“Faces I Do Not Worship”

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This picture is uh, my grandma, and uh, her husband took right when they went to the Mount Rushmore. As you can see, it’s, um, there’s no metal gates or security wire, there’s nothing, it’s just a plain open road and, um, I think it’s kind of symbolic as to how, like a lot of white people have kind of taken over uh, the Black Hills because, like they’re just using it for profit and money. I mean, if you—you know, I think everyone just focuses on, you know, the faces, they never really focus on the, like the trees or the beauty of it, and it’s pretty sad because our people have been through a lot and it’s really depressing to think about how they’re getting so much money off of something that was our home. And uh, there’s been this ongoing controversy about it, about how we think we deserve our Black Hills back but they’re just going to pay us off and it’s like well, you know, we were cheated out of the Black Hills through a treaty because we didn’t know what they were talking about and it’s just it feels like this ongoing deception, this ongoing war within ourselves and with the white people because, you know, we’re the minority and this was once our home. And we’re declining and everyday a little bit more of people just kind of die away, our culture starts to fade, and it doesn’t seem very fair, because we were here first. This was our home. The faces kind of demean, I think, the rock. Because it’s like Inyan—in Lakota culture Inyan was our creator, he uh—Tunkshila was a part of this, Inyan was a rock, and we think of the Black Hills as sacred because of the Wind Cave where we came out of. And it’s just, it seems like a big, like a big mock, mocking of our culture, because they carved our rock into some people we don’t even worship. So it’s just like a big joke to me.

[Last 1:05 of audio file is silence.]