

**Finding Aid to the
Michealene Cristini Risley Papers, 1992-2009**

Summary Information

Title: Michealene Cristini Risley papers

Creator: Michealene Cristini Risley (primary)

ID: 2022.risley

Date: 1992-2009 (inclusive)

Extent: 0.75 linear feet (physical); 2.1GB (digital)

Language: The materials in this collection are in English.

Abstract: The Michealene Cristini Risley papers are a compilation of materials from her position at Sega of America, as well as her non-profit organization Freshwater Haven.

Repository:

Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong

One Manhattan Square

Rochester, New York 14607

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Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Use: This collection is open for research use by staff of The Strong and by users of its library and archives. Though the donor has not transferred intellectual property rights (including, but not limited to any copyright, trademark, and associated rights therein) to The Strong, she has given permission for The Strong to make copies in all media for museum, educational, and research purposes.

Custodial History: The Michealene Cristini Risley papers were donated to The Strong in September 2021 and September 2022 as a gift from Michealene Cristini Risley and Eric Foster Risley. The papers were accessioned by The Strong under Object IDs 121.7341 (Activity ID 14730) and 122.1906 (Activity ID 14942) and were received from Risley along with a video game.

Preferred citation for publication: Michealene Cristini Risley papers, Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong

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Controlled Access Terms

Personal Names

- Risley, Michealene
- Risley, Michealene Cristini

Corporate Names

- Freshwater Haven
- Sega of America (Firm)

Subjects

- Documentary films
- Marketing
- Sonic the Hedgehog (Fictitious character)
- Video games -- Licensing
- Video games -- Marketing

Biographical Note

Michealene Cristini Risley is an American author, activist, entrepreneur, and former consumer products executive at Sega of America.

Risley worked in the consumer products and entertainment industry for several years before joining Sega of America in 1993, where she built the consumer products and entertainment division. There, Risley established the Sega Girls Task Force to address gender representation in games and animation. She also led the division in turning the video game character Sonic the Hedgehog into a billion-dollar brand and working on licensing real-life athletes and sports teams for video game use.

Risley later founded and ran the non-profit organization Freshwater Haven to bring to market publications and media to raise awareness of global issues. Notably, she wrote, produced, and directed the 2002 short film *Flashcards*, an award-winning film on sexual abuse. Risley also co-wrote, produced, and directed the feature-length 2009 documentary *Tapestries of Hope*, which followed Zimbabwean activist Betty Makoni and her efforts to help sexually abused young women through the Child Girl Network. In 2007, Risley co-authored the book *This Is Not the Life I Ordered: 50 Ways to Keep Your Head Above Water When Life Keeps Dragging You Down*; the book was revised and updated in 2019.

Risley continues to be involved in human rights activism, as well as public speaking.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The Michealene Cristini Risley papers are a collection of product and licensing materials from her position at Sega of America from 1993-1995, as well as audiovisual media produced by Risley at her non-profit organization, Freshwater Haven. Additional scope and content information can be found in the Contents List section of this finding aid.

The Michealene Cristini Risley papers have been arranged into two series. The physical materials are housed in one document box and one audiovisual media box.

System of Arrangement

Series I: Sega of America, 1992-1996 and n.d.

Series II: Freshwater Haven, 2002, 2009

Contents List

Series I: Sega of America, 1992-1996 and n.d.

Scope and Content Note: Within this series are materials from Risley's tenure at Sega of America (1993-1995), including correspondence, licensing agreements, planning memos, reports, reference, notes, audiovisual materials, and more.

Box 1

- Folder 1 Licensing correspondence and agreements, 1992-1994
- Folder 2 Licensing correspondence and agreements, January-July 1995
- Folder 3 Licensing correspondence and agreements, August-December 1995
- Folder 4 Product brief and target audience sheet – “Ganymede,” n.d. [c. 1996]
- Folder 5 Product brief and target audience sheet – “Obsidian,” n.d. [c. 1996]
- Folder 6 Product brief and target audience sheet – “Rocket Jockey,” n.d. [c. 1996]
- Folder 7 Product brief and target audience sheet – “The Space Bar,” n.d. [c. 1996]
- Folder 8 Sega of America FY '95-'96 Software Planning memo, agenda, and candidate list; 1993 and n.d.
- Folder 9 Sega of America Toy Division, Individual P & L list (May 1994) and notes, 1994
- Folder 10 Sega Consumer Products Division, Production Planning Report FY 1996, November 19, 1995
- Folder 11 Harvard Business School cases: “Power Play (A): Nintendo in 8-bit Video Games” and “Power Play (B): Sega in 16-bit Video Games,” 1995
- Folder 12 Licensees list and sporting event reference, 1995 and n.d.
- Folder 13 Contract and deal samples with notes, 1996 and n.d.
- Folder 14 “Sonic the Movie” treatment [“Sonic: Wonders of the World”], Richard Jeffries, with memo; 1995

AV Box 1

- Object 1 U-matic tape: “Sega Toys, Stampede w/ final audio, viewing copy, 12/12/94,” 1994 [corresponds to digitized file “Risley 01_Sega Toys-Stampede_U-matic_1994.mp4” (0:00:32)]
- Object 2 U-matic tape: “Sega Technical Institute, Sonic Extreme, E3 Demo, Looped Version, View Copy,” n.d. [c. mid-1990s] [corresponds to digitized file “Risley 02_Sega Technical Institute_U-matic.mp4” (0:29:15)]

Series II: Freshwater Haven, 2002, 2009

Scope and Content Note: This series contains a short film and a documentary produced by Risley's non-profit organization, Freshwater Haven. (Risley wrote, produced, and directed the short film *Flashcards*, which discloses cultural patterns perpetuating child sexual abuse. She also co-wrote, produced, and directed *Tapestries of Hope*, documenting the work of Betty Makoni and the Girl Child Network in Zimbabwe, Africa.)

Box 1

- Folder 15 DVD: *Flashcards*, directed by Michealene Cristini Risley, 2002
Folder 16 DVDs: *Tapestries of Hope*, film by Michealene Cristini Risley, Electronic Press Kit, CD Press Kit, and film; 2009