

Interviewee: Anne Goodman James (Added husband's name w/o hyphenating)

Interviewer: Erik Laitos

[Intro, consent] *What is your last name story?* When I decided to get married, I had a couple of considerations. One, being I wanted to maintain my own identity, and two, was that I had worked professionally for several years using my maiden name, and did not want to lose that connection in my professional world. So it was important to me to keep that part of my name in the name after I was married. But decided to go ahead and use both names, looking forward to if we had a family and had children that they would have that connection. I think the other thing I had thought of when getting married, when you think about the ceremony, and the tradition is that someone gives you away, and that just made me nuts. First of all, no one owns me, and I don't want to be given out of my original family either. So my father did not walk me down the aisle, nor did anyone give me away. *Out of curiosity, who did walk you down the aisle?* I walked down with my husband, or to-be at that point.

*A little bit of background about your family history, then, or maybe the last name in particular. Is there anything in particular about your last name that bonded you to remaining Anne Goodman or Anne Goodman James by extension? Not the name itself, but something to do with what the name implies, your family, your history, that kind of thing.* Really the only thing is that I was close with my family, and it was just important to maintain that connection. I mean, there wasn't anything specific about anyone being famous or anything like that that made me want to absolutely have that name.

*You obviously have two children, and both of their last names is James. Has this really affected your children, your decision to be AGJ, Anne Goodman James. My daughter's middle name is Goodman, so she is Sarah Goodman James, and at one point when my son was very young, he wanted to know why if I was Anne Goodman James and his sister was Sarah Goodman James, why was he not Travis Goodman James? But we truly just used it as a middle name, not as an identity with me specifically. And just to clarify, your last name is Goodman James non-hyphenated. Just Anne-space-Goodman-space-James and Goodman James without the hyphen is your last name.* You know, and I guess Goodman has become my middle name, but I just use both as a last name identity [swim team joke, laughter--irrelevant].

*Is there anything apart from your personal history, with respect to your family, that really bonded you to your name? Like did you have any role models in your family or friends who might have influenced your choice to be Anne Goodman James as opposed to Anne James or Anne Goodman?* Really, the role models in my family would have influenced me to go the other way, because they all chose just to go with their husbands' names, and weren't really career women either. So I've really gone in a very different direction than any of the other women in my family.

And you mentioned in the intro about people calling you "Mrs. William James." That's like my ultimate pet peeve. I just really don't like that. *What specifically about that bugs you? Is it that you're not being acknowledged as yourself, that you're being "erased," so to speak* [Pretty much, yeah], *or are you just being irrevocably bound to Bubba [her husband], so to speak, that there is no Anne, that you are Bubba, that you are part of Bubba.* It just feels like it takes my identity away, and I think when you...once you have children, you often become known as Travis' mom

or Sarah's mom or something like that, which you get used to, but still it's like your identity's gone. And it's the same like if they're calling you your husband's name. I don't exist just because I'm married to him. Yes, we have a good partnership, but... *It's not like the 12th century where you go from the "property" of your father to the "property" of your husband.* And I think, if you asked him, he's often known as Anne's husband instead of himself, so he'd probably have the same kind of feelings I would think.

[Intro to pros and cons] *What did you hope for in choosing this name and has it worked?* I mean, I think that I just wanted to maintain my identity both as an individual and professionally stay connected with the first part of my career. So it's certainly done that. I don't think there's really anything beyond that. *Have there been any unforeseen consequences or drawbacks [either positive or negative]?* I think sometimes it confuses people. What should they call me? Am I Coach Goodman, or Coach James? I didn't really think about that in particular. That's really probably the only drawback? *Any other unforeseen consequences that you have seen, not necessarily drawbacks?* It's a really long name to say! [laughter]...which sometimes is kind of a hassle, but not really.

*Are there times when you...like you've been called Mrs. James a million times, what does that mean to you? What does that signify to you when other people call you that? Does that mean like 'I am being erased,' like let's say Travis is twelve and his friends come over and say 'Mrs. James.' Does that irk you?* That doesn't bother you at all. Yeah, in that kind of a setting...I think there's a difference in being referred to by kids as 'Mrs. James' as opposed to being referred to by adults as 'Mrs. William James.' Those are totally different to me. Their friends would typically call me Mrs. James, or for some reason a lot of them would call me 'Mama James.' [laughter]

*Would you make the same choice again? Yes. We already kind of briefly touched on this, so 'Anne Goodman James' is a very long name. Obviously people can pronounce it well, since Goodman and James aren't weird names. Is there anything about that, the length, the pronunciation, and the uniqueness which strikes home for you, apart from the length being annoying?* I can't really think of anything. *Is it just 'it is what it is'?* Yeah, and it's been so long now that I don't really think about it too much. I think there was a point maybe fifteen years ago or so that I considered 'Why did I add James on there, why didn't I just stay Anne Goodman?' But by that time I had kids, so it seemed to make sense. *Yeah, keep it simple.*

*What kind of reactions have you or your family gotten about your name?* Except for the fact that people tend to reduce it to initials [AGJ, a common nickname], which happened where I worked the last time, too [University of Arkansas], I don't really remember any real reactions to it. I think maybe my kids' friends are kinda curious as...having that whole thing, but I don't really ever feel like I've gotten a reaction that was negative or nobody's ever said 'Why in the heck would you do that?' And I think it's 'cuz so many of my colleagues are working professionals, so many of the people that I associate with, and it's reasonably common... if all of my friends were stay-at-home moms it might be a different sort of reaction I think. *What about the AGJ thing in particular? People sort of initialize you, they don't really say 'Anne Goodman James' everytime they refer to you. Is it something that bothers you, do you feel erased, so to speak, as a result of that, being initialized?* No not all. *It makes you feel more unique?* It's sort of like having people call you by a nickname, as long as the nickname's not offensive...

[Intro to implications for feminism] *How effective do you think your choice is in intervening in women being erased? So, as sort of a case study relative to others, do you think that your name*

*has been reflective of women not being erased?* I think using that pattern, whether it's as a middle name and last name or as a hyphenated name, certainly is a step in what I consider the right direction. But it doesn't necessarily have to be what everyone does. I think the thing about naming that I've always been sort of curious about though is when you look at families where the woman has kept the maiden name, and you have children...the woman carried the baby, why is it the man's last name? And that's very traditional, obviously, and then you look at some Spanish cultures, and they just keep adding names on! Where does that stop? And my other question is, children whose parents have hyphenated the names, and their name is hyphenated...what if they marry someone whose name is hyphenated? *What do you think they should do then?* I don't know! That's going to get crazy out of hand! *The response that Jill Tiefenthaler had to this question when I interviewed her was the creation of an entirely different last name! [introduced 'Lucard' example]* *What do you think about that? Would you advocate for that?* I would not. I think, to me, the simplest thing is just to keep your name the whole time through. Don't add anything on to it, don't take anything off of it, don't change it. And then I guess if I were going back and looking at it as a long-term thing, that'd be the change I'd make. You just don't change your name.

*How meaningfully does a woman keeping her father's father's, so patrilineal name, speak to feminist goals in your opinion?* You've got two things going against each other. One, you're keeping the name you were born with, but it's still your father's name. I don't know. Where does that balance become ok? I don't know. That's a tough one, because it is a patriarchal society still, and a statement of that. So how do we get away from that? [conclusion]