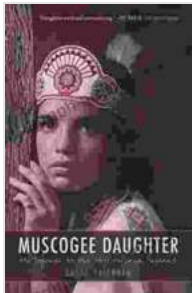


# My Sojourn to the Miss America Pageant: A Native American's Journey to the National Stage



## Muscogee Daughter: My Sojourn to the Miss America Pageant (American Indian Lives) by Susan Supernaw

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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Written by: [Author's Name]

In a world where representation matters, I am honored to share my journey as the first Native American woman to compete in the Miss America pageant. As a proud member of the Cherokee Nation, I have long been passionate about sharing the stories and perspectives of my people. This platform has given me an unprecedented opportunity to amplify our voices and challenge stereotypes.

My decision to participate in the pageant stemmed from a deep desire to represent my culture and inspire young Native Americans to pursue their dreams. It is a common misconception that pageants objectify women; in

reality, they provide a platform for intelligent and accomplished individuals to share their values and make a difference.

In this article, I will recount my experiences at the Miss America pageant, sharing the challenges I faced, the lessons I learned, and the impact my journey has had on my life and the Native American community.

## **The Road to the Pageant**

My journey to the Miss America pageant began in my hometown of Tahlequah, Oklahoma. I was raised in a traditional Cherokee household, where I learned the importance of perseverance, humility, and giving back to my community. From a young age, I was involved in dance, art, and music, which instilled in me a love for performing and self-expression.

In 2019, I was crowned Miss Cherokee Nation, a title that holds great significance within our community. It was this experience that propelled me to consider competing in the Miss America pageant. I recognized the potential impact I could have on a national stage and the opportunity to positively represent Native Americans.

The road to the competition was not without its challenges. As the first Native American to compete at the Miss America level, I faced skepticism and even prejudice from some quarters. However, I remained determined to prove that my culture and heritage were worthy of recognition and celebration.

With the support of my family, community, and mentors, I prepared diligently for the pageant. I spent countless hours practicing my public

speaking, studying current events, and rehearsing my talent performance of a traditional Cherokee dance.

## **The Miss America Experience**

In December 2019, I arrived in Atlantic City, New Jersey, for the Miss America pageant. The atmosphere was electric, with contestants from all over the country vying for the coveted title. As I stood backstage, surrounded by a diverse group of women, I felt a surge of pride and determination.

Throughout the competition, I embraced every opportunity to share my culture and perspective. I spoke about the resilience of my people, the importance of education, and the need for greater representation of Native Americans in the media. I wore a traditional Cherokee dress during the evening gown competition and performed a contemporary version of a traditional dance as my talent.

While I did not win the overall title, I was honored to be recognized for my platform and advocacy work. I received the Social Impact Award, which is given to the contestant who best demonstrates a commitment to making a difference in the world.

Beyond the awards, the Miss America pageant was an incredibly transformative experience. I connected with other contestants who shared my passion for representation and social justice. I learned the importance of perseverance, self-confidence, and finding my voice.

## **The Impact of My Journey**

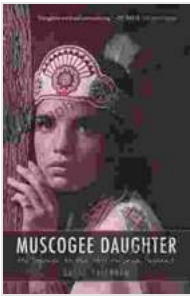
Since competing in the Miss America pageant, I have continued to use my platform to amplify Native American voices and promote diversity and inclusion. I have spoken at schools, universities, and community events, sharing my experiences and encouraging young people to pursue their dreams.

My journey has inspired countless Native Americans, both young and old. I have received messages from aspiring pageant contestants, community leaders, and educators who have expressed their gratitude for representing our culture in such a positive way.

The Miss America pageant has provided me with a platform to challenge stereotypes, promote understanding, and inspire others. It has been a transformative journey that has had a profound impact on my life and the Native American community.

My sojourn to the Miss America pageant was more than just a competition; it was a journey of representation, empowerment, and cultural pride. As the first Native American woman to compete at the national level, I am honored to have had the opportunity to share my story and inspire others. I believe that my journey has helped to pave the way for greater representation of Native Americans in the media and society.

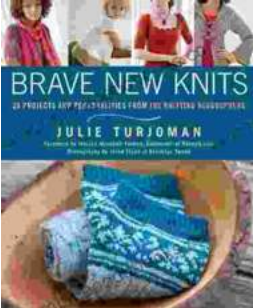
I encourage all Native Americans, and all individuals who have faced adversity, to pursue their dreams with confidence and determination. Representation matters, and our voices deserve to be heard. By embracing our cultures, sharing our stories, and working together, we can create a more inclusive and equitable society for all.



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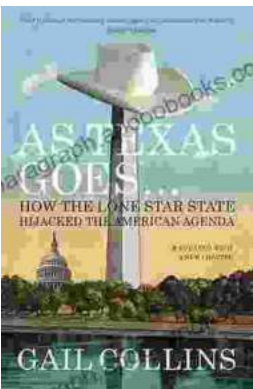
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