

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Andrea Meigs

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Meigs, Andrea Nelson, 1968-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs,
<b>Dates:</b>	November 18, 2013
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:17:24).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Media executive Andrea Meigs (1968 - ) was a high-profile talent agent at Creative Artists Agency and International Creative Management, where she represented stars like Idris Elba and Beyonce Knowles Carter. Meigs was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 18, 2013, in Los Angeles, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2013_301
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Talent agent Andrea Nelson Meigs was born on October 30, 1968 in Bellflower, California. Her father, David Nelson Jr., was a principal in the Los Angeles Unified School District; her mother, Dorothy Nelson, a college professor. Meigs spent her early childhood in the Compton area of Los Angeles and attended a private Christian school before entering the public school system in the fifth grade. After graduating from high school in Palos Verdes, Meigs enrolled in Tufts University and graduated with her B.A. degree in English and Spanish in 1990. While there, she studied at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia as well as the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid in Madrid, Spain. Meigs went on to earn her J.D. degree in entertainment law from the Duke University School of Law in Durham, North Carolina in 1994.

In 1994, Meigs was hired to work with Congresswoman Maxine Waters in the Los Angeles District Attorney's office. Meigs joined Creative Artists Agency (CAA) in 1996 as a mailroom clerk where she was promoted to motion picture talent agent. She was then hired as a talent agent at International Creative Management (ICM). Throughout her career, Meigs has worked with major talent in the music, television and film industries including Christina Applegate, Halle Berry, Ellen Burstyn, Beyoncé Knowles, and John Voight, Mark Salling, Cristina Saralegui, and the multi-talented power couple Mara Brock Akil and Salim Akil.

Meigs is a member of the State of California Bar Association, the Los Angeles County Bar Association, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. In 2003, she served on the steering committee for the American Black Film Festival. In addition, *Black Enterprise* magazine recognized Meigs by including her in the 2003 "Hot List" and the 2004 "Brightest under 40" list. She also appeared in *Honey* magazine as one of the "25 Hottest Women in Entertainment."

Meigs is married to John V. Meigs, Jr., a partner at the entertainment law firm Home Page for the law firm of Hansen, Jacobson, Teller, Hoberman, Newman, Warren & Richman, LLP. They have four daughters: Avery N.

Meigs; the late Alexandra N. Meigs; and twins, Isabella Alexa and Calla Alexis Meigs.

Andrea Nelson Meigs was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 18, 2013.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Andrea Meigs was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 18, 2013, in Los Angeles, California, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Media executive Andrea Meigs (1968 - ) was a high-profile talent agent at Creative Artists Agency and International Creative Management, where she represented stars like Idris Elba and Beyonce Knowles Carter.

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## Restrictions

### Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

### Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

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## Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

Meigs, Andrea Nelson, 1968-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Meigs, Andrea Nelson, 1968---Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

Media Executive

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

EntertainmentMakers

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## Administrative Information

### Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

### Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs, November 18, 2013. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs, Section A2013\_301\_001\_001, TRT: 1:28:35 ?

Andrea Meigs was born on October 30, 1968 in Bellflower, California to Dorothy Clay Nelson and David Nelson, Jr. Her maternal grandmother, Ruth Clay, moved from Mississippi to St. Louis, Missouri after giving birth to Meigs'

mother. In St. Louis, Meigs' maternal grandmother worked as a nurse. Her mother studied at Washington University in St. Louis, Saint Louis University and the University of California, Los Angeles, and became a medical administration professor. Meigs' paternal grandfather, David Nelson, Sr., came to St. Louis to work on the railroad, while her paternal grandmother, Nina Carroll Nelson, worked in domestic service. Meigs' father left Missouri to join the U.S. Marine Corps. He studied at Long Beach State College and the University of Southern California, and became an educator in Los Angeles. There, he reconnected with Meigs' mother, who was his high school classmate. They raised Meigs and her brother, Byron Nelson, in a large home with a pool in Compton, California.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs, Section A2013\_301\_001\_002, TRT: 2:29:13 ?

Andrea Meigs grew up in a wealthy household in Compton, California during the 1970s. From an early age, she was a talented actor, and appeared in numerous advertisements as well as the television show 'The White Shadow.' She stopped acting at ten years old, after being pressured to lose weight. Around that time, Meigs moved with her family to Palos Verdes Estates, California, where the public schools were better funded. There, she enrolled at the Malaga Cove Intermediate School. During this time, Meigs aspired to study medicine, and considered pursuing a career in dentistry, ophthalmology, nutrition or veterinary science. Influenced her brother, Byron Nelson, who attended a boarding school in St. Louis, Missouri, Meigs decided to leave Southern California for college. She applied almost exclusively to schools on the East Coast, and was admitted to Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. She majored in English and Spanish, and studied abroad in Madrid, Spain and Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs, Section A2013\_301\_001\_003, TRT: 3:30:14 ?

Andrea Meigs enrolled in 1986 at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. There, she was supported by Professor Elizabeth Ammons, who suggested that she pursue a creative field because of her strong writing skills. With the encouragement of Congresswoman Maxine Waters, who was a family friend, Meigs decided to attend to law school and founded the Tufts Pre-Law Society. However, she was not accepted to any law programs upon graduating in 1990. She returned to Los Angeles, California, where she worked as a production assistant on KCOP-TV. She also attended the Charles Hamilton Houston Pre-Law Institute at Georgetown University. The following year, Meigs reapplied to law school. She was accepted to the Duke University School of Law, where she developed an interest in entertainment law. She worked for Congresswoman Maxine Waters, and joined the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office after graduating in 1994. Then, Meigs decided to apply for the training program at the Creative Artists Agency.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs, Section A2013\_301\_001\_004, TRT: 4:29:09 ?

Andrea Meigs left the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office to join the training program at the Creative Artists Agency (CAA) in the mid-1990s. She initially worked in the mailroom, where she delivered packages and ran errands for the firm's agents. After eighteen months, she was promoted to an assistant position. During this time, Meigs was mentored by her senior colleagues, including Ray Kurtzman, who helped her secure a new assignment after she became dissatisfied with her job responsibilities; and Joe Rosenberg, who gave her the opportunity to pitch a script at a companywide meeting. In 2000, Meigs was promoted to full agent at CAA. Her first client was Cedric The Entertainer, for whom she secured roles in 'Kingdom Come' in 2001, the 'Barbershop'

franchise in 2002 and 2004, and ‘The Honeymooners’ in 2005. At this point, Meigs talks about the pay structure for agents at CAA, and her experiences as the firm’s only black female talent agent.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs, Section A2013\_301\_001\_005, TRT: 5:31:03 ?

Andrea Meigs was an agent at the Creative Artists Agency (CAA) during the early 2000s. While there, she represented top actors and dramatists like Idris Elba, Christina Applegate, Jon Voight and Ellen Burstyn. After Destiny’s Child recorded their final album in 2004, Meigs was recruited to represent the formers bandmates, Michelle Williams, Kelly Rowland and Beyonce Knowles Carter, who were interested in acting roles. In 2006, Meigs learned that she was being paid less than her white male colleagues; and after requesting an appropriate raise, she was asked to leave the agency. Within one day, she was contacted by William Morris Agency and ICM Partners, and decided to join the latter agency. During her transition to ICM Partners, Meigs was followed by most of her clients, including Beyonce Knowles Carter, Mary J. Blige, Chris Brown and Aunjanue Ellis. Her clientele at ICM Partners also included actress Jurnee Smollett Bell, screenwriter Mara Brock Akil and director Salim Akil.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs, Section A2013\_301\_001\_006, TRT: 6:30:00 ?

Andrea Meigs joined ICM Partners as a senior talent agent in 2006. At the firm, she represented international actors and actresses like Nathalie Emmanuel, Anna Popplewell, Tim Pocock and Ana de la Reguera. At this point in the ninterview, Miegs talks about the process of finding quality talent, and the challenges of balancing her life and career. She also describes the experiences of women and African Americans in the talent industry, and lists the black agents who were her colleagues in Los Angeles, California. At this point in the interview, Meigs describes her family and her hopes and concerns for the African American community. She also reflects upon her life and legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Meigs, Section A2013\_301\_001\_007, TRT: 7:19:10 ?

Andrea Meigs joined the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority at Tufts University. She remembers her experiences of pledging, and talks about the importance of her sorors’ support during her career in the talent industry. Meigs describes how she would like to be remembered, and concludes the interview by narrating her photographs.