

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

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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>	Roane, Andrea, 1949-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Roane,
<b>Dates:</b>	January 27, 2014
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2014
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:33:54).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Broadcast journalist Andrea Roane (1949 - ) served as a news anchor on WUSA-TV Channel 9 in Washington, D.C. from 1981. Roane was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 27, 2014, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2014_039
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Broadcast journalist Andrea Roane was born on October 5, 1949 in New Orleans, Louisiana to Frederic and Ethel Roane. She attended the Holy Ghost Elementary School, and graduated from the Xavier University Preparatory School in New Orleans. Roane went on to receive her B.A. degree in secondary education in 1971, and her M.A. degree in drama and communications in 1973, both from LSU - New Orleans, now the University of New Orleans.

From 1971 to 1974, Roane worked as a middle school and high school English teacher. She was also coordinator of cultural services for the New Orleans Parish

Public Schools, and served as an administrator and principal of the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts. In 1975, Roane was hired as an education reporter for the New Orleans public television station WYES, where she also hosted a weekly magazine show and was the station's project director of a federally funded education show. Roane then worked for WWL-TV, a CBS affiliate, as an education reporter from 1976 until 1978. She returned to WYES for one year, and, in 1979, was hired as a host and correspondent for WETA public broadcasting station. Then, in 1981, Roane was hired as the Sunday evening and weekday morning anchor for WUSA Channel 9 in Washington, D.C., where she went on to serve in a number of news anchor roles. In 1993, she initiated an innovative Washington, D.C. breast cancer awareness program called Buddy Check 9.

Roane has served as co-chair of the Kennedy Center Community and Friends Board; as a member of the Capital Breast Care Center Community Advisory Council; and as a trustee of the National Museum of Women In The Arts. She is also a sustaining director of the Prevent Cancer Foundation. She served on the Georgetown Lombardi Cancer Center Health Disparities Initiative Community Advisory Board; the National Catholic Education Association Board; and served as a trustee of the Catholic University of America. Roane is also a Dame of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta; and a member of the Women's Forum of Washington. She is a lifetime member of both the NAACP and the National Council of Negro Women, and a member of the LINKS, Inc, Metropolitan D.C. Chapter.

Roane has received many awards and honors for her work. She has won multiple Emmy and Gracie Awards. She was also named one of Washingtonian Magazine's "Washingtonians of the Year" in 2006, and was honored by the Sibley Memorial Hospital Foundation with its Community Service Award. In addition to being named the 2010 Rebecca Lipkin Honoree for Media Distinction by Susan G. Komen For the Cure, she received the 2012 Faith Does Justice Award from Catholic Charities.

Roane and her husband, Michael Skehan, live in Washington, D.C. They have two children: Alicia and Andrew.

Andrea Roane was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on January 27, 2014.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Andrea Roane was conducted by Larry Crowe on January 27, 2014, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 8

uncompressed MOV digital video files. Broadcast journalist Andrea Roane (1949 - ) served as a news anchor on WUSA-TV Channel 9 in Washington, D.C. from 1981.

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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:**

Roane, Andrea, 1949-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews  
Roane, Andrea, 1949---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:**

Broadcast Journalist

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

MediaMakers

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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 Roane, January 27, 2014. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

## Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 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 Roane, Section  
A2014\_039\_001\_001, TRT: 1:28:40 2014/01/27

Andrea Roane was born on October 5, 1949 in New Orleans, Louisiana to Ethel Simon Roane and Frederic Roane, Sr. Her maternal great-great-grandparents, Caroline Malboroux Bartholomew and Joseph Bartholomew, lived in the rural community of Vacherie in St. James Parish, Louisiana. They were ethnically Creole, and spoke the Creole language. Her maternal grandparents, Celestin Simon and Nellie Taylor Simon, met in Vacherie, and raised her mother in the Uptown section of New Orleans. Roane's paternal grandfather, James Roane, served in the U.S. military during World War I, and later became a Pullman porter on the Illinois Central Railroad. Her father served as a cook in the U.S. Navy, and went on to attend Xavier University of Louisiana, where Roane's parents met. After marrying, they moved to New York, where her father attended dental school. Prior to Roane's birth, her parents returned to New Orleans, where her father secured a mail clerk position on the Illinois Central Railroad.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Roane, Section

A2014\_039\_001\_002, TRT: 2:31:27 2014/01/27

Andrea Roane grew up in the Uptown neighborhood of New Orleans, Louisiana. There, her family lived next door to her maternal grandparents, Celestine Simon and Nellie Taylor Simon. Her paternal grandparents, Mary Porter Roane and James Roane, also lived nearby in the Backatown area. Roane began her education at the Sarah Allen Child Development School when she was a toddler. She went on to attend the Holy Ghost Catholic School, and then received her high school diploma from Xavier University Preparatory School. At this point in the interview, Roane talks about the culture of New Orleans. She remembers eating sausage po boys at Dooky Chase's Restaurant, and recalls learning her grandmother's gumbo recipe. She also describes her family's Good Friday and Mardi Gras traditions. Roane was introduced to the music of New Orleans by her maternal grandmother, who sang at Baptist revivals. She also attended school with the children of Fats Domino, and had a friend whose uncle played in the Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Roane, Section  
A2014\_039\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:10 2014/01/27

Andrea Roane grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana, where she attended the Holy Ghost Catholic School. There, she was taught by her mother, Ethel Simon Roane, during the second grade. Roane excelled in trigonometry and French classes, and enjoyed reading mystery novels outside of school. Around the time of her eighth grade graduation, the schools in New Orleans began integrating. Roane's parents opted to send her to the all-black Xavier University Preparatory School, which became an all-girls institution while she was a student. Roane graduated from high school in 1967, and went on to attend Louisiana State University in New Orleans, where she changed her major from clinical psychology to secondary education during her freshman year. At this point, Roane talks about the exclusion of women of color from television news. She also remembers the media coverage of the assassinations of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Roane, Section

A2014\_039\_001\_004, TRT: 4:31:13 2014/01/27

Andrea Roane graduated in 1967 from Xavier University Preparatory School in New Orleans, Louisiana. She decided not to attend the historically black Xavier University of Louisiana, and enrolled instead at the predominantly white Louisiana State University in New Orleans (LSUNO). There, she majored in education, and joined the theater program. Upon graduating in 1971, Roane began a graduate degree at LSUNO, while also teaching at John F. Kennedy High School. She then became a cultural services coordinator at New Orleans' newly opened Edward Livingston Middle School. After promoting an art education program on television, Roane was offered an education reporter position at WYES-TV in New Orleans. She accepted, and went on to produce educational programs as well. After a brief stint at WWL-TV, Roane returned to WYES-TV as a news anchor. Then, she and her husband, cameraman Michael Skehan, moved to Washington, D.C. to join the staff of WRC-TV. However, her offer was revoked by the network after their arrival.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Roane, Section  
A2014\_039\_001\_005, TRT: 5:28:25 2014/01/27

Andrea Roane reported on Hurricane David in 1979 for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). After several freelance assignments with the BBC, Roane applied for a host correspondent position on WETA-TV's 'Metro Week in Review' in Washington, D.C. Although the position was initially given to another candidate, the host soon left for a position in Chicago, Illinois, and Roane was hired based on her audition tape. Later, Roane was offered a morning anchor position at WDVM-TV, which she accepted after the birth of her daughter, Alicia Skehan, in 1981. Roane covered the explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger in 1986, and went on to anchor a number of news times during the 1990s. She co-anchored the eleven o'clock and six o'clock news with Gordon Peterson from 1995 to 2000, when she was replaced without prior warning. At this point, Roane talks about the importance of balanced coverage of minority communities, and remembers the notable journalists at WDVM-TV, which was later

renamed WUSA-TV.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Roane, Section  
A2014\_039\_001\_006, TRT: 6:29:30 2014/01/27

Andrea Roane was unexpectedly removed from her position as a primetime news anchor on WUSA-TV in 2000. Shortly afterwards, she returned to anchor the morning news with her former partner, Mike Buchanan. Roane was on the air during the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and coordinated the coverage of the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. At the time, her daughter, Alicia Skehan, was studying at the Parsons School of Design in Manhattan. During her career at WUSA-TV, Roane interviewed celebrities like Sir Ian McKellen, First Lady Laura Bush and Elmo, and received an Emmy Award and Gracie Award in recognition of her work. Roane also became an advocate for breast cancer awareness, and created WUSA-TV's Buddy Check 9 program in partnership with a colleague who found a tumor via a self exam. In addition, Roane talks about the representation of minority communities on the news, and the changes in the media industry.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Roane, Section  
A2014\_039\_001\_007, TRT: 7:31:41 2014/01/27

Andrea Roane talks about her son, Andrew Skehan, who faced criminal charges related to domestic violence while recovering from cancer in 2012. Roane also talks about the presidency of Barack Obama, and describes her hopes and concerns for the African American community. She reflects upon her life, legacy and how she would like to be remembered, and concludes this part of the interview by narrating her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Andrea Roane, Section  
A2014\_039\_001\_008, TRT: 8:03:48 2014/01/27

Andrea Roane narrates her photographs.