

Interviewee: Carmen Verdejo Garcia (has two last names, however primarily is referred to by her first surname. She discusses how changing last naming practices in Spain demonstrate how Spain is becoming a more progressive and feminist society.)

Interviewer: Lara Atkins

*So, what is your name? My name is Carmen Verdejo Garcia. So, Verdejo Garcia is your dad and your mom's last names? Yes. Verdejo is my dad's first last name and Garcia is my mom's first last name. Okay, and so is there any reasoning behind why they chose that to be their last name? Well, not really it's just a tradition in Spain, it says that both surnames should be in the child's surname. Traditionally, the father's surname has gone first but now you can change it, so potentially I could be named Carmen Garcia Verdejo. So are there any cultural implications? Because traditionally the father's last name will come first then the mothers, so are there any cultural implications if the mother's comes before the father's? I think that the fact that the mother's surname can come first means that the society in Spain is really changing and moving forward, because traditionally...because the mom's surname comes last it would get lost...And now that doesn't have to happen anymore.*

*So, would you say Spain is becoming increasingly more feminist? Or women are becoming more concerned about not losing their last names? Yeah I think so. I think for me personally, it is strange to marry someone and take their name. For me that's really strange, it's like that person owns me. Right, so in the situation in which the mother's name comes first... the fathers' name would get lost then? Yes, but for future generations. So would you say there have been any effects of having your particular last name and...your fathers name and then your mothers name being your last name? Well, not really, most people tend to call me when they use my surname...by my father's surname. But I don't really think it's because it's my first surname I think it's really because it's way less common..I would say that's why, especially in the South it's not such a common surname.*

*So you said that you wouldn't want to lose your last name, so what do you think you would do if you got married or had children? Well, I don't think I would take my husband's surname if he were a Spaniard because it just doesn't work that way in Spain. But I don't know about the order...I would take a look at my husband's surname and mine and work out what sounds better. Okay, so typically when you get married in Spain do a lot of wives take their husband's surnames? No nobody does that. Nobody does?... Yes. You keep your name and then your children will traditionally get your first surname in the second place. So have you enjoyed having your last name in the order that it's been? I'm not sure it would have made a difference.*

*So what were the pros that your parents thought they would get out of choosing this name for you? You mean the advantage of having two surnames? Yes. Then you can actually track who your family members are, if the names are not the same, because maybe you're Atkins and your father's Atkins and your mom's Atkins and you can see the family relations, then you can see the family ties maybe to my cousins and things like that. Okay, so you talked about this a little before, but are there times that your friends or people call you by either Verdejo or Garcia and not your full last name? Yes, a lot of people usually go with their first last name to be honest and then because my first last name...it's not really uncommon but it's way less common than Garcia then they use that one. So it's just because it's less common in the south and it's unique that a lot of people chose to call you Verdejo? If you say in a classroom Garcia than half of the kids will*

be called like that, so that's why. But usually people use their first last name and that's it to be honest. *So, in Spain do you think that using both the father's surname and the mother's surname when naming your child is a way for women to keep their identities? Or, do you think that it's not so much about that?* Definitely. It's a way to preserve your identity because your name passes on for your child, maybe it will not pass on for the next generations, if it's not in the first place but it's still there and you're not taking somebody else's surname, it's not like you're losing part of your identity. *So you're saying now that it's changing and more common that mother's surnames will come before father's, so that's definitely speaking to more feminist practices in Spain?* [Agrees] *Are there any ways that you can have both the fathers and the mothers surname be passed on to their child's children?* Well I guess you could hyphenate them and make it a single surname. *Do a lot of people do that?* No, that's kind of a posh thing to do, you will find people with two hyphenated surnames and you will know that they are kind of well off because in the end they have four surnames and that sounds like the royal family...*So, in that situation both the mother's and the father's names get preserved, however in the situation in which the mothers surname comes before the fathers only the mothers will be passed down. Is that correct?* Um well, if the mother's surname comes first then it's more likely that it will pass on because whichever surname comes first has better chances of coming first again. It's a little complicated, especially now that you can change it and make the second come first.

*Okay...so do you think that practice is controversial at all?* Well, it was pretty controversial when this law passed about being able to make a second surname at first, people said that if there is not an agreement with the parents because they both want their surname to come first, by law it has to be done in a political order. So a lot of people were complaining because they said that a lot of people would not agree, and that only surnames starting with A or B or C would pass...To be honest I don't know many people that actually change the traditional order, I know some friends of mine have because they had really cool surnames and they wanted them to pass on, but that's about it. But it was indeed controversial. *So was the initial law that you couldn't change your name?* Yeah. The traditional law said that the fathers surname comes first then the mothers and that's it. *So they recently just changed that law that you can you know have a say in that...So where do you think this will lead in the future. Do you think a lot of people will become more progressive in changing their names or keeping their names?* I hope so... it gives people more freedom and that's always a good thing. I don't know if it will have such a great effect anyways because people tend to go with their first surname so I don't know if we will still do the traditional surname thing for very long or not. *Okay I think that is all the questions I have to ask for you, thank you!* [End]