

Interviewee: Susana Cruz (Susana is married and kept her father's last name. She is Spanish and has two last names but only uses one of them in the U.S.)

Interviewer: Kelson Brighton

[Explain project, consent] *What is your last name story?* Well my last name is my family's last name, which is my father's first last name, and in Spain everybody has two last names, so you take your father's first last name and your mother's first last name. So they are patriarchal names, but you always have two last names. So in the U.S. you have only one and I don't include the other one in the document. I am married, but I would never change my name to my husband's name. He has his own last name. *In terms of documents in the U.S., you just use Cruz?* Yes, it's easier, I never combined it or hyphenated it but all my Spanish documents have both last names. *Would you say that it's because of the uniqueness of your family name in terms of an aesthetic and uniqueness of your family name?* I think that it's both cultural and also because I would have a huge problem switching to my husband's last name. That's a form of possession. So for me to change my last name would be a clear indication that...why would I change my identity because I'm getting married? First of all it's cultural because in Spain we don't do that. When you get married you don't change your names, you keep both your names. Your husband has his own last names and you never combine them. So first it would be culturally inappropriate and shocking that you would do that as a woman and second there's this connotation that you know, I am changing my last name to become part of my husband's last name. Why aren't the males doing it? Why don't they change their last name? For me it would be both cultural and also a certain degree of Feminism there.

Did you have any role models when making your decision? I mean, no. This is clear because in Spain you never have to make a decision. I never had to think about what am I going to do in this situation because no woman in Spain changes their name to their husband's name. So for me, there was never any point when I had to make a decision. I mean when I got married, he knew that I wasn't going to change my name, because he knows about the cultural norms in Spain. He also knows how I am so he never ever asked me if I would change my last name. There wasn't any moment that I had to make a decision or that I had to refer to a role model. I mean, it's just intrinsic in my upbringing. So it's something that's inside my upbringing that I would have never considered changing my last name. It was never even an option.

What did you hope for in keeping your own name and has that worked for you? Yeah, I mean I think a name is important because it's your connection to your roots. So, I would not want to lose my last name in any situation, because that is what connects me to my past and to my family.

Have there been any unforeseen consequences to keeping your last name and not taking your husband's last name? The only thing that happens is that in the U.S. people that don't know us or don't know us well will assume that my last name is his last name. Sometimes we will get an invitation in the mail that will say Mrs. and Mr. Smith. And I never feel that that is directed toward me because I am not Mrs. Smith. But that only happens with people that don't know us well or anonymous things that we get in the mail. You know, telemarketing, that type of thing, where they just assume. Or on the contrary, if they know my name and they know I'm married they will assume that Cruz is my husband's last name. But that would be the only thing. So it's never happened on a personal level, but more with these indirect situations. Now, I don't know. If we were to have children it might be different. I guess they would assume that Cruz is the last

name of the husband, I'm not sure what would happen in that situation. *Do you plan on having children?* Um...Yeah, I might have one in the future. I don't know, I'm not worried that the kid would have two last names because that's not common in the U.S. But I would probably at least choose a Spanish name as the first name. *Would the child have your husband's last name?* Probably. In Spain they would have both. So their Spanish passport would have both last names, but probably if I were to have a child the first name would be the Spanish one so there would still be that origin to me even if the child only has his last name. But for me it's really shocking that people do that in the U.S. That women change their last name...it's shocking. It's truly shocking to me as a woman that people do that and that that cultural norm exists. In 2012, it's shocking. As a spaniard, it's shocking.

What types of reactions do you get about your name, in terms of you and your husband having different names? None, I haven't gotten any negative reactions. No. It's pretty well accepted. I mean the circle I move in are academics, so no. *How effective do you think that your choice is in intervening in the process of women becoming erased in getting married and losing their name?* Well in my situation I don't, so, you know? I would say that I'm going against that trend. *How effective do you think that keeping your name, so your patrilineal father's name, is in working towards feminist goals?* Yes, and that's why in Spain I think it's nice that we have both last names. Of course you're not going to have four last names but at least having the mother's last name is important as well. *We've talked about whether keeping your last name, your maiden name is effective in not erasing your identity.* Or in Spain you're keeping two last names. It happens sometimes here. I've had some students that have two last names, hyphenated, but it's not common. I think the option in Spain is the best one, it's not hyphenated, you have two last names. When they role call in school they say both last names. There is no hyphen. In any form you fill out you have to give two last names. I mean, always, in every form. *I think that's it, is there anything else that you think should be included?* I don't think so. *Great, well thank you.*
[End]