

Interviewee: Sarah Smith Han (Sarah Smith Han and her sisters were all given her mother's maiden name as their middle names. Her mother retained her middle name after she was married)

Interviewer: Lara Atkins

*What is your name?* Sarah Smith Han. [explain project/consent] *Okay, what is your name and what is the story behind it?* Well, my first name is Sarah, my middle name is Smith, and my last name is Han. My last name is from my dad and my middle name is my mom's maiden name which she kept. I have three older sisters and we all have my mom's maiden name as our middle names. *So, do you think your parents decision in giving you your mom's maiden name as your middle name has a relationship to feminism?* Yeah, my mom has a pretty common last name, her maiden name is Smith, so it's not like she was trying to preserve the family name. There are lots of Smiths out there. Rather, she did not want to give up her own name for my dad's name which is a unique name, Han. So for her I definitely think it was a feminist choice and I think that she discussed having a hyphenated name with my dad for us but that didn't end up happening. So, I don't really think that it's a feminist statement for me or my sisters, but it was for my mom.

*Okay, so it was a discussion that she had with your dad prior to naming you and your sisters?* Yeah i'm pretty sure they've told me that. Also, when we sign things she signs as the Smith Han family. *So your middle name is an extension of your last name in a way?* I wouldn't say that, not for me. *But for your mom?* For my mom. *So has having a different last name from your mom caused any difficulties or effects growing up?* Yeah definitely, there have been a lot of things that have tripped people up, if its like a credit card company or booking airline flights. And it usually all works out, but we've definitely had difficulties a lot of the time with travel. One time I was in a hospital really sick and my mom was trying to visit me, it was in Honduras and she couldn't get access for a while. *So do you think that you would do something similar when you get married?* Um, I don't know it depends on what my future life partner's last name is and if I like it. I really like my last name, but I don't feel like I need to...I think i'm a feminist but I don't think that my name is the way that I want to make my feminist statement.

*So you definitely like your last name Han? But would you ever want to use Smith somewhere in your name as well?* Like for my kids? Yes. No. *Do you think you would consider giving your children your maiden name as their middle name?* No, I don't think that would sound very good honestly. *So do you think you put a lot of importance on aesthetic and how things sound?* Yeah, I think Sarah Smith Han sounds nice but if it was like Sarah Smith Brown that just sounds weird but maybe that's just because I'm used to it. *When naming do you think your parents had any role models? Or did they get inspiration from anyone? I know it's usually a Latin American practice to have the fathers name and the mothers name as two last names.* No, I mean they had inspiration for my first name, but my middle and last name is pretty much just [inaudible]...and I have no Latin American roots... *So what do you think they hoped for in chosing this name?...Obviously for your mother it was a way for her to preserve her name, but do you think there are any other reasons behind chosing to name you this way?* Well I don't think it was, that's what I was trying to say before, I think rather it was the fact that she didn't want to submit herself. I mean this is definitely a feminist statement of my moms, but it wasn't about the name in particular. Do you know what I mean? And I think my dad was just like well, if she wants to do that it doesn't matter to me.

*Do you think that they would make the same choice again if naming you now? Yeah, because the problems that have occurred have been minor, and I think that it's tedious often to deal with them but I think my mom likes telling people. Have you gotten any unique reactions to your name in particular or you and your sisters all having the same middle name? Yeah, people think it's weird when I say my middle name's Smith, because I don't know a lot of girls have Ann or Elizabeth as their middle names and mine is Smith and Smith is sort of manly sounding and it's a last name. And then I always say it's my mom's maiden name which is kinda funny that I have to justify it...*

*So, do you think alternative naming practices are effective in intervening with women's last names being erased? Um...yeah...well, i think there's two questions, I think there's the idea of women's last names being erased but then it depends if they have brothers, they can keep it. But then it's a question of erasing this patriarchal system and I think that's a different question. So...do you think it's effective in patrilineal naming practices more generally? Um, I don't know for me I really do consider myself a feminist, but naming practices seem to be very minute of a problem and I think we're becoming more and more of a progressive society. So you think, you think that you could differentiate between last naming practices and feminism kind of? I definitely see the connection, but for me personally it's not where I chose to make my stance. Those are all the questions I have to ask for you, Thank you [End]*