

“Already Made a Name for Myself”:
Academic and Professional Women’s Utilization of Impression Management and Practice
Theory through Retaining their Natal Surnames at Marriage

A SENIOR HONORS THESIS

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By

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ON MY HONOR, I NEITHER GAVE NOR RECEIVED ANY UNAUTHORIZED AID ON
THIS SENIOR HONORS THESIS.

Amanda Grace Rennecker

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ABSTRACT

For some women in the United States, last-naming practices have progressed from a patronymic system to a non-conventional one. An example of non-traditional last-naming choices is when a woman retains her natal surname at marriage. Women who choose to keep their own names at marriage are often questioned about their reasoning and are sometimes ridiculed for defying the longstanding patronymic system. The questions I seek to answer in this essay are: what are women's reasons behind keeping their own last names? Do they need a claim to a professional or academic accomplishment to justify their decision? Through the Feminist Last Naming Project, 82 women and one man were interviewed about their last name stories surrounding feminist last-naming practices. I used grounded theory methodology to interpret the data from the interviews and two theories arose: impression management theory and practice theory. Both theories provide a lens to understand women's academic and professional reasons for keeping their own last names at marriage as well as the practice of women imparting situational name use in their lives. Twenty-two people cited academic and/or professional reasons for their experiences with a woman keeping her own last name at marriage. Fifteen of these women discuss compartmentalizing their lives through situational name use. Costs and benefits exist for this non-conventional naming decision; however, for the women in this study, it appears that the benefits outweigh the costs. In order to reconcile the difficulties surrounding their decisions, many of the women use different surnames in different situations and compartmentalize their lives. These women appear to manage the impressions they wish to acquire from different people as well as garner different forms of symbolic capital that reflect the structures under which they live.

Introduction

When a woman retains her natal surname at marriage, questions of her motivations and inspirations arise. She is also confronted with people who disagree with or do not understand their decisions. A commentary found on the Internet accuses women who keep their natal surnames at marriage of creating an “ego-trip legacy” by not committing to their nuclear families by sharing their husbands’ last names (Nugent 2010: 509).

Fathers will often pass their surnames on to their wives and children, a system known as patronymics. Scholars speculate that early medieval Ireland is one of the first cultures to adopt the use of paternally inherited surnames, dating back to 10th century A.D. (McEvoy 2006:212). Patrilineal naming, although common, perpetuates an element of gender inequality in that women often lose their last names at marriage. As more women entered the workplace, obtained higher education, and propagated women’s rights movements, the emergence of feminist ideology spiked a shift away from the traditional patrilineal naming system to non-conventional practices (Goldin and Shim 2004; Hamilton et al. 2011; Kopelman et al. 2009; Owen Blakemore et al. 2005; Schueble 2005; Stannard 1977). Non-traditional naming practices include a woman hyphenating her name with her husband’s name, creating a new name with her husband, and a woman retaining her natal surname upon marriage.

Women keep their last names at marriage for numerous reasons, including motives pertaining to academic and professional experiences. In this essay, I explore women’s personal stories behind academic and professional reasons for last-naming practices through grounded theory methodology, as well as analyze women’s situational name use through the lenses of impression management theory and practice theory. The questions I seek to answer are: For what reasons do women keep their natal surnames? Do women need to have a claim to personal

accomplishments (education and/or a professional career) to justify keeping their own name? How do women reconcile the differences in name use for certain situations? The focus of my research is last-naming choices with respect to marriage. Although the complexities that arise in naming children after imparting a non-traditional last name are important as well, they are not the primary focus in this essay.

The literature surrounding this topic lacks personalized accounts of women's experiences and decisions to retain their natal last names at marriage, which removes factors such as situational context and emotions associated with these decisions. Many of the previous studies are based on surveys. My sample includes 83 people with last name stories that relate to feminism of whom were interviewed in the Feminist Last Naming Project¹. Twenty-six of the people interviewed were women who retained their natal surnames at marriage. One man explains his experience with his wife's decision to retain her natal surname at marriage. The stories of the women interviewed throughout this essay provide insight into the reasons and thoughts behind their marital last-naming decisions.

Before I explore the stories of people interviewed during this research, I review the relevant literature on the history of feminist last-naming practices, and more specifically women choosing to retain their natal surname at marriage. I present my methods followed by an introduction to the impression management and practice theory. I provide an in-depth look at women's academic and professional reasons for retaining their natal surnames at marriage. I, then, discuss situational use of women's last names through the lenses of impression management and practice theory. I close with some overarching themes and conclusions from the interviews as well as some limitations and final remarks on the direction of feminism and last-naming practices for women.

Background

The conundrum of marital last name decisions has exposed diverse thoughts and reactions from women, men, feminists, and anthropologists in the United States since the 19th century. The conundrum I refer to is a woman's choice between taking her husband's last name upon marriage and choosing an alternative option, such as hyphenation, a new last name, or keeping her own last name.

The current conventional naming choice for a woman in the United States is to take her husband's name upon marriage and to give her and her husband's children the husband's surname (Brightman 1994; Liss 2013; Scheuble and Johnson 2005). Locations that currently practice patronymics include Columbia (Alonso and Usaquén 2013), Russia (Balanovska et al. 2011), Spain (Boattini et al. 2007), the Aleutian Islands (Graf et al. 2010), Sicily (Guglielmino et al. 1991), Central Europe (Immel et al. 2006), Britain (King et al. 2006), The Netherlands (Manni et al. 2005), Belgium (Larmuseau et al. 2012), and the United States (Foss and Edson 1989; Mills 2003; Ridge 2008; Stannard 1977; Suarez 1996; Weitzman 1981). However, the patronymic naming system has felt pushback since the 1800s.

One example of this pushback was a woman named Lucy Stone. Living in Boston, Massachusetts in May of 1855, she was one of the first documented women to retain her natal last name upon marriage. She generated interest and discussion around the topic of nontraditional marital naming practices amongst women in the late 19th century (Goldin and Shim 2004; Stannard 1977). However, debates have existed around who was the true initiator of this practice. Shortly after receiving her medical doctor degree (MD) in November of 1855, Mary E. Walker married Dr. Albert Miller. After the wedding ceremony, she continued to use her natal surname. Some argue that Dr. Mary Walker preceded Lucy Stone as the first woman to retain her natal last

name at birth because although Lucy Stone married in May of 1855, she did not renounce her husband's last name until July of 1856 (Stannard 1977:133).

In the late 1800s, people began to comment on the inequalities seen between a husband and wife after marriage. The relationship between a man and woman created by this union bared the blatant oppression experienced by women (Basch 1986). Only independent, monetarily prosperous women could manage not getting married without going into extreme poverty or persisting in a life at home (Ridge 2008). For a woman, during this time, marriage corresponded to termination of her career due to the common assumption that women could not work and take care of a family simultaneously. Maintenance and care of the family and home comprised a woman's primary job at the time.

There existed an unofficial policy in the workforce to fire a woman as soon as she married; men expressed contempt in being challenged by an accomplished woman (Stannard 1977). For many women with male-dominated careers, such as doctors, marriage ironically helped maintain their femininity. A woman who wanted to enter a profession that had been customarily composed of men was believed to want "to make herself into a man" explained Orestes Brownson (quoted by Stanndard 1977:81). In order to maintain her femininity in the home, a woman in a male-dominated profession often used her husband's last name at work. Women were also willing to dispose of the titles they earned, such as Dr., to continue to go by the name Miss or Mrs. This helped "prove their femininity despite their masculine profession" (Stannard 1977:82). Some women were able to choose how they wished to be addressed, but other women, legally, had no say in the matter. In Washington in the late 19th century, for example, a married woman who practiced her profession under her natal surname was still legally known by her husband's last name (Conrad-Rice 1973).

The Lucy Stone League, created in the 1920s by a group of prominent feminists, had a goal to help women preserve their identities by keeping their own last names upon marriage (Goldin and Shim 2004). The women comprising this league faced many hardships. Several states had laws well into the 1970s denying women rights such as retaining their drivers licenses and registering to vote if they did not use their husbands' last names (Goldin and Shim 2004). At the time, in order to keep her name, a woman had to pay her husband anywhere between \$25 and \$100 and obtain his permission (Conrad-Rice 1973). A woman taking her husband's last name, a practice that we now term traditional, stems from a patriarchal family system where, upon marriage, a man deemed ownership of his wife's possessions and property (Foss and Edson 1989; Mills 2003; Ridge 2008; Suarez 1996; Weitzman 1981).

In the 1970s and the 1980s, after women made their way into the work force, they progressively defined their identities by their roles at school and work. The shift from women having roles at home within the family to possessing roles outside the home happened during a movement called Second-Wave Feminism² (Hoffnung 2006). The age at which women married for the first time as well as the number of advanced academic degrees obtained by women increased in the 1970's (Goldin and Shim 2004). Correspondingly, the progression toward the use of the title, "Ms.", instead of "Mrs." as a portrayal of ambiguous marital status, similar to a man's title, "Mr.", commenced around the 1970's (Goldin and Shim 2004). The 1970s also pioneered a less complicated divorce system than in the past, which appeared to encourage non-traditional last naming practices. Women were also increasingly having children without getting married and this influenced their marital last-naming choices (Mills 2003).

Some scholars argue that nontraditional naming has become more common over time (Goldin and Shim 2004). Other scholars suggest that marriage itself links to attitudes and

behaviors associated with traditional gender roles and more conventional-naming practices (Liss and Erchull 2012; Scheuble and Johnson 2005; Gooding and Kreider 2010; Scheuble and Johnson 1995; Stannard 1997). Studies have revealed that college-educated women are more likely than their counterparts to have nontraditional marital names (Gooding and Kreider 2010; Schueble and Johnson 1995). Scheuble and Johnson (2005) provide evidence that women use different last names in different social situations in order to placate the opposing thoughts of people that believe they should follow traditional naming practices and their own desires to retain their natal surnames.

Innovations in last-naming decisions do not come without disapproval. In a study, examining online discussions about providing children with their fathers' surnames, many online comments spoke negatively about the complications that arise for families without a single, shared family last name. These families were accused of lacking family values by online commentaries:

I've heard secretaries, receptionists, and housewives all keep their maiden names in the cause of 'professional reputation.' I would love to find out the probability of divorce in families with different last names—I bet it's much higher. Passing this ego-trip legacy on to the next generation isn't kind and it sends a poor message to kids. We're saying that Mommy and Daddy live together but they can't commit to one another. Pick one name and stick to it. And show respect to your NUCLEAR family in the process. (Nugent 2010: 509)

This quote illustrates the stigma that many Americans place on non-traditional last-naming practices, specifically women keeping their natal names for academic or professional reasons. The underlying assumption in this comment as well as others in additional online discussion forums is that some believe that patriarchal last naming would be a simpler and obvious solution. The comment also alludes to the idea that non-traditional last-naming practices seem pretentious. Yet, this essay contradicts these assumptions. Many of the women interviewed in this project

argue that their non-traditional choice of last name is more convenient and identity displaying among other reasons.

Women's educations, career goals, and accomplishments seem to complicate the once black and white decisions behind marital naming for women. A woman with a career outside of the home can find herself in a situation where she has already "made a name" for herself among friends and coworkers (Goldin and Shim 2004:160). As time passes, women feel more comfortable in postponing marriage and are able to further consider keeping their natal last names. Some explanations for this relief are that women are marrying at a later age (Goldin and Shim 2004), furthering their education, obtaining higher incomes (Kopelman et al. 2009), working in professional occupations increasingly since the 1970's (Owen Blakemore et al. 2005; Schueble 2005), and supplementing their sexual lives with oral contraceptives (Goldin and Katz 2002). The rise in college-graduate women keeping their own surnames began in the late 1970s and plateaued from the 1980s to the 1990s, suggesting that the surge of women into the work force might have caused an increased desire to retain their natal names at marriage. However, the number of women to execute this practice is still under 20 percent (Goldin and Shim 2004).

During an interview, professor Jessica Giles Copeland explains, "I do not know how to create a matrilineal name without starting fresh. You know, without taking some woman's first name as your last name or something. I do not know." Jessica highlights the main issue with utilizing a non-traditional last name: there always appear to be patrilineal undertones in names. Yet, this has not stopped the women in this project, and many women in the United States from keeping their own last names at marriage.

What has happened after the plateau, from the 1990's to the present, and what are women's reasons behind why they chose to keep their natal names? Do women need to have a

claim to personal accomplishments (education and/or a professional career) to justify keeping their own name? The literature surrounding women's reasons for keeping their natal last names provides statistical answers to some of these questions. Hamilton and colleagues (2011) suggest marital naming decisions predict "gender attitudes" better than surveys related to division of labor for work versus home. For a woman, obtaining a bachelor's degree increases the likelihood of her choosing a non-conventional last name. Older brides are also more likely to keep their natal surnames (Brightman 1994). Some women who decided to use non-conventional naming practices state reasons for their choices in a survey: of the 44 percent of women surveyed in a study who chose nontraditional naming mention identity, 21 percent discuss professional reasons, 18 percent cite bonding/union in marriage, 15 percent describe a like or dislike of a name (Twenge 1997). In a general survey representing all women in the United States, Hoffnung (2006) found that roughly ten percent of the women surveyed have nontraditional names including their birth surname, a hyphenated name, or their birth name as a middle name. The array of women choosing non-conventional last-naming practices ranges from ten percent to close to 50 percent depending on the sample of women, the location, and the method used for conducting research (Hoffnung 2006). In a similar investigation representing mostly college-educated women, 29 percent of the women surveyed chose to utilize a nontraditional surname (Hoffnung 2006). My research adds to the growing body of literature surrounding feminist last-naming practices, but focuses specifically on women's reasons for retaining their natal surnames through the lenses of impression management theory and practice theory using a grounded theory approach.

Upon initial exposure to the Feminist Last Naming Project in Decemer 2012, the topic did not captivate me. My mother took my father's last name at marriage and I did not know any

women that spoke out about retaining their natal surnames at marriage. As I interviewed people and probed through the interview transcripts, I began to think more about my future career plans and my marital last-name decision. I realized that my current last-naming practice, although superficially patriarchal, is relevant to the Feminist Last Naming Project. I am adopted and have my adopted father's surname. Had I not been adopted, my last name would have been Valdez, my birth mother's last name. I often use the last name Valdez in casual conversation to validate my Hispanic heritage since my physical features do not elucidate my Hispanic roots, and my current last name, Rennecker, displays German lineage. The luxury of checking the minority box on college applications, scholarships, and medical school applications gives me a leg up on my predominately Caucasian counterparts. I once thought my name to be a trivial entity, slapped on a nametag, most likely to be mispronounced; however, last-naming practices, marital and generational, create a labyrinth of issues, rewards, explanations, and justifications.

Methods

Research for the Feminism and Last-Naming Practices Project began in the course *Women, Men, and Others (AN/FG239)* taught by Dr. Sarah Hautzinger at Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado³. Dr. Hautzinger presented the idea of the community-based learning project the first few days of the 18-day course and the project was continuously modified through the entirety of the block by the class as a whole. I helped develop the project with 20 of my classmates. The project explores alternative naming practices to the "traditional" patrilineal practice: when women take their male partner's last name and give that name to their children. We sought insight into the types of naming practices in use by people from both today and from past generations.

The class was divided into five teams designed to assemble the following information: contacts, data, text, website dissemination, and project managing. Each team consisted of 4-5 students from the class and had a specific set of duties such as managing the interviews, working with the qualitative data, and creating the web page. Each student obtained three contacts of people with feminist-motivated, last-naming-practice stories. We finished collecting names of approximately 100 contacts, not all of who have interviewed to date. We contacted who we deemed to be promising participants, whom elected or declined to participate in the project. A few contacts also referred friends and other possible participants to us. We received Institutional Review Board approval for our project and permission to obtain verbal consent for the interview, voice recording, and use of the interview in a final product, such as a website.

We used a purposive sampling method for this project, meaning we were attempting to include maximum diversity in our sample, rather than to create a sample statistically representative of the general North American population. The interview consisted of a semi-structured list of questions that was malleable based on the direction of the conversation. Most of the interviews were digitally recorded; however, we did have a few interviews in email format. The interviewing process yielded 54 interviews which consisted of women, men, parents, adult children, married, divorced, and so on, who have last name stories that relate to feminist motivations.

After the interviews were finished, each person in the class transcribed the interviews they completed on NVivo8, a qualitative data analysis (QDA) program. We used this software because it allowed us to work with our rich, text-based and audio-interview information. We were able to classify, sort, and arrange our interviews into prominent salient themes. We created 27 themes, which included matters such as Loyalty, Divorce, Regrets, Role Models, Hyphenated

Unions/Children, Created Names, and Family Names. Students in the class wrote topical essays based on the previously discussed themes.

The project was partially suspended after the class finished in late December 2012, besides website and database editing. The project continued in October of 2013 in *Community-Based Field Course (AN380)*. Since there were only eight students and a professor, each student was able to cater the work within the project to their individual interests. In 2013 we added to the list of potential people to interview, including those initially contacted in 2012. We used NVivo 10 to transcribe the interviews. For this paper, I used interviews and materials from both 2012 and 2013 interviews⁴.

Through the course of the 2013 interviewing process, 29 more people were interviewed, for a total of 83 interviews in the database. Twenty-six women discussed retaining their natal name at marriage, and two men explained their thoughts on women keeping their natal names at marriage. The data collection method for 2012 and 2013 was convenience sampling. We chose interviewees based on connections with people in the Feminist Last Naming project team. Since the team members of the Feminist Last Naming project consisted of Dr. Sarah Hautzinger and Colorado College students, our sample has an academic bias.

Throughout this research, there was no rigid set of guidelines followed to analyze the data. I explored the interviews through grounded theory methodology, under which a researcher generates theory from the data instead of allowing the theory to dictate data collection. Grounded theory was presented in the 1960's as an innovative method to examine qualitative data and has continued to be a useful tool in developing or applying theory to data that is systematically collected and examined (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1994). Corbin and Strauss (1990) note that grounded theory shares two main ideas with Pragmatism and Social

Interactionism: building change into the method and recognizing that actors have, although they do not always use, the means of “controlling their destinies by responses to conditions” (5).

Grounded theory methodology allows the researcher to analyze the interplay of changes in the environment and peoples’ reactions to those changes.

Three processes are necessary in order to ensure the correct utilization of grounded theory methodology in this research. Research should begin with a broad research question, which narrows and develops as data collection and examination occur (Charmaz 1990; Corbin and Strauss 1991). Similarly, raw data must be coded and converted into concepts, allowing the researcher to analyze the data effectively. The overall theory is composed of these concepts (Corbin and Strauss 1991:7). Data analysis should also take place parallel to data collection. The emergence of theoretical categories can then influence the data collection as well as shape coding and subsequent theory development (Charmaz 1990; Corbin and Strauss 1991). Charmaz (1990) discusses the utility of grounded theory approach:

The ‘groundedness’ of this approach fundamentally results from these researchers’ commitment to analyze what they actually observe in the field or in their data. If they find recurrent themes or issues in the data, then they need to follow up on them, which can, and often, does lead grounded theorists in unanticipated directions. (1162)

This method sets grounded theory apart from other qualitative data sampling methods because other methods stress obtaining lots of data before analysis and they examine the data long after leaving the field (Charmaz 1990:1162). With grounded theory methodology, as a researcher, I can apply theories to the data I collect as I see fit.

Theory

I discuss the patterns found in the interviews through the lenses of impression management and practice theory. Before I delve into the data analysis, a brief overview of these theories' is necessary.

Impression management is defined by Goffman (1959) as “the contingencies, which arise in fostering an impression” (49). In other words, impression management is a process, either conscious or unconscious, in which people try to influence the perceptions of other people about themselves. People will often control information, such as a surname, in social interactions in an attempt to control other’s opinions. Impression management theory asserts that an individual must ascertain and uphold impressions that are consistent with the perceptions they want to communicate to their audience and that individuals are motivated to claim images that provide them with the highest potential value (Goffman 1959; Schlenker 1980).

Women interviewed in this research often spoke of their experiences with the use of different surnames in different social situations. Schueble and Johnson (2005) describe common circumstances in which women use different last names in different situations such as picking a child up from school, visiting a hometown, or in professional situations. Most of the women in Schueble and Johnson’s study use their husbands’ last names in home situations and use their natal last names at work (Schueble and Johnson 2005). Full time employment and a higher education level correlate positively with situational name use (Schueble and Johnson 2005).

Situational name use can create compartmentalization of a woman’s life. Here, I use Rozuel’s (2011) definition of compartmentalization: dividing something, such as one’s life, into distinct and separate sub-sections (686). In my analysis, I refer to compartmentalization as having separate sections of one’s life and while in a certain section, the other parts are “stored

away” for later use. Compartmentalization stems from our tendency to “embrace multiple identities through our life, each being defined and influenced by the groups we interact with or the roles we perceive we ought to or wish to enact” (Pratt and Foreman 2000:687). People are able to manage the impressions they make through compartmentalizing their lives.

Impression management has been the focal point of studies in selection, leadership, and other issues in the workplace (Baumesiter 1989; Frink and Ferris 1998; Gardner and Cleavenger 1998; Tedeschi and Melburg 1984). Many important frameworks for impression management theory exist. Gardner and Matinko (1988) follow in the footsteps of Goffman (1959) by postulating that a person consciously chooses a way to present him or herself to an audience in hopes of a desired impression. Jones and Pittman (1982), similar to Foucault (1982), propose that the goal of impression management is to protect and maintain power, which allows a person to control their social environment. Other scholars suggest a multiple goal theory of impression management as well (Schlenker 1980; Schneider 1981; Gardner and Matinko 1988).

Not only is impression management concurrent with professionals in the workplace, it has also been studied in relation to professional women (Kilduff and Day 1994; Maddock and Parkin 1993; Oakley 2000; Rudman 1998; Singh and Cinnicombe 2001). Studies have shown that men, more often than women, manage the impressions they make in the workplace and self-promote at work (Kilduff and Day 1994; Oakley 2000; Rudman 1998). The reluctance to manage impressions they make, along with factors such as gender stereotyping and power relationships appear to be barriers hindering women from obtaining high level leadership roles. Hatmaker (2013) displays that women engineers in Britain and Sweden actively manage their desired impressions of commitment by building closer relationships with the managers. Engineering is a male-dominated profession and the women engineers in the study maneuver the system in order

to excel and feel successful (Hatmaker 2013).

In order to navigate academic and professional settings, such as the women in this essay do, people need to gather different forms of capital, which reflects the larger theory of practice. Approximately ten years after Goffman (1959) defined impression management, practice theory surfaced. In opposing response to structural determinism⁵, practice theory allows a researcher to investigate the dialectic relationship between a human agent's action and the structure or system under which the agent operates (McElhinny 1998; Ortner 1984; Ortner 2006). In my analysis, I look at the acting units as individuals: each person interviewed acts as an individual in the larger system. Ortner (1984) describes practice theory:

The analyst takes these people and their doings as the reference point for understanding a particular unfolding of events, and/or for understanding the processes involved in the reproduction or change of some set of structural features. (149)

In other words, I analyzed interviews from the Feminist Last Naming Project and used the peoples' experiences to understand the structure under which they act. The structures in this essay are comprised of a patronymic culture, educational and professional settings, and citizen settings such as the home. Although Bourdieu (1977) describes each agent's actions as unplanned and short term, I recognize the necessity of analyzing the actions in the context of the larger structure (Collier and Rosaldo 1981; Hart and Pilling 1960; Ortner 1981; Sahlins 1981). Habitus is "a set of acquired dispositions of thought, behavior and taste... [which] constitute[s] the link between social structures and social practice (or social action)" (Scott and Marshall 2009). It focuses on the expression of culture in human routines and habits.

People draw on behaviors, skills, and styles that are valued or devalued under a specific habitus, in order to gather different sources of capital. A major source of capital for the women in this research is symbolic capital, which Bourdieu (1989) defines as "the form that the various

forms of capital assume when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate” (17). More specifically, cultural capital refers to symbols, beliefs, and choices that can serve as a parallel for resources and actions. Cultural capital plays an integral role in creating societal power relationships, which allow people to show dominance and hierarchy without economic capital.

The specific types of cultural capital that I use in this essay are social capital, gender capital, and professional capital. I use Bourdieu’s (1990) definition of social capital as “effective possession of a network of kinship (or other) relations capable of being mobilized or at least manifested” (35). I define gender capital as the positive acknowledgment gained by a person concerning their gender. Lastly, I define professional capital, in both academic and professional settings, as acknowledgment of a person’s academic and/or professional accomplishments and successes.

In my analysis of women’s situational surname use, I will analyze how impression management and women’s decisions to retain their natal surnames at marriage interrelate. I will also investigate how women’s actions surrounding last-naming decisions echo social, gender, and professional capital and how gaining capital reflects the larger structures at work. The women in this study that retain their last names have different professional careers ranging from medical doctors to lawyers to professors.

Personal Narratives

Major themes that materialized in the interviews include: academic experiences with last-naming thoughts and decisions; professional reasons for retaining one’s natal surname at marriage; and compartmentalization of one’s life based around which names are used in different situations. Out of the 83 people interviewed in this research, 22 of them mentioned academic and/or professional reasons for retaining their natal surname at marriage. Fifteen of the 83 people

described situations in which they compartmentalize their lives based on the names they use in different social settings. The women that discussed compartmentalizing their lives based on surnames were also in either the professional and/or academic categories as well. The people interviewed provide unique and individualistic stories about their various experiences with the non-traditional last-naming practice of a woman retaining her natal surname at marriage.

Academic Reasons

Nine women and one man discussed academic reasons for women keeping their natal last names at marriage. I define academic reasons as decisions that occur while a woman is in school or decisions that emerge based on her academic career's influence. Eight subthemes emerged through the interviews: meeting a spouse and/or deciding in school; publishing in school; ties to a family name that led to a decision in school; the attainment of diplomas; decisions tied to graduate school, specifically, academic recognition; the influence of friends in school; and feminist reasons that influence a naming decision made in school. These subcategories include, but are not limited to, sections of interviews that contain buzzwords for each category, such as publishing, recognition, feminism, and so on.

Women's last-naming decisions often transpire in college and graduate school. Hoffnung (2006) shows that wives with non-traditional last names have higher education levels than wives who take their husbands' last names at marriage. The most stated sub-categorical reason for the women in this research retaining their natal surnames upon marriage was deciding during school (n=5). "It was a decision I'd made in college, probably, or maybe late high school," said Jean Scandlyn, a PhD Research Professor at the University of Colorado in Denver, during an interview. Hillary Hutchison explains, "I went to Oberlin, a progressive, small liberal arts college. It did help mold a strong sense of women's rights." When asked the question *do you*

think [Hillary's] going to college and being educated at a liberal arts college had something to do with [her choice to keep her last name at marriage]? Hillary's husband, William Wilsey, responded, "No." There is a discrepancy between William's answer and Hillary's answer. A possible reason for this disconnection is they may not have discussed Hillary's academic reasons for wanting to retain her natal surname at marriage.

Tomi-Ann Roberts, a psychology professor at Colorado College, describes her experience in pondering marital naming decisions during school:

My friends and I in grad school had said if we publish something before we marry, that's going to be a game changer in terms of changing our last name because when you're in academia you want your published work to be easily searchable and findable. And it was like, oh my gosh, if you published under one name and all of a sudden you changed your last name and took your husband's last name, now you're going to have a totally different last name and how are people going to find you in the search engines looking for your article?

She notes that she had a group of people around her that shared similar thoughts about marital naming decisions and the influence on her decision. Publishing and academic visibility are other points that she touches on. Tomi-Ann's salient thoughts on non-traditional marital naming materialized during her higher education. She commented on the fact that she had a hyphenated first name and the idea of two hyphenated names was not appealing. Not wanting to adhere to traditional, patrilineal naming practices, Tomi-Ann chose to retain her natal last name.

Mary Pechauer, the Executive Pastor at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, also describes how her marital last-naming decisions appeared in college:

Well I would say that I did not give keeping my last name a lot of thought, but I met my husband when I was a sophomore in college and by my senior year, we were talking about what our future might be like together and so we were sort of imagining things. He has a sister by the same first name, Mary, so at one point he said, "That'd be kind of weird to have a sister named Mary Undlin and for you to also be Mary Undlin," and so I said, "What makes you think I'm going to be Mary Undlin?"

Although Mary's decision arose in college, personal accomplishments did not spark her decision. She shared her husband's concerns with her sharing the exact name as his sister. This experience seemed to reaffirm Mary's original thoughts on retaining her natal surname and so she kept her natal last name at marriage. For some women, school led them to knowledge that influenced their final decisions about last-naming practices. Some women discuss how events in school "gave them a name" and led them to keep their own last name at marriage. Other women explained that they met their future spouse and conversations about marriage arose while in school.

Publishing in academia is another reason women cited for keeping their natal last names for academic reasons (n=2). Corina McKendry, a professor whose family name is her wife's natal surname, makes a point, "Once you've been out and publishing as an academic, then you don't want to change your last name because your identity is your publications, right?" Corina interrelates publications with identity. Tomi-Ann explains that her decision to keep her natal surname "was definitely due to the fact that I had published an article in grad school under the last name, Roberts," which also displays a link between publishing and identity. She also associated publications with search-ability in the scholarly world (see quote above).

Two women considered the importance of strong ties to a family name as a reason to retain their natal surnames at marriage (n=2). For example, Tomi-Ann described how her paternal grandfather had told her that the family name would perish if she changed her name at marriage. She noted, "[Publishing], the fact that I remember my grandpa saying this to me, and the fact that I had a hyphenated first name all conspired to be like, okay you're not even going to come up with a kind of hybrid; you're going to keep Roberts." Although Tomi-Ann's tie to her family name seems to have nothing to do with academia superficially, the fact that Tomi-Ann

decided to keep her family name in graduate school displays a link between the family name and academia.

Two women mentioned diplomas and other related official documents as a reason to retain their natal last names at marriage. Gina Bamberger, a doctor of osteopathic medicine and a Colorado College alumna, explains, “All of my medical school transcripts and all that official stuff in my last name.” Lauren Leverenz, a doctor who retained her natal last name upon marriage, points out an interesting observation:

I know that some people who are in my situation married before they got any diplomas, before they graduated from college. They just used their married name on everything. The ones who had already been married before they got their medical degree... kept their names. Wherever you happen to be in the continuum of time when you are getting married, that ends up being which name people use [for you].

Lauren brings forth the idea that marital last-naming decisions are connected to where a woman is on her personal or professional timeline. This statement lines up with Hoffnung’s (2006) assertion that wives with nontraditional names are often older than wives with traditional names (2006). The more schooling a woman gets, the higher chance she has to get a higher paid job, which often causes the woman to postpone marriage. According to Lauren Leverenz and Hoffnung (2006), the longer a woman waits to get married, the more likely she is to keep her natal surname.

Graduate school experiences can influence a woman’s decision to keep her natal surname at marriage, as mentioned by two of the women. Gina Bamberger discusses how going to medical school to become a doctor of osteopathic medicine helped in her final decision to keep her last name at marriage. Lisa Mueller, a woman who kept her natal last name at marriage, explained in an interview, “I had gone to law school [by then] and the people whom I had known at the time knew me as Lisa Mueller. I somehow felt I had no

desire to change my name and I liked my name.” Lisa and Gina were past graduate school at the time of their marriages and this position on their timelines lends them to be more likely to retain their natal surnames, as both of them did. Lisa also alludes to the fact that she had developed academic recognition in the scholarly world.

Although the act of a woman retaining her last name is implicitly feminist, most of the women did not say the word feminism (or any derivation) in their interviews. Gina Bamberger appears to have underlying materialist feminism motivations in her decision to retain her natal last name. Material feminism includes women that recognize the domination by men in a system defined as both patriarchal and capitalist and attempt to produce an egalitarian workplace (Kirk and Okazawa-Rey 1998). She discusses her amazement at how it has been less than 100 years since women were granted the right to vote. Commenting on how she has experienced discrimination against women in her profession, she stresses the importance of resisting the urge toward complacency with how women are treated in professions in general. Gina expresses excitement at how far women have come but she does not want women to become too comfortable and to stop fighting for their rights:

[I was influenced by] my mom, even though she became Mrs. David Bamberger, she definitely had a feminist awareness that I, you know, not overtly, but just definitely cultivated in me, you know. And I kind of come from a line of really strong German women, who always kind of, you know, whether they have taken other people’s names or not, they’ve always had these strong identities. So, I am sure that’s part of it.

The support of friends or lack thereof can strongly influence a woman’s marital last-naming choice. Carrie Ruiz, a woman who kept her natal surname at marriage, responded to a question about the types of reactions that she experienced based on her decision. She said, “None, I haven’t gotten any negative reactions. No. It is pretty well

accepted. I mean the circle I move in [is full of] academics, so no.” Surrounding oneself with people who share one’s beliefs and thoughts, aids in decision-making. Carrie makes it clear that the support of her friends made her decision easier to make.

Professional Reasons

Women with high-level jobs (i.e. Chief Executive Officer), professional occupations (i.e. physician), and art and entertainment related careers are more likely to keep their natal last name upon marriage than women in all other occupation categories (Kopelman 2009). Goldin and Shim (2004) explain that women keep their surnames to protect the value of contacts, publications, and professional goodwill. The reasons found in this project differ slightly from Goldin and Shim’s (2004) list. Eighteen women and one man quoted professional reasons for a woman to keep her natal surname. I define professional reasons as decisions that emerge based on the influence of a woman’s profession in some way. Eight relevant subthemes emerged in the interviews in this project: professional identity within a woman’s working community; reputation with the general public (i.e. professional contacts); publishing after school; ties to a family name that led to a last-naming decision made during a woman’s professional career; professional credentials; feminist influences in the work place; influence of friends in the working community; and convenience with respect to a woman’s profession.

The sub-categorical reason cited most by women in this study for keeping their own last name at marriage is the tie their natal last name had to their professional identities within their working communities (n=6). Lauren Leverenz explains, “Everybody knew me as Doctor Leverenz. If I changed my name to something else, I would lose that professional identity. So, I didn’t want to do that. I wanted to keep my

own professional identity intact.” She had already created recognition for herself amongst her colleagues with her natal last name and felt that if she changed her name she would lose that respect. Gina Bamberger expressed a similar concern; “I guess I wanted that name recognition to follow me various places, you know, whether it’s people who knew me in medical school or my training program, etcetera. [I made this decision] just to kind of maintain that continuity of my professional identity.” Even though many women cite identity as a reason for keeping their natal surnames at marriage, some women do not think identity influenced their decision at all. Susi Marzoula, an architect who kept her natal surname upon marriage, explains, “I do not think it would hurt or help my career necessarily if I was Susi Waller. You know, I do not know how much bearing that would have on what I do. *Or your sense of identity.* Right.” The interviewer proposed the idea that Susi would not lose her sense of identity based on which last name she chose.

Although professional identity was the most cited sub-category in the whole project, there are still women, such as Susi Marzoula who feel their identity in the workplace does not influence their last-naming decision.

Reputation, in the public and amongst people such as clients and patients, was the second most cited sub-category for many of the women interviewed (n=13). Corina McKendry, a woman whose partner retained her natal surname upon marriage, explains, “My partner is a veterinarian, so name recognition is really important because half of your career is based on your reputation.” A person establishes reputation early in a professional career. A healthcare professional will see a patient and if that patient is satisfied with the care they receive, then they are likely to return and possibly recommend the healthcare professional to family and friends. Lisa Cipriany, worked as a physical therapist for approximately 10 years before marrying. She

commented on how everyone already knew her by her natal surname so she found it a best fit to retain that name. When asked if anyone influenced her decision she replied, “No, I just had so many professional contacts out there and I just wanted people to remember who I was.” The process to inform everyone of a surname change can be a hassle. William Wilsey explains in an interview from his daughter about his wife’s decision to keep her natal surname. “Mom had a complicated project that meant a lot to her so it was important for her to keep it; it’s difficult to change a name. Advertising, etcetera.” William is alluding to the fact that when a woman changes her name, especially in the midst of a large project such as the one his wife had undertaken, she has to go through an extensive process of executing and announcing her name change.

Publishing after finishing school is another professional reason women in our sample retain their natal surnames at the time of marriage (n=7). Sarah Hautzinger, an anthropology professor at Colorado College, describes, “I had already earned a doctorate under the name Hautzinger. I had already published some scholarly articles and that kind of thing. I think I wanted to keep my name as an author and as my professional name.” Sarah’s publishing name is tied to her professional name. The name that a person publishes under is often the name that they publish with for the rest of their life. Gloria Mark, who got her PhD from Columbia University, explained her experience with publishing and name decisions:

Yeah, so uh I remember the very first paper that I wrote, I remember my professor said to me, he was very careful, “How do you want your name do be? You want it to be Gloria Mark? You want it to be Gloria J. Mark?” And I remember he was like really precise um because he was telling me the importance of what my name would be because once I stated my name on a paper that's the way I would publish from that point on. You know, you cannot have Gloria Mark and then you publish as Gloria J. Mark and then you publish as G. J. Mark. You cannot do that.

You have to have a consistent name that you publish by, so I remember that it was very crucial the way that I initially chose my name.

The decision of selecting a specific publishing name for Gloria Mark was stressful. She discusses how the process of choosing a name to publish under aided in her decision to keep her natal surname at marriage because she had already pondered how she wanted the scholarly world to view her name.

Women cited deciding to keep their natal surnames due to sentimental ties to a family name in the interviews (n=5). A chemistry professor at Colorado College, Amy Dounay, discusses keeping her name for a multitude of reasons in saying, “I kept my family name, Dounay, when I married, in part because it’s a unique family name made up at Ellis Island. Only women in our family are in my generation. The name will disappear if we follow the traditional patriarchal naming conventions.” Amy discusses the historical aspect of the family name in that it comes from her ancestors who created the name and she talks about her obligation to keep the last name so that it does not die out. Lisa Cipriany also wanted to retain her natal surname due to familial ties she had to that name. She states, “My only brother, Allen, had died and I wanted to keep the name Cipriany around just for my dad.”

Amy and Lisa retained their natal surnames to preserve their family names, but this is not always the case. Gina Bamberger explains her desire to keep her natal last name in order to prevent issues that would accompany a family name with her husband:

There was a very high likelihood that my spouse and I would work together, because... he is also a physician. And we were in the same training programs and so forth, and I was very aware of the fact that suddenly there would be two Dr. Carters and I would have to go through all the hassles of notifying all these official boards with, you know, here is my new last name.

The creation of a family name for Gina and her husband would have been problematic because both of their professions with respect to things such as clients and professional credentials.

Professional credentials are documents given to women under the names they have at the time of certification. Four out of the five women who cited professional credentials as a reason to keep their natal surnames have the title of Dr. For example, Lauren Leverenz, Gina Bamberger, and Lisa Cipriany are doctors in the medical field and Sarah Hautzinger has a doctorate degree in anthropology and is currently a professor at Colorado College. Jessica Giles Copeland, a professor, discusses how many of her teaching credentials, including things such as her teaching evaluations, were under her first married name, Giles. She went by her natal last name, Giles, while teaching at University of Colorado in Boulder.

As stated earlier, the choices these women make to retain their natal last names is implicitly feminist, yet few of the women use the word feminist (or any derivation) in their interviews. Four of the women that kept their natal last names in this project, however, did cite feminist influences for their decisions. Radhika Chavan, a woman from India who kept her last name despite cultural norms, explains, “I felt my career was progressing quickly and I wanted to keep the name that I had been using. I had always been progressive, as was my mother. She was a huge influence in my life and always a huge feminist.” Since Radhika’s feminist mother influenced her, her decision was based on feminist ideology. Kayla Hunt, a woman who kept her natal surname upon marriage, describes her last name story:

I got married in 1984 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and I was very much a feminist. I was, also, a little older than the normal bride. I think I was 31. I had my career. Even if I had not had, you know, my independence and career I do not think I would have changed my name just because of my feminist leanings. Also, in Minneapolis at the time, things were pretty liberal, very progressive and it was interesting because we from there to Cincinnati and Cincinnati to Annapolis and there were definitely fewer women keeping their names in those two cities.

Kayla displays right up front that she identifies herself as a feminist. Despite her environment, which was extremely conservative with respect to naming decisions, she still decided to keep her natal surname.

Role models play a large part in the decision of a marital last name for many women in this project (n=3). Kayla Hunt explains “there are a lot more professional couples in higher positions now with two names, so that’s good.” She takes solace in the fact that other women are also retaining their natal last names. For many women, friends and colleagues are also role models. Jean Scandlyn, a PhD Research Professor at the University of Colorado in Denver, discusses the idea of women’s erasure with respect to last-naming practices:

In my circle of friends and acquaintances, it is pretty common that women do not change their names. So, I have lots of friends who, you know, have different last names. But, I don’t know how effective it’s been in the long run if most people are still adopting their husband’s last name... I think professionally it might have made more of an impact because certainly within our discipline there are a lot of women who haven’t changed their names, in anthropology⁶.

A friend group or a colleague group that shares common interests and last-naming practices fosters role models for its members and provides solid support for non-conventional naming decisions as well. Anne Goodman James mentioned reactions from friends and family to her choice to keep her natal surname:

I do not really remember any real reactions to it... I don’t really ever feel like I’ve gotten a reaction that was negative and nobody’s ever said, ‘Why in the heck would you do that?’ And I think it’s because so many of my colleagues are working professionals, so many of the people that I associate with, and it’s reasonably common. If all my friends were stay-at-home moms, it might be a different sort of reaction I think.

Anne suggests that she got a good reaction to her decision due to the people in which she associates.

The last sub-category for professional reasons is the convenience in the workplace of keeping a natal surname (n=2). William Wilsey explains how his wife retained her natal surname at marriage:

The story with mom is that mom was a working professional and all of her professional business contacts knew her as Hillary Hutchison, and at the time she felt like it would be easier for her, professionally, if she kept her last name. She felt it made it easier for her and she made the choice to do that.

In a separate part of William's interview, he exclaims, "She worked for quite a while after we got married, so it made sense for her [to keep her name]. It did not bother me one way or another and it had nothing to do with feminist. It was just easier for her."

William notes the major convenience factor that played into Hillary's decision to keep her natal surname at marriage.

Compartmentalization

Both women who chose non-traditional last name for academic and professional reasons discussed their experiences with situational name use (n=15). Through situational surname use, the women in this project manage the impressions they make, resulting in compartmentalization of their lives. Impression management is the way in which people control information in order to foster desired perceptions from others. In my analysis of women's situational surname use, I will explore how impression management and women's decisions to retain their natal surnames at marriage interrelate. Women's actions with respect to situational name use suggest the desire for the accumulation of different forms of capital, either consciously or subconsciously: social capital, gender capital, and professional capital. The three different types of capital reflect the structures under which the women operate. The structures in this research are a patronymic culture, educational and professional settings, and citizen settings such as the home.

Lauren Leverenz discusses her last-naming choice at marriage, which she believes to be an alternative to hyphenation:

Yeah, I think that could be an option. What I did was I was professionally always Dr. Leverenz and I never changed any of my diplomas, licenses, or anything. But, socially, I was Lauren Bennet. People in any other realm that I was in that was not professional, like my daughter's school friends, all knew me as Lauren Bennet or Mrs. Bennet. They did not call me Lauren Leverenz. So, I kind of had both identities. I had a professional identity and I had a social identity, and both knew of the other. Like my friends would know that I went by Dr. Leverenz professionally, and work knew that I was married and that my last name was Bennet for marriage. But, technically I was always Lauren Leverenz.

Lauren presents the idea that situational use of her two last names could be a solution for the messy naming conundrum of women's erasure at marriage. However, this explanation is only effective for one added generation past the patrilineal naming practice. Unless the children take the mother's natal surname, a practice not considered "traditional", the matrilineage will cease after the mother is gone. Lauren's proposed solution may be an effective, short-term solution for the individual, but it does not satisfy the needs of women as a greater unit. Lauren's proposition mirrors many of the women's decisions in this project and beyond. Lauren's case is an illustration of the issue underlying many of the women's decisions in this project.

Compartmentalization was apparent in Lauren's explanation. Lauren's discussion of the people in her separate sections of life is an analogy for her thought process around situational name use. She notes that she has two identities and both groups associated with those identities knew of each other, which parallels the idea that both identities exist in Lauren's overall self. While Lauren is at work, she goes by Dr. Leverenz, which is impression management because she wants people in her professional life to see her as a competent and professional doctor. Lauren is seeking professional capital by using the title Dr. and she is possibly seeking gender capital by using her natal surname at work. Since she uses her natal surname, Lauren does not go

by her husband's last name, so in a way it appears to reflect her feminine identity; however, her natal surname (assuming her family used traditional naming practices) is most likely her father's last name, so her gender capital seems to lose some of its significance. This is reflective of the patronymic culture in which we live. Yet, in the short term, Lauren's gender capital is still prominent because she identifies her early-life identity with her natal surname. Lauren's professional and gender capital reflect her professional setting and indicate the environment in which she works.

Although Lauren does not completely abandon her role as a wife while at work, she compartmentalizes this role for use later when she is not at the office. Both of Lauren's identities as well as both of her social groups (professional and personal) acknowledge each other's existence, but one allows the other to dominate when necessary. Lauren exclaims that the people in her personal circle know of the name, Dr. Leverenz, but they do not call her that; they call her Lauren or Mrs. Bennet. In going by Lauren and Mrs. Bennet in her personal circle, Lauren is acquiring social capital, which reflects her personal circle setting. In her home life, she seems to prefer the labels of mother and wife and she compartmentalizes her doctor role for her time at the office. Lauren's choice of having Dr. Leverenz at work and Mrs. Bennet at home is her way of managing the impressions she gains. She appears to want the people in the two separate circles to view her differently, although both identities are still part of her overall self.

JoAnna McCort, a woman who legally kept her natal last name at marriage, describes her experience with situational name use:

I was born with the last name McCort, of which my family was very proud and I was raised knowing that I was the last one in that part of the family's line of McCorts. Because of that, when I got married, although I wanted my children to identify as a whole family, including mother and father instead of being confused about surnames, I decided to only use my last name for work and school and then

I would take the Fischman last name, which is my husband's last name, and use that for anything to do with home.

JoAnna, like Lauren Leverenz, uses her natal surname, which is also her legal last name, in professional and academic settings and uses her husband's surname in personal settings. JoAnna discusses managing her impressions at home more often than at work or school. She wants her children to feel as if she is part of a unified familial unit and she believes that she can achieve this by sharing a last name with her husband and children. This reflects the impression that JoAnna appears to want to acquire from her children.

"I actually feel like I built a nice strong family unit by using Fischman," she describes. The family unit in which JoAnna speaks is her social capital that appears to reflect her desires in personal life.

By retaining her natal last name, JoAnna also hopes to give back to her deceased parents, another form of social capital. "It gave me an opportunity to give back to my parents. Although they are no longer living," she explains along with verbalizing her desire to connect her parents to her successes via a last name. JoAnna appears to convert her social capital to professional capital and vice versa in this situation. She also describes feeling the pressure of a tie to a family name, so in keeping McCort she is also able to please that side of her family. JoAnna is able to compartmentalize her professional identity by using her parents' last name while compartmentalizing her home identity by using her husband's last name.

Jessica Giles Copeland, although not retaining her natal surname upon her first marriage, does have some experience with situational name use. She describes her last name story in an interview:

So, my last name at birth was Wollam and that was my father's last name. I married when I was 23 and I took my husband's last name, which was Giles. Then I was in grad school so I was publishing a lot and I published under J. W.

Giles, Jessica Wollam Giles, with Wollam as my middle name. Then we divorced but I kept that name because it was the name I was publishing under and people recognized me as that. Then I remarried and my second husband's last name was Copeland. My intention initially was to use that last name personally and to keep Giles, because I thought it would be confusing for my career if I just randomly hopped on the scene as Copeland and didn't have any track record of publishing and people would say, 'Who are you?' So, I stayed Giles academically until I moved to Colorado College at which point when I went to do my right-to-work paperwork, like my W9, and they processed my social security card and driver's license that said Copeland, that was the email address that they created for me. And that was the login name that they gave to me. So I thought I would have to go through all these hoops to document some change. So I said, fine ok, I will become Copeland at Colorado College.

Jessica retained the name Giles in her academic and professional worlds because she had published under that name and she was afraid of losing her professional and academic identities by changing surnames. In keeping Giles as her academic and professional last name, Jessica appears to want to garner professional capital. Due to an error in processing, Jessica became Copeland working at Colorado College although she had previously been Giles at previous schools. In an interview with her, I asked her thoughts on identity and surnames. She responded with her experiences with situational name use:

What seems to me is that people who know me as different names almost do not know different versions of me. So, if you are a person who calls me Wollam, like I have friends from life who just call me by my last name. And when someone calls me Wollam, I associate it with unconditional love. Like, if you knew me well enough to call me Wollam, there is no way I am ever going to disappoint you, like I have your friendship for life. And if I'm Giles, I'm academic. Like if you know me as Jessica Giles, it is Dr. Giles. Because that entire period of marriage was getting my PhD, assistant professor, it was all about who I was academically like what I published, what I study, what my expertise is. Um, and then Copeland, to me is, that is synonymous with military wife. Because [my husband] is Copeland, like as a single name and I am Mrs. Copeland. I am like the support for the military man. So I chunk it that way.

Jessica acknowledges the fact that she compartmentalizes, or "chunks" her life in different ways based on the surname she chooses to use. In an essay describing a two-component model of impression management, Leary and Kowalksi (1990) explain that people engage in self-

presentation to construct public identities and that people attempt to make their public selves congruent with their ideal selves (37). Jessica's description of the different ways she "chunks" her life suggests that she might be trying to create perceptions of other people that line up with the distinctive ways she views herself. To Jessica, Wollam means loyal, Giles means academic, and Copeland means supportive. In using Wollam with long-time friends and family, and using Copeland around military people, Jessica is collecting social capital. The structures under which she uses Wollam and Copeland are vastly different, although both result in social capital, Jessica appears to assume different roles and expect different impressions under each name. She gains professional capital by using Giles because this is her publishing name.

Gina Bamberger describes her experiences with situational name use. Similar to the women quoted earlier, she explains that she uses her natal last name at work and her husband's surname at home:

Yeah, I mean, I think, like I said earlier, it's so much easier, like if I am calling to schedule an appointment for my sons, I say, "Hey this is Gina Carter, blah blah blah." So, I'll use other last names there. If it is simpler to just tell somebody, "Hey, I'm Gina Carter and I am here to pick up my husband's car, Patrick Carter." You know, at the car shop. It is just for simplicity. I am trying to think if there is any other situation. [Pause] Sometimes it is kind of nice to be a little stealthy, you know, especially as a physician, I am kind of thinking. I'm Dr. Bamberger and I have many patients that go to school with my children and since they have a different last name, they have no idea. And when they have become aware that they figure out who my high school son is, they kind of get a little weird, like, "Oh my gosh, that's your son." And it kind of affects his relationships and in many ways I like being a little bit more anonymous and not having that same name just because of patient confidentiality issues and, you know, just so that they don't feel uncomfortable if they ever encounter my family members somewhere else. And in some ways it is kind of nice, actually.

Gina compartmentalizes her life with the use of different last names in different situations. She manages her impressions at work by using the name Dr. Bamberger, a method she uses to gather professional capital. The title Dr. allows people to notice her position and respect her

competency, which is required for her success under her professional structure. Similar to Lauren Leverenz's case, the use of the name Bamberger, Gina's natal surname, also suggests that Gina may want to highlight the positive aspects of being a woman physician, gender capital. Hatmaker (2013) uses the term 'gender ownership' to define how women "emphasize and capitalize on the strengths that being a woman could bring to [a typically male dominated profession]" (Hatmaker 2013:394). As women begin to own their gender, Hatmaker (2013) foresees a change the culture surrounding gender stereotyping in professional work settings. Hatmaker's (2013) prediction mirrors how capital reflects the dynamicity of the structures.

Both Lauren and Gina are doctors; a profession that has typically been male dominated in the past. Women in professional careers often need to expend a certain amount of agency to gain professional capital that men do not, necessarily, need to exert in order to gain professional recognition. This shift of women using their natal surnames in professional careers is a complete opposition to the way women used their natal surnames to manage the impressions they made in the late 1800s. During the late nineteenth century, women with professional career titles would use their husbands' last names in order to project themselves as men in the profession (Stannard 1977). Stannard (1977) postulates that the women of this time used masculine "pseudonyms" at work in order to maintain femininity in the home and to hide the fact that they were women working in a male-dominated profession. Femininity in the home was socially expected of women at the time. Although women in professional careers do still feel the same stigma that women felt in the 1800's, there has been a large shift in culture (Hatmaker 2013).

Gina comments on the convenience of situational name use, such as when she picks up her husband's car from an automotive shop. Although she does use her husband's surname for reasons that interrelate to her impression management, she remarked that situational name use

simplifies her life. Other women also discuss the convenience of using different surnames at select times. Valerie Taylor, a woman who kept her natal surname at marriage, explains her experience with the practicality of situational name use:

We use my last name on all of our bills and things like that, just so that my husband does not have to spell his name out every time he does anything... We use Finocharo, like if I'm calling the kids' doctor, something like that, I often go by Finocharo just to make it easier for them to connect me to whoever they are talking to.

Valerie and her husband will use her surname, Taylor, on bills and other documents because it is shorter and easier to spell; whereas, her children use her husband's last name, Finocharo, and she will use that last name to prove that she is their mother. Valerie explains how the system that she developed with her husband works well for both of them. Jean Scandlyn expresses her thoughts on situational name use and world travel:

The only time that having my own name became problematic just in terms of marriage was in 1983. We did not have children yet. We lived a year in Indonesia and, you know, Indonesia is basically a Muslim country. We had to provide proof of marriage even to go there. Which was fine, you know, I did not mind having my marriage certificate. But, while I was there, although I never changed my name legally or anything, I used my husband's last name, Eppler, because it was just easier. It was just expediently easier.

Based on Jean's story, it does not appear that she used her husband's last name in Indonesia for reasons besides convenience. She did not seem to feel the need to manage the impressions she made for anyone abroad, according to her interview. Jean and many other women in this project have the ability to choose which surname best fits the situation.

For other women, situational name use is not under their control. Kayla Hunt expresses her frustration when people call her by a surname that she does not wish to go by:

I guess my husband is kind of in a higher-level position and when they send out invitations from work, it's usually Mr. and Mrs. Blah Blah invite you to dah dah dah and I did not care for that! But the administrator and I talked about it and she said, well it's so much easier, nobody know who you are, and it's another person

on the invitation.” And I notice how that’s because that probably ten years ago and I just let it go because I figured that’s my husband’s business, I don’t really care.

Kayla did not approve of the forced change in surname. The impression that she was receiving from the people at her husband’s work appeared to not be in line with the way she saw herself and she did not want people to see her that way. She acquired social capital where she seemingly did not want it. She wanted to be Kayla Hunt in this situation and preferred to not be called by her husband’s last name.

Mary Pechauer describes some instances where people have called her by husband’s last name:

Sometimes I get a little frustrated that after being married for 26 years, friends, mostly when it’s people who [my husband and myself] very well who will write Tom and Mary Undlin. Tom’s parents had a hard time making the change, but after about five or six years, they made the change. So, birthday cards or Christmas cards now always come addressed to Tom Undlin and Mary Pechauer. So, they made the change, which is terrific. They are in their eighties and they’ve adjusted.

Mary, similar to Kayla Hunt, does not appreciate when people call her by a surname she does not wish to go by. Both Mary and Kayla have strong ties to their natal surnames and although they may use their husband’s last names in select cases, they do not wish to go by their husbands’ surnames during these situations. Women’s abilities to manage the impressions they acquire are hampered when they are unable to compartmentalize their lives based on their surname choices. Their public identities and self-identities do not align and Kayla Hunt and Mary Pechauer show great examples of the frustrations women in these cases feel. Too much social capital where it is not wanted can cause dissonance between identities.

Discussion

Throughout the entire Feminist Last-Naming project, professional and academic reasons were two of the most cited motives for the women who kept their last names at marriage. Under the category of professional reasons, the most mentioned subtheme was professional identity and the least cited reason was convenience. Under the academic reason category, the subtheme cited the most was meeting or deciding while in school. Feminist reasons were the least cited in this category.

Deciding to pursue what people have coined a “non-traditional” or “non-conventional” practice can cause several varying emotions for a woman. For instance, one feeling that surfaced in a few of the interviews was the desire for belonging. Tomi-Ann Roberts discussed naming decisions with her friends and they made an agreement together to not change their names if they published a scholarly article before marriage. Carrie Ruiz mentioned not experiencing any negative reactions due to the open-minded people in her friend group. Jean Scandlyn and Anne Goodman James also explained that their friend groups helped them make their decisions. Kayla Hunt extends the idea outward from her friend group. She said she was comforted to see increasingly more professional couples with different last names. The comfort of knowing that others agree with the decision or have executed the decision successfully in the past drives many women to retain their natal surnames at marriage.

Fear of losing one’s identity is a strong motivator for many women to retain their natal surnames at marriage. Corina McKendry and Sarah Hautzinger both discuss their last-naming decision with respect to maintaining their already-established professional and published identities. Lauren Leverenz and Lisa Cipriany, both with professions in the medical field, explain how they both have professional identities and they discuss the importance of preserving that

identity for patients. Whether the preservation of identity occurs for one's own mental wellbeing or for the convenience of patients, colleagues, and so on, maintenance of identity motivates many women to keep their own last names.

Hillary Hutchison and Gina Bamberger both discussed their non-traditional naming choice in terms of women's rights. Hillary attributes her knowledge and respect for women's rights to her liberal arts education. Gina Bamberger discussed the issue a bit more at length in her interview. She expressed feeling empowered in the fact that she is able to make her own decisions about her career and her last name. She was adamant, however, about how women entering male-dominated fields of work need to continue to fight for their rights and she believes that retaining one's natal surname at marriage is a great way to do this. Both women displayed passion for women's rights and mentioned activism as their way of assisting the cause.

Although many women feel prideful, empowered, and content with their decision to keep their birth last name at marriage, many also express underlying anxiety. Many of the women interviewed discussed how the decision was an arduous process. Gloria Mark, in particular, appeared to exhibit stress around deciding under which name she wished to publish. She noted that the name you publish with on your first publication is the name you must (or should) publish under for the rest of your life. Her decision of choosing a name under which to publish reflects all the women's choices in this project to choose a name under which to marry. Women are seemingly "stuck" with the name they pick to publish with just as they are "stuck" with the name they choose to take upon marriage.

Costs and benefits exist when choosing a non-conventional last name such keeping one's own last name at marriage. To the women in this research, the benefits seemed to outweigh the costs because they all decided to keep their natal surnames at marriage. Benefits of this non-

traditional naming choice include keeping your own name that you have built an identity around and that you like such as Mary Pechauer and Lisa Mueller. In addition, some women feel that they are doing their part to resist complacency and maintain women's rights movements such as Hillary Hutchison and Gina Bamberger. Tomi-Ann Roberts, Amy Dounay, and Lisa Cipriany all mention their desires to keep a family name alive, where Gina Bamberger and Radhika Chavan specifically cite their desires to pay tribute to their strong, feminist mothers. Lastly, Sarah Hautzinger, Lauren Leverenz, GinaBamberger and Lisa Cipriany feel that a great benefit to keeping their natal surnames at marriage is the convenience and continuity in their professional lives that the lack of name change brings.

Costs do exist for the decision to retain one's last name at marriage, however. Gina Bamberger describes her experience with gender discrimination based on her career and her last-name choice. Moreover, the quote from the online blogger discussed earlier in this essay is reflective of many people's thoughts and feelings regarding non-traditional name choices. Some people strongly disagree with a woman having a different name than her husband and children and believe that these women are the root of many family and marital issues.

JoAnna McCort explains the concern she had for a lack of family name. She discussed how she did not want to her children to be confused about why their mother has a different last name than they do. This concern brings us back to the question of if women need some sort of claim or excuse for retaining their own last names at marriage. The women in this research all have specific personal, academic, and professional reasons for keeping their last names at marriage but none of the women discuss these reasons in light of excuses. The women interviewed in this study seem to embrace their decisions and many of the women even say that they would do it all over again.

Since the benefits of keeping their last names at marriage appear to outweigh the costs, these women chose to retain their natal surnames. The costs of the decision still exist and these women seem to wish to minimize the negative aspects. In order to reconcile the costs, many of the women discuss situational name use accompanied by compartmentalization. In pursuit of social, gender, or professional capital, each woman's actions reflected the structure under which she operated.

With compartmentalization and situational name use, a woman's different personas cannot mutually amplify power in the different "chunks" of her life. For example, a woman such as Gina Bamberger might have a hard time being Dr. Bamberger and mommy/wife at the same time. Since she is perhaps seeking to gain various types of capital in different situations, her life becomes compartmentalized and the sections become difficult to coalesce. Ironically, if a man possessed the title of Dr., he would theoretically have few issues in fulfilling coalescent roles at work and at home. A man is able to be Dr. and daddy/husband at the same time because he does not have to merge his desires with the desires of those around him by juggling different names in different situations. Another issue that arises for women who have different last names than their husbands and use different last names in different situations is what I call forced situational name use. Kayla Hunt and Mary Pechauer describe their frustrations surrounding people calling them by a last name they do not prefer in a specific situation. This causes the women to not earn the capital they are perhaps seeking or to gain capital that they do not want in that moment. Tomi-Ann Roberts tells a story about how her grocery store clerks will often call her Mr. Roberts, which is also a form of forced situational name use. However, in this case, a man is experiencing the dissonance in desired symbolic capital and gained symbolic capital.

Benefits of situational name use include pleasing different people in different situations, possessing a less fixed identity, and convenience. By using her natal surname at work, JoAnna McCort is able to honor her parents and by using her husband's last name at home, she is able to admire him as well. Situational name use and compartmentalization allow a woman to have a more fluid sense of identity. At work, a woman can demonstrate her professional and academic abilities by using a name associated with those qualities and then use another name at home to show that she is a dedicated mother and wife. Gina Bamberger explains how convenient it is at the auto shop to use her husband's last name to pick up his car. By using his last name, she is able to prove that she is his wife and she receives no questions about the matter. She also describes situations where having two different names allows her to fly under the radar around her children's friends and their families. Using her husband's last name and the title, Mrs., allows her to hide the fact she is a doctor. The children act much differently around her if they know she is a doctor versus if they think she is just Mrs. Carter.

Overall, the benefits of a woman retaining her natal surname at marriage appear to outweigh the costs for the women in this project, aiding in the decision for these women to keep their own last names at marriage. In order to diminish the negative aspects of this decision, the women often use different names in different situations and therefore compartmentalize their lives. Women spoke more of benefits than they did costs of situational name use.

Conclusion

A common non-traditional last-naming choice for women is retaining their natal surnames at marriage. However, inquiries arise as to why they would make such a decision; whether or not they need some excuse to keep their name; and how they go about using different names in different situations. Women cite reasons such as professional identity, academic and

professional publishing, diplomas and credentials, as well as feminist motivations for their decisions. The benefits of the decision for these women to keep their natal last names at marriage appeared to outweigh the costs, leading them to ultimately keep their own names. To reconcile some of the negative aspects of the decision, the women in this project implemented situational name use, which leads to compartmentalization of their lives. Through situational name use, women appear to accumulate symbolic capital that reflects the structures under which they operate.

If more research is accrued on this topic in the future, some major methodological techniques should be taken into consideration. The sample used in this essay was opportunistic and purposive, based on connections to members on the Feminist Last Naming team. We sought women and men who have “unique” last name stories that pertain to feminist motivations. A control group could enhance the results of this research by allowing for comparison between feelings of women who kept their names at marriage, those who took their husbands’ names at marriage, and gay couples. Our sample was academically biased due to the composition of our team who recruited the women and men, and the location of our study. A larger sample size would allow statistical tests to enhance the results and allow the data to be compared with existing literature.

The idea of situational name use could be supplemented with research in indexicality, or in other words, the way people use resources to index qualities about themselves. Instead of looking solely at last names, one could investigate clothes, accessories, possessions, and so on, of the academic and professional women who use different names in different situations to see if there is a correlation between the desired image the women hope to display and the way they use their resources. Further research could also analyze the use of titles among women through

linguistic and cultural analyses. Women's fear of erasure could be further studied by investigating Y-chromosomal DNA and mitochondrial DNA inheritances by comparing those to last-naming practices (Rennecker, unpublished manuscript, 2013). This could also be analyzed linguistically through the origins of surnames and their inheritance patterns.

Overall, the accounts of the women in this project provide great insight into why women chose to keep their natal surnames at birth and how they cope with the emotions, benefits, and costs of their decisions.

¹ The Feminist Last-Naming project asks: Where are non-traditional last-naming practices going? How satisfying and sustainable, or frustrating and short-term, have varied options proved to be? If a woman keeps her father's father's father's name, or parents hyphenate their children's names, do these pave the way to the emergence or long-term, systematic alternatives? Or, are they short-term solutions that may have value for the individuals, but will not alter traditional, patrilineal practices in the long run? This project explores the pros and cons of the alternatives we found. For more information on the project please visit flnp.wordpress.com.

² Second-wave feminism emerged from anti-war, civil rights, lesbian and gay, and black movements in the 1960's and 1970's in the United States. All of these movements, including second wave feminism, focused on the interests of oppressed groups such as women and Blacks (Krolokke and Sorensen 2006).

³ For more information on the class and the project executed in 2012 please visit <http://flnp.wordpress.com/topics/>.

⁴ The other eight people in the Community-Based learning course are concentrating on foci such as Hispanic last-naming practices and its ties to feminism, identity and last names, Northern Irish last-naming practices, same-sex last-naming options and decisions, how decision making plays a role in feminism and last-naming practices and how familial relationships affect last-naming choices. The final products of this class will be an improved website showcasing the scholarly work done by students on this project in 2013, a documentary and/or short film segments from select interviews, scholarly papers, and this honors thesis.

⁵ Structural determinism, also known as structural determination is composed of Talcott Parsons' systems theory, Levi-Strauss's structuralism, and Geertz's work in symbolic anthropology (McElhinny 1998; Ortner 2006).

⁴ By "different last names", Jean Scandlyn is referring to non-traditional last names. This includes any last-naming practice that is a woman not taking her husband's last name upon marriage.

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