



Introduction of Dr. DaShanne Stokes

Powerful, inspirational, and known for digging deep beneath the surface, Dr. DaShanne Stokes is a respected public intellectual, sociologist, author, speaker, and pundit. A scholar of politics, culture, and civil rights, he has been an invited college speaker and a sought after guest featured on *NPR*, *BBC*, *NBC*, *CBS*, *MSN.com*, and other national and international media. Dr. Stokes' fresh, provocative, and inspirational thinking has been quoted by world leaders and hundreds of times in books, sermons, and major outlets around the globe, including *People*, *USA Today*, *The Nation*, *The Hill*, *BET*, *MSN.com*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. His work has appeared in scholarly journals, books, and publications like *The Advocate*, *Diverse*, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. DaShanne Stokes' life story has been featured three times on the front page of *The Huffington Post*, where he is also a contributor, and is the subject of his forthcoming memoir, *Recomposition*.

Dr. Stokes is an accomplished thought leader, scholar, and pundit.

- He has published dozens of articles in scholarly journals, books, and publications like *The Huffington Post*, *The Advocate*, *Diverse*, and *Indian Country Today*.
- He has presented his original research at prestigious scholarly conferences across the nation.

Dr. DaShanne Stokes is also a dedicated advocate for civil rights and social justice.

- From 2005 to 2008, Dr. Stokes was the founder and director of *Religious Freedom with Raptors*, a political interest and advocacy group that helped change the language of California State senate bill AB1729, which threatened the religious freedom of over 400,000 people in California.
- Dr. Stokes' work covers range of today's important and controversial issues, including the contested use of ethnic team names and mascots, the Boy Scouts LGBT membership controversy, the religious freedom debate surrounding the "eagle feather law," the #BlackOnCampus movement, the Orlando massacre, "religious freedom" claims against LGBT rights, the Trump presidency, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and many more.

Behind the scenes, DaShanne's is an inspirational story of survival and triumph.

- DaShanne was born in Racine, Wisconsin, to a teenage mother and was raised in Las Vegas, Nevada, without knowing he was adopted. As a young child, he and his mother struggled to survive the exploits of his step-father--a man who taught the family about unity and responsibility through Kwanzaa, yet who turned into a drug-abusing adulterer and stalker.
- After many experiences of discrimination and loss of religious freedom, DaShanne accidentally discovered, at the age of twenty, that he was adopted--and that his family, culture, and spirituality weren't his. These experiences inspired his forthcoming memoir, *Recomposition*.
- Despite a childhood marked by racism, abuse, and trauma, and his later experiences with homelessness and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), DaShanne went on to earn degrees in biology (B.S.), psychology (M.A.), and sociology (M.A.). He received his doctorate in sociology from the University of Pittsburgh in 2016.
- DaShanne now makes his home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

He is joining us this (morning / afternoon / evening) to speak to us about (insert topic or program title). Please join me in giving a warm welcome to Dr. DaShanne Stokes.