

Interviewee: Jae Salinas (Kept her surname)

Interviewer: Laura DiRusso

*Alright, so first I want to know the story behind your last name, what you chose to do when you get married and things like that. Well my last name is Salinas and, well I really don't know very much about my last name except that um, it's Spanish. My family is from Mexico and my father is from the middle-northern part of Mexico. And I think a lot of his family was also from Chiwawa. So yeah that's about all I know about my last name. And you chose to keep it? Yeah I chose to keep it, really because I liked mine a lot better than my husbands. His last name is Gonzalez, and where were from in deep south Texas it's predominately a Hispanic community and there's a large population of Gonzalezs there and not very many Salinas. So I thought mine was more unique so I wanted to keep it. Another reason is really just because it was easier [laughs]. I didn't have to stand in line to go change it. Also because it was um, I guess sort of like a personal branding decision as well, so that people who've known me for the 21 years that I was not married, growing up will find me easily. Especially those people that don't even know I'm married. And, because I'm in social media, all of my handles that I've created before were tied to my last name and I would've had to change everything. And it wouldn't have been that big of a deal, but I had already created a personal brand with the last name I was given at birth. That's awesome, did you have any other influences? You mentioned your culture...? The Hispanic community especially the older generations are very conservative. I was raised catholic. As I was being raised I wasn't really conforming to those ideals and I thought I was just different. I was very different from a lot of my family. It just seemed like an unnatural thing to do, not conform to the norms of changing my last name to my husband's. It just seemed like it was an okay thing to do and it wasn't a big deal [to me]. How long have you been married for?*

*I got married in 2007 so five years. Has it worked out for you so far? Any regrets or issues with your last name? I haven't had any issues at all, not even from my family. It surprised me a little bit I thought I'd get some backlash, especially from my grandmother on my dad's side although I was really keeping her name so maybe that's why she didn't say anything [laughs]. But nothing has come of it. We're not planning on having children so even that's not an issue, like a kid with a slashed name.*

*How do you think your choice has made women more visible professionally, culturally? Culturally, I feel like in the Hispanic community there's a lot of "machismo" and that is essentially men dominating women socially and I felt like if I took my husband's name it'd be like he owned me, um and I feel like maybe that's an important part of the Hispanic machismo community, but I feel like it's definitely turning away from that. And I don't think me taking his last name would have helped that very much but, it would be nice for women in the Hispanic community to be seen more and respected more and maybe not taking their husbands name would help, I really don't know. Professionally, um, I guess it's, well professionally we stand on an even ground, or at least we should. Especially in positions that have more power and get paid more. Women are still not paid as much as men are. I guess I don't have anything else to say about that. [conclusion]*