



Powerful, inspirational, and known for digging deep beneath the surface, DR. DASHANNE STOKES is a respected public intellectual, sociologist, author, speaker, and pundit. He has been an invited college speaker and a sought after guest featured on *NPR*, the *BBC*, *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*, and *The Hill*. He has also published dozens of articles in scholarly journals, books, and publications like *Huffington Post*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Advocate*, *Diverse*, and *Indian Country Today*.

DaShanne (pronounced *Duh-Shane*) was born in 1978, in Racine, WI, to a teenage mother and raised in Las Vegas, NV, without knowing he was adopted.

As a child, DaShanne was raised being told he had Lakota ancestry, and he began embracing his heritage as a source of strength and direction while still in grade school. Despite an upbringing marked by racism, poverty, and abuse, DaShanne flourished academically. He began writing at the age of eleven, became an Eagle Scout, and went on to study at Boston University in 1996.

As a student at Boston University, DaShanne faced being thrown out of his dorm for "smudging," the burning of a small amount of sage or sweetgrass that is a traditional part of many Native American spiritual practices. These experiences of institutionalized discrimination and attacks on his religious freedom prompted him to move to South Dakota to be closer to his Lakota culture.

For many years, DaShanne had no knowledge of the whereabouts of the man he was raised to believe was his biological father. In 1998, however, he managed to reconnect with his long-lost father in an attempt to become an enrolled member of his tribe. Shortly after their reunion, however, DaShanne discovered by accident that he was adopted--and that his family, culture, and spirituality were not his.

This plunged DaShanne into a deep personal crisis, but after much soul-searching he discovered that who he was had never changed. With this newfound direction, he founded and managed his own company, *Indigenous Creations* (2001-2003). As a graduate student, he also went on to found and direct *Religious Freedom with Raptors* (2005-2008), a political interest and advocacy group instrumental to changing California State senate bill AB1729, which threatened the freedom of over 400,000 people in California.

Since 2001, Dr. Stokes has become an accomplished writer, speaker, and social commentator. He draws on his training as a research scholar as well as his personal experiences to break down complex ideas and events into meaningful and incisive social commentary. He has published dozens of articles on a 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 Trump administration, and many more.

DaShanne Stokes received his B.S. from the University of South Dakota in biology, a master's degree from Boston University in psychology, and a second master's degree from Minnesota State University in sociology. He is the author of the forthcoming memoir, *Recomposition*, and received his doctorate in sociology from the University of Pittsburgh in 2016.

DaShanne knows he is one of the luckiest people on Earth.