Osages weren't going to, um, give up their belief system, uh, you know, at that time, uh, you know, if a missionary came in and could bring, you know, metal pots or things like that, you know, they'd let 'em, but they weren't about to compromise their belief system just because of that, you know, so.

Interviewer: So, how did the boarding school process affect the Osage Nation, at one opint-at what point did it start, um, you know, becoming a, uh, a thing that you would see a lot of kids being sent to these boarding schools?

Jimmy Beason: Um, kind of more towards the mid/late-1800s, once Native Nations had become somewhat militarily, um, dominated, uh. The United States Government took it upon itself to, uh, well,

“Indian Wars”, things like that, um, were becoming too expensive, so one way they could kind of stop, you know, any hostility towards them, um, was to target the children and, for the most part, um, most Tribes were effected by that, not just Osages, but um, in terms of the effect it had on them, uh, obviously, uh, they’re being sent to these, uh, boarding schools. Again, you see this collusion between, uh, Christian Missionaries and the government, military, um, so the kind of uh, it had on them was, uh, pretty severe, detrimental, um, boarding schools consisted of a lot of, uh, loneliness, abuse, sexual abuse, um, verbal abuse, physical abuse, um, most children were essentially, uh, kidnapped, taken from their homes, and then, uh, sent to boarding schools hundreds of miles away or whatever, and then they, um, were, uh, trying to erase their identity, you know, so, um, the kind of impact it had on those children, um, you know, they probably weren’t able to, you know, get teachings like they would, um, those traditional teachings were lost, um, so I think with the boarding schools it was pretty much, uh, you know, it was a psychological warfare on children, um, to kind of erase their identity. And, the end goal of that was to, kind of, turn Native people into, uh, “White Americans”, because that was their-the endgame, was to, you know, take away their identity and, um, if we take away their belief system, their spiritual foundations, um, they’re not going to want to put up any kind of resistance anymore, so, you know, if you think, a few generations of that and I mean it did, if kind of took that out because those ceremonies, those, uh, warrior societies, they all kind of disappeared and um, and then those children became absorbed into, you know, White American values, Christianity, um, individualism, capitalism, that kind of stuff, so, um, so it definitely had a very, um, uh, detrimental impact on Osage communities, not just Osages but for all Native people, so.

Interviewer: Uh, in terms of modern religious traditions, what sort of lasting impact has the boarding school era had on Osage religious traditions now?

Jimmy Beason: Um, can you rephrase that? \*laughs\*

Interviewer: \*laughs\* Um, how did the boarding school era change religious practice today? Is there a lasting effect on it--of the religious practice itself, not just the, uh, teachings?

Jimmy Beason: Oh yeah, definitely, I think, um, so with the boarding schools and kind of “Indian removal”, relocation, um, those efforts by the government to disrupt the social organization of, uh, Native Nations, in particular Osages, um, it uh, there was no-most ceremonies revolved around full clan participation, um, certain things had to be done with certain clans and once a lot of those clans, uh, disappeared or they were no longer, uh, operable, uh, they, um, uh, couldn’t practice what they used to practice. So, um, in that in connection with those kind of religious teachings that children were getting, it did begin to kind of shape this, kind of hybrid of, you know, little bit of traditional stuff, and a little bit of, like, Christian stuff, so, um, it did kind of blend it to some extent because there’s, although there are a lot of Osages who are Christians and Catholic, they still might go to Elonska and do ceremonies, you know, just things like that, go to a sweat, but they’ve also kind of ended up, uh, embracing this, um, Christian identity, you know, that was ultimately forced upon, you know, our ancestors, so you can kind of see how that has rooted itself within Native people, you know, uh, and to some extent has really, uh, I think pacified a lot of Native people, you know, um, because one of the main tenants of the Christianity is to, you know, turn the other cheek and do all these things, you know, and if you have come from a culture that has a war society and a peace society, and you have ways of dealing with conflicts that are rooted into your identity and that’s taken away, you know, um, later on you might not, uh, you know, be willing to resist those changes, you know, um. So yeah, it’s different and altered it to a point where, um,

although we can respect those older ways, um, we can also maintain those values, I think, but um, you know, so.

Interviewer: And the, uh, process of relocation, um, how did that start with the Osage Tribe?

Jimmy Beason: Um, so when Tribes, uh, Native Nations on the east coast were being forced westward, let's say the Cherokee, Choctaw, uh, a lot of those tribes from that area, um, when they were being forced this way, um, the Osages were essentially fighting other Natives to protect their homeland. Um, but because of the conflict, mainly with a lot of the Cherokees, which is kind of interesting in itself, um, that Native people from the east essentially became almost kind of, uh, lateral oppressors \*laughs\* working with the United States government, because the United States government was, uh, funding them and, uh, providing them with, uh, the means, uh, provisions, weapons, and ammunition, to kind of engage the, um, Natives who were out here already, uh, namely the Osages, and um, so they had these kind of back and forth battles, essentially, with the a lot of these Tribes that were moving in from the east, um, but once it got to the point where they could, uh, couldn't fight anymore and it was just becoming kind of prolonged and they ended up signing agreements with the United States to give, um, lands to uh, other Tribes, they eventually, uh, you know, their land base shrunk, um, eventually the Osages, um, got put on a Reserve in Kansas, in south-eastern Kansas, and, um, because of the Homestead Act, I believe it was the Homestead Act, um, White settlers began moving west and actually began squatting on Osage lands. Now because of that, um, Osages were getting, of course, upset with that, and um, to kind of, uh, prevent any future conflicts, because at that time they weren't really in a position to put up a fight, you know, essentially, um, they were already kind of fighting the Tribes in further out west, and then you had, um, uh, White Americans moving into their territory, so eventually they had, uh, this agreement where they would just move to Oklahoma, um, so that's kind of how they were, like, in terms of relocation, um, uh, but Oklahoma was still Osage territory, you know, so-so they weren't actually moving outside of anywhere they weren't familiar with which in a way is kind of good, you know, they were really kind of, were familiar with all these areas and they weren't-they didn't have to move like, you know, all the way to the east coast or the west coast, you know, like a lot of tribes did, they were forced from-from the east coast in to these areas, um "Indian Territory", which was essentially Osage territory, uh, so there was kind of, there was that while dynamic there, um, with Osages defending their territory from other Tribes, so, um, but yeah, that's kind of how Osages ended up down in Oklahoma was because of, um, just signing away lands, making agreements with the government and then, uh, allowing these eastern tribes to come in and kind of take over their areas, um, and they essentially worked it out where they would just move to Oklahoma, so, that's kind of how they were relocated. Because relocation wasn't it didn't really impact the Tribes out-further out west at that time, um, it was more directed at Tribes from the eastern areas because that's where the brunt of, uh, colonization was occurring so it was more like pushing them further-further this way. Like I said, they were conflicting with all these Tribes out here, so.

Interviewer: How did the relocation process effect, um spiritual traditions?

Jimmy Beason: Um, well like I said, you know, with all the warring with the different Nations, um, the Christianization, um, clans being kind of, some of them went extinct, um, they weren't able to fully do a lot of those ceremonies anymore, um, uh, the main, kind of centerpiece of a lot of Osage spirituality at that time was the, uh, Wahobi Bundle, which was a Hawk Bundle, which was, uh, they had a pretty strong warrior culture, um, so once they got to a point where that was kind of impractical, um, after

moving into the Oklahoma area and, um, they weren't able to, kind of, do those ceremonies any longer, uh, just because, you know, there wasn't enough people, and um, for example, one of the main, uh, ceremonies of Osages was something called the Morning War ceremony where Osages, you know, if an Osage person passed away, they would ride out west to find another, uh, Native person who wasn't from their Nation and, um, essentially kill them and bring back, you know, their scalp to that Osage's grave site, and the idea was that, that person's spirit would accompany the Osage person on the other side. Um, so once, uh, that was no longer practical because of, uh, 'cause it was causing too many problems, they stopped doing that, you know, so just everything was pretty much kind of at a standstill, you know, like you don't have enough clans, they didn't have enough people, um, just those ways were, you know, going away, um, so the way they changed was they, you know, they stopped doing them so ultimately, um, during the reservation era, um, they began adopting different ways like the NAC, Native American Church, and stuff like that, so that's kind of how they shifted those belief systems to other, you know, ceremonies, like NAC and, uh, Inlonshka and things like that, so um, so yeah.

Interviewer: Was there any impact, um, due to not being able to access like, a certain plants, or sacred sites, due to the relocation?

Jimmy Beason: Um, as far as I know, um, I'm not too sure about the, um, sacred sites. I know they kind of held certain areas, uh, in reverence, but um, as far as, like, uh, not having access to anything, um, I'm not too sure about that, uh, so, I mean, I know they still continued on with, uh, sweat lodges, um, NEP and, um, I kind of wonder that myself, you know, how did they get the rocks for that, 'cause, you know, most times with a sweat lodge it's lava rocks so those aren't-you can't just find those around here \*laughs\* so I kind of wonder where they were still getting those at that time. Um, but as far as, like, sacred sites, um, and access to those, um, I'm not too sure about that, so.

Interviewer: I have heard about, um, like, I guess, bus trips that take certain, like participants around to different sites in this area, have you heard anything about those?

Jimmy Beason: So with the Osages, I know that they do these, um, I never participated in them, but I think their cultural department, they sponsor these bus trips to, uh, Cahokia? So, um, I don't know if you've heard of Cahokia, but um-

Interviewer: I'm not sure.

Jimmy Beason: Yeah, so St. Louis, outside of St. Louis there's a pyramidal mound structure, and it's, like, one of the biggest in North America, it's like 100 feet high, and it's shaped, uh, from, uh, you know, it's made out of dirt, but it's in the form of like this kind of pyramid, rectangular pyramid. Um, and they found many others around it, uh, there's some documentation that anthropologists, archeologists have, um, come up with that indicate that Osages have descended from Cahokia, which is, like, an ancient Native city that, um, they say held about 30,000 Native people. Um, so there's some indication that we came from there, so the Osages will take, uh, what I've heard is that they would take, um, these little trips, and they would take Osages who wanted to go and go see it and just kind of look at it and things like that, so, um, and I know they kind of do this reenactment of a walk down to Oklahoma, but I don't know if that's, you know, I don't think that has anything to do with sacred sites, that's more of just kind of like a remembrance, commemoration for those Osages who went down there, so.

Interviewer: Uhuh.

Jimmy Beason: But yeah, as far as like, trips to sacred sites around here, um, I don't know, you know. But that's the only one I know of, they go to Cahokia, just they kind of, you know, have been promoting as 'hey, that's Osage', you know, 'we should go, you know, be a part of it' and um, but yeah, I don't know about those other things you're talking about. \*laughs\*

Interviewer: \*laughs\* Okay. Um-

Jimmy Beason: Did you need a tissue or anything? \*laughs\*

Interviewer: I \*sighs\* should I pause?

Jimmy Beason: No, No, you, yeah, I gotta kinda blow my nose too, we're both like-

{we were both sick at the time of this interview}

Interviewer: Alright. So how did contact and relocation and changing of the religious practices because of those things, how did that change the government structure? Or, did it change the government structure of the Osage Nation?

Jimmy Beason: Um, so you're talking about how European contact changed that?

Interviewer: Uhuh.

Jimmy Beason: Um, it's interesting because, um, prior to colonization, Osages had kind of a dual, um "chieftainship", they had two--they had two different leaders that represented the different divisions amongst the Nation, like a Sky Division, which was essentially concerned with matters of peace, and then they had a Earth Division, which was concerned with matters of war, and then they kind of, um, led, uh, in a kind of equal capacity. So when Europeans came in the form of, uh, fur traders, and Osages began collecting, like, beaver pelts and things like that to get access to rifles and tools and things that they wanted, um, that began to kind of shift that out of balance because now you had people--you had Osages who weren't really in leadership positions or who, uh, historically probably wouldn't have been in a leadership position, now they were just able to kind of, like, do things and then kind of make a name for themselves by getting, uh, I don't know, say like hunting, getting things and, like, pelts, and then they could give them to those traders who would then give them a bunch of stuff, and then they could kind of say 'hey, look, I've, you know, got us a bunch of things', you know, and so it kind of shifted that out of balance and um, from my understanding that's kind of what led to a split amongst the Osages, because, um, because it--during that time when I was talking about, when, uh, other Nations were coming into Osage territory, um, you had kind of a northern group of Osages who were in this area and more in Missouri, then you had the Arkansas Band, which had kind of left them because they felt like these [the northern] Osages were getting too cozy with the Americans, you know, they're like 'you're kind of letting 'em change us up, you know, what's up with that?' you know. \*laughs\*

Interviewer: \*laughs\*

Jimmy Beason: You know, 'so, we're going to go ahead and leave' and so they moved to Arkansas and kind of kept that structure alive. Um, but yeah, you kind of see how that influence of, you know, trading and incentives and things like that kind of split them up and kind of began to alter their, um, social organization, so.

Interviewer: Uhuh. How did that then effect spiritual practice?

Jimmy Beason: Um, well with the spiritual practice, um, I don't think it really affected it too much in terms of, like, because although they were being, you know, kind of influenced differently, they were still able to maintain that, um, uh, that Bundle that they had that Wahobi Bundle, that Hawk Bundle, because they were getting those, um, uh, I don't know, kind of getting access to better weapons and things like that. If anything, it kind of accelerated it to a point because they were, um, because that Wahobi Bundle pertained to, like, matters of war and warrior hood, so because they were able to get all the things, they were able to actually kind of do that a little bit more, um, so, and-but it wasn't until they kind of got put in a position where they couldn't fight back anymore and their numbers dwindled, that's when they really couldn't practice that, that spiritual component. Um, so yeah, that's kind of like, an interesting dynamic with-with that, so.

Interviewer: Okay. Um, how was, um, or how were religious teachings passed on through the generations? Was it, you know, oral tradition, or-

Jimmy Beason: Well yeah, I mean, I think um, just kind of watching and learning, you know, amongst the children, um, you know, passing those down through stories, I know they had songs, um that they, um, would sing, um, and that was a way to-they kind of kept them-things going, so that was all passed down and \*cough\* you know, I think you really had to have a really good memory back in the day \*laughs\*

Interviewer: \*laughs\*

Jimmy Beason: Because, you know, you didn't have anything to, uh, write things down with, you know, essentially, so uh, at least amongst them they-they had songs and things like that were passed down through the generations. So you always think about, like, children and, you know, I didn't realize that until-I didn't fully realize that until I had children and the things that you know you're like 'wow, the only way that these are going to live on is if they get taught', you know? So, um, essentially that was how that passed down was mainly through the children so you can see how when boarding schools and stuff like that came about, how that pretty much really just cut all that information out, because those children weren't learning from their grandparents anymore, they were learning from, you know, White Missionaries who had a completely different way of doing things. And not only that, they kind of, you know, they abused them, you know, they did those things and um, so that shifted all that because once you take those children and you move them to another place where they're scared and frightened and they're, uh, getting religious teachings that don't coincide with who their family is, then um, yeah, it's just going to, you can see that's going away, you know. I mean, some of those stories are still there, and those value systems, but ultimately, um, you know, how they prayed, and ceremonies they did, and who they prayed to was different, you know, so.

Interviewer: How did, um, language loss, um, effect spiritual practice?

Jimmy Beason: Um, well again, kind of going back to-because if you're learning something in your original language and then you're translating it into English, it loses some of its meaning, um, you know, so, um, if they're trying to sing things, or trying to understand certain things, um, if certain songs and the way you pray is in Osage but then that's lost, and because of the language, you don't understand no more, then you're not going to be able to, you know, understand the intent behind it, or the meaning. Even today, there's a lot of, you know, it's crazy because you have to, um, take something that's, uh, say with the language program, you know, they're learning language and they have these, uh, words in Osage, but then you're trying to translate it into English and it's really kind of difficult to do that, uh, you

know. So I think so far as, like, spiritually, the way that effected their ceremonies, it was just, you know, not even being unable to uh, you know, pray the way you would have, or to um, uh, name certain things, or to call on certain spirits for help, that wasn't there anymore, you know, so that really also impacted their ability to just maintain some of those ceremonies because they just couldn't speak the language, you know, um, and then trying to interpret it from Osage to English and things get lost in translation, um, yeah.

Interviewer: And, how has the modern language revitalization movement, uh, how has that effected modern spiritual practice?

Jimmy Beason: Um, that's a good question, I don't...because again, kind of going back to, uh, even though Native people, Osages, or who-whoever else is learning their language, um, as far as spiritual practice, um, they're translating a lot of things, from my-from what I understand, from what I've seen with, um, amongst kind of the language programs, um, with some of the stuff I've seen with the Osage language programs, they kind of turn stuff, they kind of Christianize some of those terminologies.

Interviewer: Mm.

Jimmy Beason: Um, so I just think they're kind of taking the language and kind of fitting it with that view, you know, that's the way I see it. Um, so ultimately I don't-I don't know if it's, uh-because if those ceremonies and those older ways are gone, and all that's left is kind of that Christianity, you know, I can see how they're just kind of trying to fit some of those words, you know, um, to go along with that, so.

Interviewer: Alright, um, is there anything else that you would like to talk about?

Jimmy Beason: Um, hum, I don't know, uh-

Interviewer: No pressure \*laughs\*

Jimmy Beason: \*laughs\* um, let's see...yeah, I think that's...I think one thing that kind of-so when I started researching, you know, our Nation and kind of getting a broader understanding of how Osages were put in-onto, uh, into Oklahoma, and Kansas, and things like that, I always hear this kind of, um, you know, this statement amongst a lot of Osages, say 'oh, we never went to war with the United States'. But then I think, well, we were effected by them, and we obviously lost our land base, and we were affected by these boarding schools, so what-so what happens, so how did we, um, you know, uh, how did we lose our land, because we weren't special, you know, we \*laughs\*

Interviewer: Mm.

Jimmy Beason: We still dealt with colonization, you know, so there's kind of this myth perpetrated amongst a lot of Osages saying 'well, we didn't go to war with the US' and, so when I did a lot of research on that and kind of, in fact, a lot of the information I found in the Indian Claims Commission books was that, um, we might not have went solely to war with the United States, but they definitely were waging a war on us through the eastern tribes, and they were using them essentially as kind of a, uh, proxy military force because, like I said, Indian Territory, when they were doing Indian removal, was Osage territory. So, we had to defend that in order to defend those lands, um, but we were fighting other Natives who were given supplies, ammunition, provisions, by the US with the sole intent of, uh, destroying us, destroying Osages, breaking them down to the point where they couldn't fight and then, so that they could move in, you know. And, um, I think that's a thing that has to be addressed amongst,

kind of that Osage, uh, history is that they kind of say that but I'm kind of like well, we definitely were being attacked, you know, you know, by them, and there's even a lot of, um, uh, correspondence, letters from Thomas Jefferson who was saying, you know, that was their intent of-they were 'hey, let's-let's give these Tribes the weapons and ammunition that they need to drive the Osages off their lands. So I think, you know, to what extent Osages knew that the United States was behind a lot of that I'm not sure, but they were definitely, um, being, uh, you know, attacked and had these, uh, conflicts with Cherokees and south-eastern Tribes and Tribes up north who were all coming from the east and then, um, but with that kind of blessing by the United States, like 'well, yeah, go ahead and, you can move over there, you can have that land, but you've got to fight for it', you know, so 'here's your-here's the stuff we're going to give you to do it with, we're going to give you the means to do it'. Um, so I think that's kind of the, uh, a, uh, a myth, you know, it's kind of been established that, you know, that in looking at the actual research and looking at actual correspondence and things that were happening, you know, where we were definitely being attacked by them, at least via, you know, through, uh, kind of a proxy war I guess you could say, um, using other Natives to, you know, achieve the US's goals of taking this land. And then once they came in they just kind of pushed them out again anyways, so.

Interviewer: Uhuh.

Jimmy Beason: Um, but yeah, I think that's, you know, something, uh. And then also a thing that you should probably look into, um, have you heard about the Osage Reign of Terror?

Interviewer: No.

Jimmy Beason: So, in the 1920s, um, this could be something you could, like, if you go to Oklahoma uh, you could kind of look into, but during the 1920s, after Osages moved-were moved to Oklahoma, um, they found oil on the Reservation. So, the Osages became very rich, um, but what happened was a lot of White Americans began moving into their communities and they would marry Osages who had a lot of money and they would kill them.

Interviewer: Mm.

Jimmy Beason: Like, and this happened, like hundreds of times, and you know, and the call it the Osage Reign of Terror because it was just like they were really taken advantage of and um, but there's a number of deaths that were resulted because of that. And, um, you know, I think that kind of really, uh, is something that isn't really talk-although, interesting enough they're going to make a movie about it, Leonardo DiCaprio I think.

Interviewer: Leonardo DiCaprio? \*laughs\*

Jimmy Beason: \*laughs\* yeah, yeah, he's going to be in it, um, uh, but yeah, they're uh-they are going to, um, uh, talk about that in this movie but I think that, you know, it's going to be very one-sided in my opinion but um, yeah, it's-but yeah, it's something that I think that's something that needs to be talked about as well, made more known, is all those deaths because of that, you know, 'cause, uh, you know, so. Do you have any more questions aside from these, or anything else you want to ask?

Interviewer: Um, well I-I was wondering, because you mentioned, um, having a son, um, has being a father, you know, changed your perspective on religious traditions at all?

Jimmy Beason: Um, well...

Interviewer: Or, you know, passing them on, or not passing them on, or-

Jimmy Beason: Yeah, I-I try to be, uh, I'm-I consider myself, like, a traditionalist, you know, I don't practice Christianity, I don't practice, you know, that, and I think that's a conscious effort on my part to kind of decolonize myself and to, um, you know, my family, and we try to each them the traditional ways, going to sweat lodge and things like that. And, um, so if anything, it hasn't kind of-I've embraced our traditional practices, um, trying to be as reverent as I can in regards to that, but, um, as far as, like, effecting us, um, I think that's something that I really have to-it's almost like you have to kind of be vigilant about it because even though the boarding schools, the way they were implementing them a long time ago, they aren't really doing that anymore, um, but there are still a lot of, uh, Missionaries, Christians who will try to come in and um-just the other day, like, a few weeks ago I had, uh, Mormons come into my backyard, trying to get me to, you know, talk to them about their, I'm like \*laughs\*

Interviewer: \*laughs\*

Jimmy Beason: And they started trying to get mad at me and I'm like 'dude, you came into my backyard', you know, I'm like, you know, I kept questioning them about that stuff and I was like, 'cause I was trying to make a little thing for my son and the kids, and these other kids that hang around, and I was trying to make a little chub house thing, just, out of some scrap wood-

Interviewer: Uhuh.

Jimmy Beason: -and they were just back there, standing there talking to me, and I was like 'you know, well, what about this and what about that' and, you know, and one of them was like 'well, you can Google it' and I'm all like 'you got Google? You're supposed to know what I'm asking you-

Interviewer: \*laughs\*

Jimmy Beason: -you're supposed to know this stuff 'cause you're coming back here' and they were trying to, you could tell they were getting kind of frustrated but I'm like 'man, you came back into my yard, you know, I didn't go to you, you know, and now you're trying to act like you're getting mad because, you know, I'm questioning you and not just going along with whatever you're saying' you know, but that in itself is just another example of that, it's that colonization they're still trying to do it, you know, I'm like you know what, I have my beliefs, and I'm comfortable with them, and you shouldn't be trying to come into my space and say something's wrong with me because I don't follow your beliefs, you know, I don't go to your doorstep and demand you go to a sweat lodge, you know what I mean, so respect that, you know, um, but they definitely weren't the first, and they won't be the last, you know, and I think with children, we really do have to talk with them, because we want them to embrace who they are, I want, you know, our children to, um, uh, follow their traditional ways, and I talked to them and told them like 'look, there's going to be people out there who are going to try and convert you, to try to get you to say this is going to happen to you, you're going to go to hell if you don't do this, or you should do this and that' and I said, you know 'and a lot of times they're going to come with a smile on their face and they're going to try to, um, say something's wrong with you because you're not doing this-doing it their way' and I said 'you've got to be vigilant about that and you've got to be, you know, um, you know, uh, and embrace who you are' I said, because we do-do things, we do go to ceremony and, um, 'cause that's who you are and so as long as you're strong within-with your ability as-or within yourself and your identity, then, you know, we tell them there shouldn't be an issue with that, you

know. Say 'no, I don't want to, no thanks, I'm fine, I'm good' and um, you know, so that's I think that the other kind of battle that, you know, it's not as in-your-face as maybe it once was, but it's still there and it's still very subtle, and it's still, you know, there's still people, you know, um, Missionaries, you know, people who are still trying to do that, are still trying to, you know, convert you and change you and it's just like back in the 1800s, you know-

Interviewer: Mm.

Jimmy Beason: -they came in and they do that, you know. And, um, so-so it's a struggle still, a battle, because you know, we, uh, you know, I definitely think there is a Christian privilege, you know, because you look at the holidays and a lot of stuff and it's still very much, you know, you get the holidays off, you know, you get Christmas off, you know, and all these, you know and Easter, you get Easter off, and a lot of places close down and you automatically get those days off but if you aren't doing that and you are a part of a different spiritual belief system, um, you have to put in time to take off, or people don't understand it and you have to really explain to them what you're doing, you know, otherwise they don't know, um, and it, you know, I think that's kind of a struggle, just trying to maintain our identity. Because I think, you know, it- I think we're really resilient as a people, fact that we still have some of these things, and still have a lot of our culture left, although it's very fragmented, you still have a connection to who you are and who you were. The struggle is, today is to maintain that, you know, to keep that alive and um, you know, for future generations and I think that's kind of what my view as a father is, to try to, you know, help our children to have their identity, be strong in that, be strong in their belief and be like, you know, so when somebody does come knocking on their door like when we had those guys come-but when I'm not around, they'll be able to stand their ground and be like 'no, I-I'm good, you know, I don't need that, I got my belief system' you know, so we don't need that' you know, and I think that's a struggle because that in itself is, you know, it's-it's still there, it-it's still kind of a battle, you know. So, 'cause if they had it their way, which they did a long time ago, you know, they took our children from us, you know, they stole 'em, took 'em, forced 'em to-today we still have-now, today things are a little bit different so now we have a choice, so. I look at it as, I practice and maintain my spirituality because they didn't have a choice, you know.

Interviewer: Uhuh.

Jimmy Beason: They didn't have a choice. Those kids who went to those boarding schools, they were forced into that. And I'm pretty sure if they could, they would have but because they were being physically harmed for being Native and wanting to be who they were, they weren't able to. But today we can, so why not, you know, why not do that? You know, I think we owe it to them, to embrace who we are, you know, so that-yeah, that's kind of what I've got to say about that, you know, it's uh, yeah. Having kids really wakes you up to what you will allow and not allow around your children, you know, and I definitely was like, I'm not going to allow that, you know, because to me, like-like I said with those Mormons coming back there and with my kids there, they kind of make me think about those boarding schools, you know, and what they were doing. I'm like 'you're still trying to do it, you're still trying to change us. After 500 years, you're still trying to do it' you know, and to me, I'm still fighting that battle \*laughs\* I'm like, like, and a lot of-I know a lot of other Natives are, but I'm like man, you're not going to change, you know, you're not going to get at me, man, that's like, it's just wasted, you know, it's like you might've gotten to those other guys but, you know, I'm still holding out, you know, it's, you know, trying to be, uh, uh, we're still resisting a lot of those things and, you know, it's-I don't know, it's just

interesting that they're-that's still there, and we're still having to fight that, you know. Because now, it's not like a forced conversion. It's snacks, and pizza parties-

Interviewer: \*laughs\*

Jimmy Beason: -and 'hey, come and see our' you know 'hey have you heard about this' and 'here's the-a pamphlet' you know 'oh, you don't really have to come, but we've got things for you, we've got gifts' you know they're bribing you \*laughs\*

Interviewer: \*laughs\*

Jimmy Beason: And it's really, I'm like man, it's like changed up tactics, like you know, 'cause \*laughs\* the old ways aren't fashionable anymore, you know, taking children, now it's like bribing the children, you know 'hey, come hear the word' and I'm like man, you've got to be careful with that, you know, 'cause especially with, uh, you know, incentives, like, offering those things to, the people and 'by the way, here's this', slipping the little, you know, it's kind of like, you've got to be careful, you know, so. Any-any other questions on that, or-

Interviewer: No.

Jimmy Beason: Okay.

Interviewer: Alright, well.