

Interviewee: Isaac Rowe-Raitin (Given both father's and mother's surnames at birth, however decided to hyphenate them for convenience. He believes hyphenated last names aren't practical.)

Interviewer: Lara Atkins

[Explaining project/consent] *So what is your name?* Isaac Rowe-Raitin. *So, what would you say your last name story is?* My parents decided that they wanted to have a two word last name and both of them blamed the other, or not really blamed the other, but not everyone can agree as to why they decided to do that. *So do you think it at all was related to your mother wanting to retain her maiden name?* Yes. At least part of it was that. *Do you think that you would do something similar when you get married?* No, because I don't think you can have a three word last name [Laughs]. *Right, well that makes a lot of sense.* I just remember filling out all the bubbles on the SATS for my last name, and I can't imagine adding on to that [Laughs]. *That's true. Growing up were there any other difficulties having a two name last name or a hyphenated last name?* No not really, it's decently common these days it just takes longer to tell people, but there weren't any major difficulties. I definitely think it's more cumbersome than having a one name last name.

*So have you ever at any point in your life just gone by Rowe or gone by Raitin?* Yeah I have. *So was that just because of convenience?* Yeah it was because I was working at an Elementary school and the two word last name would have confused the hell out of the kids. *Right, definitely. So when your parents decided to hyphenate your last name do you think they put any importance on the sound of the name or the uniqueness?* Like in choosing what order to do?...*Like order and did they chose it based off of the way it sounded?* Um, I don't know, possibly, I think Rowe Raitin sounds better than Raitin Rowe, but maybe that's because I've said it for twenty-one years. *Right, me too.* So I don't know, yeah, possibly, but I don't know if either one of them if they particularly liked the sound or not.

*So do you think that if given the opportunity, your parents would make the same decision to hyphenate their names again?* I think...well it's a good question because they're divorced and they have been for ten years so it doesn't make much of a difference to either one of them now, I think that knowing what they know now, they..I don't know what they would have done, they probably would have to compromise on hyphenating their last name because neither of them would relent on giving up their names. So if it was amicably decided almost 22 years ago, it probably wouldn't amicably decided now, but they probably would still come to the same decision. *Okay. And so your dad's last name is Rowe right? And your mom's last name is Raitin?* No, other way around. *And so initially when they got married did they hyphenate their last names as well? Or did your mom just keep her maiden name?* Yes, they legally did. *Okay, and now your father just goes by Raitin and your mom Rowe?* Yeah, my dad actually professionally never took Rowe Raitin, but I think legally he took Rowe Raitin. He never professionally changed his name. *Okay, interesting.*

*So are there any special unique reactions that you've received for having a hyphenated last name or any particular stories you think that are worth sharing?* The one thing that might be interesting is that my dad claims that my mom did it because it was popular at the time and it was like a thing to do and sorta dismissed it a little bit because of that, but again that's after getting divorced and not liking each other too much anymore so it's hard to say whether or not that's true, but that's sorta how my dad saw it. Other than that it hasn't really been a thing. The biggest issue

is that legally it's not even hyphenated it's just two words. *Oh it's not?* Yeah, they didn't make a distinction between that and being hyphenated for any reason, like any actual reason..my dad thought it would be easier for registering for things, to have it without the hyphen which is [inaudible] false. *Yeah.* So that's actually been a bigger issue, I hyphenate it now just to make it easier but legally there isn't a hyphen. *Right, so they did kind of the Latin American style of the two last names?* Yeah. which is really stupid. Because even in Massachusetts, the DMV...can't put a space in your last name, they don't do it, so on my driver's license there's a hyphen even though legally there isn't. Which isn't the biggest deal in the world it just highlights how stupid my parents were [Laughs]

*So you technically just have a space not a hyphen in between your two last names then?* Yeah. Legally, but i've gone for a long time i've used a hyphen to identify myself...*So just your opinion on this, how effective do you think your parents choice in hyphenating or hyphenating last names are intervening in women being erased in last naming practices?* Well, [laughs] obviously I know so much about feminism that I am very qualified to speak on this issue. Um [laughs] I don't really know, I mean, I think that they...I don't know, I really don't. I don't think it did too much in terms of eliminating...I think there are many other ways that women have been eliminated through public policy and social norms and the last name I think for my mom, having me carry her last name has not done too much for her in terms of being made equal in the marriage partnership.

*Right, I know you probably can't speak on that because you're not a woman keeping your last name...* [Laughs] Well not yet at least. *Okay...so you said originally that you probably wouldn't want a last name that has you know three parts to it, so hypothetically what do you think you would do if the person who you decide to marry wants to keep their last name?* I think it depends on who i'm marrying, If they want to take my last name I wouldn't object to that. I would think they're crazy for wanting my last name [Laughs] but wouldn't object to that. But, I would be more than happy to work out some other deal. I have a friend who has his mom's last name and his brother has his dad's last name because they flipped a coin on it which is crazy and you could imagine that's causing all sorts of issues, but if that's what it takes then I think that would be more reasonable than the other way, a third last name or adding last name after last name for generations to go. So i'd be more than happy to work something out, it's not something I feel overly passionate about, I just think practically speaking it doesn't make a lot of sense. And I don't know It seems most people that I talk to...who are women...they maybe want to keep their own last name but their kids take their husbands, but obviously we talk about marriage all the time at our age [laughs]. *Do you think you would ever take your wifes last name?* I don't think so no...yeah I mean see i'm in an issue because if anything I would want to take one of my parents last names and get rid of this hyphenated nonsense but since they're divorced I can't do that, i'd be picking sides [inaudible]. *Yeah that'd be quite controversial i'm sure.* Yeah exactly. *Well that's all of my questions thank you that was quite helpful* [End]