

NAMES AND TITLES: MAIDEN NAME RETENTION AND THE USE OF MS.

Donna L. Atkinson

York University

ABSTRACT

This sociolinguistic study examines the two dependent variables of stereotypes of women who use Ms., and stereotypes of women who retain their maiden name after marriage, with respect to the five independent variables of sex, age, level of education, degree of religiousness, and feminist orientation. Three hypotheses are proposed and are tested by means of a questionnaire distributed to a stratified sample of 325 subjects. The data from the sample are analyzed using the SPSS subroutines Analysis of Variance and Pearson Correlation and the results indicate that subjects' sex, level of education, and degree of religiousness are significant with respect to their stereotypes. A strong positive correlation is shown between stereotypes of women who retain their maiden name and stereotypes of women who use Ms.

1. Introduction

Very few systematic studies have been done to date on the related topics of maiden name retention by women who marry, and the use of the title 'Ms.' as an alternative to 'Miss' or 'Mrs.' Articles such as 'Miss' to 'Mrs': going, going, gone!' by Shirley Davy (1978) and 'Sexism in English pronouns and forms of address' by Donald D. Hook (1974) give apologetics for and against (respectively) the use of Ms., but the authors do not base their work on objective empirical research. Davy neatly, through briefly, summarizes the philosophical arguments for Ms., and calls for increased use of that title. Hook touches on the question of birth name retention by women as well as, and in the context of, his discussion of 'Ms.' He concludes that the most viable solution to the problem of how to address people is to 'retain Mr. (married or unmarried) and Mrs. (married) and use Miss (married or unmarried) with maiden name when desirous of camouflaging marital status, as celebrities often do' (Hook 1974:90). The tone of this remark (note the term 'camouflaging') is indicative of the tone of the paper as a whole. Hook is clearly unsympathetic to the concerns of people who encourage the use of 'Ms.'

Apart from these two largely subjective papers, a small number of studies have been conducted with the aim of obtaining objective data on the topics of maiden name retention and the use of Ms. In 1975, Madeline E. Heilman published the results of two experiments designed to determine whether or not students' expectations and evaluations of course offerings vary according to the title given to the instructor. Among the discoveries she made was the fact that 'in all cases, courses taught by Ms. instructors were found to be rated comparably to those taught by Mr. or No Title instructors. Only those ascribed to Miss or Mrs. were the object of more negative judgements.' (Heilman 1975:518).

Hook (1974) quotes figures from a summer 1972 Ladies Home Journal poll (published in the October 1972 Ladies Home Journal) carried out to determine women's preference in salutations. Of 8,074 respondents, Hook reports that 5,352 preferred Mrs./Miss and 2,722 preferred Ms. This poll, of course, was limited to readers of the Ladies Home Journal, and did not involve a representative sampling of the population at large.

Una Stannard (1977 and 1984) traces and discusses the history of the legal controversy surrounding maiden name retention, primarily in the U.S.A. Beginning in the 19th century and continuing through most of the 20th century, English common law, upon which American laws concerning names are based, was persistently misinterpreted in the U.S.A., resulting in a denial of the right of women to retain their maiden name after marriage. The details of the controversy, as presented by Stannard, suggest strongly that a male judicial system was working very hard to make it seem illegal for women to keep their own name. Presumably it was felt that forcing women to use their husband's name would prevent them from stepping out of the subservient role society wanted them to fill. The legal manoeuvres exposed by Stannard show clearly that the idea of a woman keeping her own name is and has been a very unpopular one in many circles, especially in the U.S.A.

A 1983 study by Pegeen Anderson (under the direction of Ruth King at York University, Toronto) investigated attitudes towards women who use Ms. Her data were gathered by means of oral interviews with people in two bars. She found that the two characteristics considered most strongly stereotypical of a woman using Ms. were job-orientation (as opposed to home-orientation) and assertiveness, with university education, urban upbringing, feminism and youth being part of the stereotype held by some sub-groups. Women thought that the woman using Ms. was a feminist, while men thought she was young. Anderson was hesitant to generalize her results to society at large since her sample was quite small and was representative

of a very restricted social group: the employees and patrons of two local bars.

Sheila M. Embleton and Ruth King (1984) reported on a small study which focused on attitudes towards maiden name retention. They found, among other things, that contrary to expectations, sex and education level of subjects had very little effect on stereotypes of women who retain their maiden name, and that the primary elements in the stereotype of such women were assertiveness and orientation towards a job rather than towards family, with urban upbringing also being frequently mentioned. In no case, however, were the stereotypes found to be very strong. The sample involved the same social group as the Anderson (1983) study, and, like Anderson, the authors were hesitant about generalizing their results beyond the sample.

Most studies to date have focused either on maiden name retention or on the use of Ms., but not on both. As Donald Hook has indirectly pointed out, however, the two subjects are not unrelated. For example, suppose that a woman named Sue Blue marries a man named Fred Red. If Sue decides to keep the name 'Blue,' then what title is she to use? Will she be Miss Blue, Mrs. Blue, or Ms. Blue? If she calls herself 'Miss Blue,' then the assumption of most people will be that she is unmarried. She may or may not want people to assume that. Calling herself 'Mrs. Blue' implies that her spouse is named Mr. Blue, which is not the case at all. Calling herself 'Ms. Blue,' on the other hand, solves the problem rather nicely. She is not 'hiding' her marital status or pretending to be single, nor is she inaccurately implying that she is married to a Mr. Blue. She is simply asserting that she is a person, Ms. Sue Blue, whether she is single or married, just as her husband is Mr. Fred Red, before as well as after his marriage. In fact, the choice of many, if not most women who keep their own name is to use the title Ms. The same arguments are used in favour of both Ms.-use and maiden name retention, namely that a woman is an independent being and should be identified as such instead of being identified as legally attached to some man, whoever he may be. It is legitimate, then, to investigate together the two topics of maiden name retention and use of Ms., as will be done in the present study.

2. Hypotheses

The specific hypotheses being tested in this study are:

HYPOTHESIS I: Women who use Ms. and women who keep their maiden name when they marry will be stereotyped as being young, career-

oriented, not religious, independent, assertive, well-educated, unattractive and feminist.

HYPOTHESIS II: More extreme stereotypes of women who retain their maiden name and women who use Ms. will be found among people who are 'Y' than among those who are 'X,' given the characterizations of 'X' and 'Y' below:

'X'	'Y'
female	male
younger	older
more highly educated	less well-educated
not religious	religious
feminist	non-feminist

The greater number of 'Y' characteristics a person has (and therefore the fewer 'X' characteristics), the more extreme their stereotypes are likely to be; the fewer 'Y' characteristics they have (and therefore the more 'X' characteristics) the less extreme the stereotypes are likely to be.

HYPOTHESIS III: There will be a strong positive correlation between stereotypes of women who use Ms. and stereotypes of women who retain their maiden name.

3. The Variables

Given the hypotheses stated in Section 2 above, the two dependent variables being tested in this study are:

1. Stereotypes of women who use the title Ms.
2. Stereotypes of women who retain their maiden name when they marry.

The independent variables are five in number:

1. Sex of respondent
2. Age of respondent
3. Level of education of respondent
4. Degree of religiousness of respondent
5. Feminist orientation of respondent

With the exception of Degree of Religiousness, all of these independent variables were used in the study by Embleton and King (1984). Staley (1978) found religion relevant in her study of expletive use, but to my knowledge, no one has investigated degree

of religiousness as a factor relevant in forming attitudes on Ms.-use and maiden name retention. Based on my experience, however, religious people tend to be more traditional in their outlook on most things than do non-religious people, especially on the question of the 'proper' roles of women and men in society.¹ Religious people would therefore be likely to oppose maiden name retention and the use of Ms. In fact, most of the people with whom I have had contact who promote or at least support the use of Ms. and maiden name retention do not consider themselves to be particularly religious. Most religious people I have known, on the other hand, are opposed to, or at least highly uncomfortable with, maiden name retention and the use of Ms.

4. The Questionnaire

A written questionnaire was used to elicit data on people's views of Ms. and maiden name retention. The questionnaire consisted of two parts, A and B. Part A covertly and indirectly elicited stereotypes, while Part B gleaned personal background data on the subjects and asked direct questions concerning Ms.-use and maiden name retention. Subjects were not told in advance exactly what the purpose of the study was, but were merely told that they were answering a questionnaire on social roles.

In Part A, using methodology borrowed from social psychological attitudinal studies, brief descriptions were given of six hypothetical people, two of which were relevant to the study, and four of which were included only to divert people's attention from the questions of interest to the investigation. The two relevant descriptions were:

'A woman who keeps her own last name when she gets married, instead of taking her husband's name, is likely to be:'

'A woman who uses 'Ms.' instead of 'Miss' or 'Mrs.' is likely to be:'²

The subjects were asked to rate each of the people described in the scenarios according to eight adjectives hypothesized to be closely tied to the stereotypes of women who use Ms. and women who retain their maiden name (see Hypothesis I above). The specific adjectives were: YOUNG, CAREER-ORIENTED, RELIGIOUS, DEPENDENT, SUBMISSIVE, WELL-EDUCATED, UNATTRACTIVE, and FEMINIST. It is important to note that three of the adjectives used actually describe the opposite of the hypothesized stereotype (i.e. religious, dependent, submissive). The questionnaire was set up in this way to reduce the potential bias of people falling into a set response

pattern, be that positive or negative. It would also have made the purpose of the questionnaire considerably more transparent had the adjectives all directly described the stereotype.

The adjectives were arranged in random order; however, it was deemed unwise to have FEMINIST as the first adjective, lest it should seem unduly prominent and make the perspective of the author too obvious. FEMINIST was therefore placed last. For each subsequent scenario after the first, the first adjective was placed last and all others were moved up one place, in order to increase subjects' level of attention and to try to prevent them from falling into a set pattern of answering.

Subjects were given written instructions asking them to indicate to what degree each of the eight adjectives accurately described each of the six people described in the questionnaire. The adjectives were rated on a seven-point continuum of the type shown below:

YOUNG

Extremely ___; ___; ___; ___; ___; ___; ___ Not at all ³

For purposes of coding and analysis, each of the blanks in the bipolar scale was assigned a numerical value between 1 and 7, with the value 1 designating 'not at all X,' the value 7, 'extremely X,' and a value of 4 representing the intermediate or neutral position.

In Part B of the questionnaire, subjects were first asked to rate themselves using the same adjective scales as were used in Part A. Only two of the adjectives were then actually used in the analysis, those being FEMINIST and RELIGIOUS.

Subjects were also asked to supply information about themselves concerning their age, sex, marital status, educational background, where they grew up, where they currently lived, religion and/or denomination, cultural or ethnic background, English fluency if non-native speakers of English, and occupation. Next, subjects were asked to indicate how often they use 'Ms.' of themselves (if female) and of others, circling the appropriate response chosen from the following list:

always often sometimes rarely never N/A (not applicable)

Finally, subjects were asked a series of direct questions concerning their views of Ms., whether or not they had changed or

would change their name upon marriage and why, whether or not they were feminists, and what they thought feminists stood for.

5. The Sample

The large number of independent variables in this study necessitated a fairly large number of subjects. The means of calculating how many subjects were needed is described below. The projected number of levels of each of the independent variables was as follows: Sex - two levels (male/female); Age - three levels (15-24; 25-44; 45 and over); Level of Education - three levels (secondary school or less; some undergraduate university; some graduate university); Religiousness - two levels (religious/non-religious); Feminist Orientation--two levels (feminist/non-feminist). Multiplying together the number of levels of each variable, there were $2 \times 3 \times 3 \times 2 \times 2$ or 72 possible combinations. The goal was to have at least five people in each of those 72 cells, since any fewer would increase the risk that the results would be skewed (Wolfram and Fasold 1974:40). The target minimum number of subjects was therefore 5×72 or 360 subjects.

After the sample had been gathered, it was necessary to modify the levels of several variables. A third level, labelled 'neutral,' was created for Religiousness and Feminist Orientation, to accommodate subject responses. For Level of Education, a new two-way division was made between those with secondary school or less, and those with some post-secondary education, since the sample included too few people in the 'some graduate university' category.

A total of 375 questionnaires were prepared for distribution. Wherever possible, large groups were recruited to respond to the questionnaire, since this reduced the amount of administration time necessary. Most of the groups used in the study were socially fairly homogeneous.⁴ Three hundred and twenty-five copies of the questionnaire were eventually completed, and analyzed statistically.

It proved difficult to obtain a truly representative sample for all of the combinations of independent variables. Men in particular were quite hard to recruit. Some of the men were unwilling to participate, perhaps since they found the questionnaire either threatening or irrelevant.

It also proved difficult to ensure that subjects were complying with the instructions to complete Part A prior to Part B. By looking ahead to Part B, subjects may have figured out the true purpose of the questionnaire and altered their Part A answers to suit this.

Where possible, however, Part A was collected before Part B was distributed.

6. Feminist Orientation

As has been alluded to earlier in this paper, people's identification of themselves as feminist or non-feminist proved to be a very thorny problem. Subjects contradicted not just one another but also themselves in their responses to the questions on feminism. Since the conclusions of this section have a potentially negative bearing on the project as a whole, the data concerning feminist orientation will be discussed first, before the other results are presented.

Subjects were asked in two places to indicate their feminist orientation. The first was the bipolar 'rate yourself' scales of Part B, where they used the standard seven-point scale to rate themselves for the adjective FEMINIST. The second occurred at the end of Part B, where they were asked directly, 'Are you a feminist? Circle: Yes No.' One would expect that people who answered 'Yes' to the direct question would rate themselves as 7, 6, or 5 on the bipolar scales, and those who answered 'No' would rate themselves as 3, 2, or 1. Those who would not commit themselves on the yes/no question were expected to rate themselves at or near 4 on the bipolar scale for feminist. Unfortunately, those predictions were not, for the most part, borne out.

Of a total sample of 325 people, 31.3% answered 'yes,' that they were feminists; 51.6% answered 'no'; and 16.9% did not commit themselves. The people who responded 'yes' answered for the most part as predicted on the bipolar self-ratings. Of these 102 people, 86.2% responded with 7, 6, or 5; 7.8% answered with 4; 4.9% answered with a 3, 2, or 1; and 0.9% (1 subject) did not answer the 'rate yourself' question for FEMINIST at all.

The 55 subjects who did not commit themselves to a yes or no answer responded as follows to the scaled question: 78.1% answered 7, 6, or 5; 9.0% answered 4; and 12.7% answered 3, 2, or 1. The figure of 9% responding with a 4 is surprisingly low for people who would not commit themselves to a yes or no. In fact, only 34.5% gave an answer within the 3-5 range. A full 56.3% answered 6 or 7.

The results of the supposedly neutral group, surprising as they may be, are not nearly as surprising as those for the group who responded 'no,' that they were not feminists. Of the 168 people in this group, 71.4% rated themselves with a 7, 6, or 5! Only

11.3% gave themselves a 3, 2, or 1 rating, while 17.2% responded with a 4. These results blatantly contradict the expectation that people responding 'no' would rate themselves with a 3, 2, or 1 on the FEMINIST scale.

In order to determine what caused the pattern of answering described above, a detailed examination was conducted of people's responses to the open-ended question asking what they thought feminists believe in or stand for. The responses to this question cannot be as easily classified as those with a limited set of possible responses, but some sorting according to content was possible.

A total of 19 subjects could not or would not respond to the question. Of these, 1 had answered 'yes,' 16 'no,' and 2 were uncommitted. Almost all of those who did make some effort to describe their ideas of feminism used phrases such as 'equal opportunity,' 'equal pay for work of equal value,' 'the rights of women,' etc. Many left it at that, but others went on to add further comments of various kinds. Of 325 subjects, 17 or 5.2% thought that at least some feminists believe that women are superior to men. In answer to the question 'Are you a feminist?,' 3 of these 17 subjects replied 'yes,' 10 'no,' and 4 were neutral. Seventy-eight people (24.0%) commented on the extremist or radical bent of some feminists. Of these 79, 16 had answered 'yes,' 49 'no,' and 13 were neutral. Only a few of those commenting on extremism felt it was justified or necessary, while the rest viewed it as unjustified and/or unnecessary.

Below are a few of the comments, some of them rather bizarre, made by people concerning feminism. They are listed in groups according to the subjects' response to the yes/no question. After each quotation, the subject's self-rating on the FEMINIST scale is indicated in parentheses.⁵

People Who Responded 'Yes'

- i) Achieving for women the opportunities and power that is afforded men automatically. (5)
- ii) I believe feminists stand for equality for women in today's society. I believe in what they are fighting for, though I sometimes disagree with their extremism. However, it must be realized that without the feminist extremism, the suffragette of the turn of the century may not have existed and perhaps we would not have the vote today. (5)

People Who Responded Neutrally

- iii) I agree that in things like equal pay it is positive. However I also feel that in some cases women have gone too far. (I shall always be delighted when a male shows courtesy - such as opening doors for me, etc.). (7)
- iv) I don't like the term 'feminist.' To me it implies extremes. But I do believe in equality and respect between the sexes. (7)

People Who Responded 'No'

- v) Equality for women in the work force. Equal access to education. The right to lead a life with some dignity. (6)
- vi) They want equal rights. But I think right now they're going too far with abortion and stuff. A woman now can have almost any job but it's crazy when she wants a job on a construction site, those jobs were MADE for men, not a woman. Also I hate those stupid tampon and pad and douche commercials. (7)
- vii) Burn your bra. All women to be treated as equals to men. (6)
- viii) They stand for fighting for special privileges rather than equality and also think women who stay at home are 'worthless and weak' because they the feminists feel so self-righteous about the 'movement.' (7)
- ix) (From a 17-year old male) Women should be in the kitchen. They shouldn't get paid as much as men. Women shouldn't get the same chance or occupation as men. (7)

Many of the people responding in some way negatively in their written comments on feminism nevertheless gave themselves a 6 or 7 on the 'rate yourself' scales. The only pattern which emerged at all was that many of the most hostile comments, particularly from the 'no' people, were made by those with a 7 rating. This suggests that at least some of the subjects used the bipolar scales to indicate how intense their feelings were on the issue of feminism, rather than to indicate how committed they were to the movement or ideology. Thus, people who felt extremely hostile or negative may have checked off 'Extremely,' not realizing that they were thereby stating that they were extremely committed to feminism.

If there was indeed a large-scale misinterpretation of what the scales were being used to judge in the case of feminism, then it is possible that the scales were misinterpreted throughout the questionnaire by some subjects. If this is so, then the results of the study are probably not entirely reliable. Unfortunately, the extent of the misinterpretation cannot be determined, since feminist orientation of the subjects themselves was the only question (apart from age) for which subjects had to give both a direct (yes/no) and an indirect (bipolar) response. (For age, the subjects' ratings of themselves on the scale would simply reflect their different perspectives of what is young and not young, and that has no bearing on the reliability of this study.) If other questions had had that sort of cross-check, then the extent of the misinterpretation might be made clearer. However, while they should be treated with caution, the overall results do suggest that the bulk of the data is indeed reliable.

In both the 'no' group and the neutral group, some of the males asked whether or not men could be feminists, and others stated that they were not feminists because they were male, but went on to say that they supported feminist ideals such as equal opportunity and equal pay. Perhaps more males would have identified themselves as feminists if they had known that they could legitimately do so.

In a future study, many of the problems associated with the feminist ratings in this study could probably be alleviated by a combination of two or three methods. First, the bipolar scales and/or the instructions for their use could be modified to make it more explicit and clear to subjects how to use them. Second, the question of feminism could be broken down into a series of sub-questions such as: Do you think that women should be paid the same as men for doing equivalent work? Do you think that women should be treated in the same way as men in the eyes of the law? The answers could then be added up, and the greater the number of answers that were in agreement with mainstream feminist views, the higher the feminist rating the individual would obtain. Third, subjects could be presented with a short description of feminism and asked whether or not they agreed with the ideas expressed in the description, and whether or not they would call themselves feminists based on that description alone. By having all subjects judge themselves according to the same criteria, an answer of yes or no would have considerably more meaning than it does in the current study in which each person uses her/his own definition as a point of reference.

It is unfortunate that something as important as feminist orientation has had to be eliminated from the analysis, but given that there is only moderate consistency at best in people's ideas

of what a feminist is, any statistical results using feminist orientation would be uninterpretable. Furthermore, even if one assumed that everyone had a roughly similar understanding of what feminism was, there would still be the problem of subjects contradicting themselves in the yes/no and the bipolar questions.

7. Use of Ms.

Hypotheses I and II stated that women who used Ms. and those who kept their maiden name would be stereotyped as being young, career-oriented, not religious, independent, assertive, well-educated, unattractive, and feminist, and that people who were male, older, less well educated, religious and non-feminist would have stronger stereotypes than would people who were female, younger, more highly educated, not religious and feminist. (For a complete statement of the hypotheses, see Section 2 above.) In order to test the hypotheses, the SPSS subroutine analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was run on the data, to compute group means and to determine the significance, if any, of the various independent variables upon the data. All of the statistical results presented in this section and the next are based on a four-way Analysis of Variance, since the independent variable of Feminist Orientation was excluded from statistical analysis for the reasons described above.

7.1. Indirect Elicitation

The mean scores for each of the eight adjectives in the Ms.-use scenario are summarized in Table 1 on page 68. An overall mean score of 3.50-4.50 for any adjective was interpreted as meaning that subjects 'sat on the fence' or in other words did not have any strong opinion for that adjective. The only adjective for which the overall mean was in the fence-sitting range for Ms.-use was YOUNG, with an overall mean of 4.34. Apparently, youth is not part of the stereotype of a woman who uses Ms. Nevertheless, the Analysis of Variance revealed that for YOUNG, there was a significant religiousness main effect ($df=2/285$, $F=7.987$, $p<.001$), with the religious and neutral groups rating the woman using Ms. as younger than the non-religious group did. This is not an unexpected result, since it was religious people who were predicted to give ratings more in keeping with the stereotype, in this case, that users of Ms. are young.

TABLE 1: MEANS FOR USE OF MS.

	A G E			S E X		E D U C A T I O N		R E L I G I O U S N E S S			O V E R A L L
	15-24	25-45	46+	F	M	-	+	NO	NEUT	YES	
YOUNG (n=)	4.42 (168)	4.24 (107)	4.23 (30)	4.33 (207)	4.36 (98)	4.29 (133)	4.38 (172)	3.93 (106)	4.57 (62)	4.55 (137)	4.34 (305)
CAREER-ORIENTED (n=)	5.37 (168)	5.28 (107)	5.63 (30)	5.43 (207)	5.22 (48)	5.53 (133)	5.23 (172)	5.31 (106)	5.32 (62)	5.42 (137)	5.36 (305)
RELIGIOUS (n=)	2.79 (168)	2.80 (107)	2.83 (30)	2.79 (207)	2.82 (98)	2.66 (133)	2.91 (172)	2.57 (106)	3.05 (62)	2.87 (137)	2.80 (305)
DEPENDENT (n=)	2.70 (168)	2.36 (107)	2.30 (30)	2.30 (207)	3.04 (98)	2.84 (133)	2.30 (172)	2.90 (106)	2.44 (62)	2.30 (137)	2.54 (305)
SUBMISSIVE (n=)	1.98 (168)	1.90 (107)	2.07 (30)	1.83 (207)	2.22 (98)	2.02 (133)	1.91 (172)	2.14 (106)	2.03 (62)	1.78 (137)	1.96 (305)
WELL-EDUCATED (n=)	4.68 (166)	4.88 (106)	4.90 (30)	4.87 (205)	4.55 (97)	4.57 (131)	4.92 (171)	4.58 (105)	4.47 (62)	5.05 (135)	4.77 (302)
UNATTRACTIVE (n=)	3.22 (166)	3.12 (106)	3.07 (30)	2.99 (205)	3.57 (97)	3.15 (131)	3.19 (171)	3.06 (105)	3.23 (62)	3.24 (135)	3.17 (302)
FEMINIST (n=)	5.34 (166)	5.20 (106)	5.33 (30)	5.47 (205)	5.25 (97)	5.69 (131)	5.18 (171)	5.37 (105)	5.10 (62)	5.56 (135)	5.40 (302)

The overall mean for CAREER-ORIENTED was 5.36, indicating that subjects did feel that the Ms.-user was career-oriented. Here the ANOVA revealed a significant education main effect ($df=1/285$, $F=4.217$, $p<.05$). Comparing group means, it is evident that, consistent with the hypothesis, the group with lower education considered a Ms.-user to be more strongly career-oriented than did the group with higher education.

Not surprisingly, a woman using Ms. was not considered to be religious. The overall mean was 2.80 for RELIGIOUS, but only 3.7% of the sample rated such a woman with a 5 or more. A large number of people, 33.8%, rated her with a neutral 4. This figure is not surprising, since, while filling out the questionnaire, many subjects remarked aloud on the adjective RELIGIOUS, asking what it had to do with anything in the study. There was a religiousness trend for RELIGIOUS ($df=2/285$, $F=2.788$, $p<.10$), with the non-religious people rating the woman less religious than the religious or neutral people did. This result is probably partly due to a tendency for people to project their own values and characteristics onto other people. Thus the results are not entirely in keeping with the prediction that religious people would stereotype the Ms.-user as being non-religious.

DEPENDENT was expected to obtain a rather low rating, which indeed it did. The overall mean for the adjective was 2.54, with nearly 69% of subjects giving it a 1 or 2. The reason why the mean was not lower was that 12% of the subjects rated it 6 or 7. It is possible that some or all of the subjects rating it high misread the word and thought it was INDEPENDENT instead of DEPENDENT. The ANOVAs revealed a sex main effect ($df=1/285$, $F=8.718$, $p<.01$) and an education main effect ($df=1/285$, $F=4.083$, $p<.05$), as well as a trend for sex x education ($df=1/285$, $F=3.189$, $p<.10$). The males considered the Ms.-user more dependent than the females did, and the lower educated considered her more dependent than the higher educated group did. In the two-way interaction, the lower educated males had the highest mean, indicating that they felt the woman was more dependent than the others did. These findings are rather surprising, and are contrary to the original hypothesis which predicted that males, and lower educated people would consider the Ms-user independent.

SUBMISSIVE had the lowest mean score, and also the score which deviated farthest from the neutral point, 4. As predicted, a woman using Ms. was not considered to be submissive. There was a significant sex main effect ($df=1/285$, $F=5.220$, $p<.05$), and a trend for sex x religiousness ($df=2/285$, $F=2.857$, $p<.10$). The males rated the women using Ms. as more submissive than the females did. It is possible that their ratings on this and on DEPENDENT were based

more on wishful thinking than on an objective view of the world, which would explain why the results are somewhat opposite to the predictions made by the hypothesis under study. In the two-way interaction, the non-religious males gave the highest submissiveness rating, while the religious females gave the lowest. My experience suggests that many religious people, especially females, have a high consciousness of submissiveness (it is often drilled into them to submit to the dictates of their religion, and for females, to the will of their husband as well), so religious women may see a Ms.-using woman as being more blatantly assertive than some of the other people would see her. The fact, mentioned earlier, that many of the high-school students did not know the meaning of SUBMISSIVE might also have affected the scores in some undetermined way.

The overall mean for WELL-EDUCATED was 4.77, not quite as high as one might expect, but still within the range predicted. For WELL-EDUCATED, the ANOVA revealed a religiousness main effect ($df=2/282$, $F=4.337$, $p<.05$). The religious group scored higher, indicating that as predicted, they had a stronger stereotype than the people who were not religious.

Contrary to expectations, UNATTRACTIVE was given a rather low overall rating, 3.17, suggesting that unattractiveness is not part of the popular stereotype of a woman who uses Ms. In fact, nearly 59% of the subjects gave this adjective a neutral 4 rating. There was a very significant sex main effect ($df=1/282$, $F=16.083$, $p<.001$), with males considering the woman more unattractive than the females did. Perhaps the males just gave her a more 'neutral' rating while the females spoke up and asserted firmly that the woman in question was not unattractive.

FEMINIST had an overall mean of 5.40, within the predicted range, but there were no significant ANOVA effects. In spite of people's mixed ideas of what feminism was, they did seem to realize that most women who use Ms. associate themselves to some extent with feminism.

7.2. Direct Elicitation

In Part B of the questionnaire, subjects were asked directly how often they used Ms. and what they thought of it as an alternative to Miss or Mrs. Table 2 below summarizes how often people reported using Ms. of themselves and others.

TABLE 2. FREQUENCY OF MS.-USE OF SELF AND OTHERS

	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOME	RARELY	NEVER	N/A*	TOTAL
Ms.-Use Self	26	19	25	23	130	102	325
Ms.-Use Others	18	58	93	76	67	12	325

*This column includes both missing data and the N/A responses of men for Ms.-use of self.

The mean rating for Ms.-use of self was 3.95, indicating that overall, women rarely used Ms. of themselves. Indeed, only 20% of those sampled always or often used Ms. For Ms.-use of others, the mean was 3.37. Twenty-four percent reported that they always or often used Ms. of other women. Many of the comments that were made suggested that people in the business community use Ms. to avoid the problems which arise when they are unaware of the marital status of the women they have to deal with.

The comments made by people about Ms.-use were fascinating and often quite amusing. A sample of a few of the best and most representative is reproduced below. A surprising number of people thought that Ms. was a term which was properly applied only to divorced or widowed women. They have clearly missed the point of why the term was introduced in the first place, which was to have a title equivalent to Mr. which indicated only gender and not marital status. The people who advocated using Ms. for divorced and widowed women seemed to want to specify marital status more explicitly rather than eliminating it from the title system of English. Their three-category system seemed to break down into: AVAILABLE (Miss), TAKEN (Mrs.), and USED BUT AVAILABLE AGAIN (Ms.). Other people had other ideas of what Ms. should be used for, and some of those ideas are reflected in the comments quoted verbatim below.

- i) I don't usually think about it, Ms. is the most logical thing to use in business so that's what I use.
- ii) The use of 'Ms.' seems to be for those who want to keep their

marital status a secret - no one should be ashamed of their marital status if it is legal.

- iii) I feel 'Miss' denotes a younger female who has never been married. 'Mrs.' is fine if the woman wants to be known as married. For women who are too experienced to be called 'Miss' and are not married, I think 'Ms.' is a perfect title.
- iv) It is up to them. I do not really care what they name themselves as long as they are not my wife.
- v) I think it sounds rather ugly and draws attention to the self-consciousness and defensiveness of most 'feminists.'
- vi) I think that women's libbers use it to get attention and to separate themselves from the traditional female titles. There is no practical reason for it. It's used by women who aren't willing to accept the fact that God designated the man to be the protector, provider and helper.

The subjects' comments showed even more clearly than the statistical results that there was and is no general consensus about who uses Ms. and why. Many comments revealed unambiguously that the subjects' refusal to use Ms. was based on emotion, rather than on reason (see especially comment iv. above). Other people seemed to be looking for excuses to make it seem as if they had reasonable grounds for objection. A whole host of people commented that they didn't like the sound of the word (e.g., v. above). It is far more likely that it was the implications of the word which were unpleasant to them, rather than the sound itself. After all, the word uses ordinary English sounds, none of which is even in an exotic or unusual place in the word (compare Ms. to Miss and his). Those people probably just dislike being reminded that some women are opposing the traditional patriarchal system. Undoubtedly, they feel threatened. If nothing else, the results of this study show that feminists and users of Ms. have thus far done a poor job of generating public understanding of and sympathy for their cause.

TABLE 3: MEANS FOR MAIDEN NAME RETENTION BY WOMEN

	A G E			S E X		E D U C A T I O N		R E L I G I O U S N E S S			O V E R A L L
	15-24	25-45	46+	F	M	-	+	NO	NEUT.	YES	
YOUNG (n=)	4.21 (166)	4.22 (106)	4.30 (30)	4.26 (205)	4.14 (97)	4.08 (131)	4.33 (171)	3.79 (105)	4.37 (62)	4.49 (135)	4.22 (302)
CAREER-ORIENTED (n=)	5.24 (166)	4.97 (106)	5.13 (30)	5.25 (205)	4.89 (97)	5.24 (131)	5.05 (171)	5.09 (105)	4.90 (62)	5.28 (135)	5.14 (302)
RELIGIOUS (n=)	3.24 (166)	3.08 (106)	3.33 (30)	3.14 (204)	3.29 (98)	3.25 (131)	3.14 (171)	3.00 (105)	3.23 (62)	3.32 (135)	3.19 (302)
DEPENDENT (n=)	2.76 (166)	2.69 (106)	2.70 (30)	2.42 (204)	3.37 (98)	3.00 (131)	2.52 (171)	3.09 (105)	2.68 (62)	2.47 (135)	2.73 (302)
SUBMISSIVE (n=)	2.25 (166)	2.23 (106)	2.07 (30)	2.03 (204)	2.63 (98)	2.31 (131)	2.16 (171)	2.37 (105)	2.32 (62)	2.07 (135)	2.23 (302)
WELL-EDUCATED (n=)	4.73 (166)	4.63 (106)	4.40 (30)	4.70 (204)	4.59 (98)	4.54 (131)	4.75 (171)	4.40 (105)	4.37 (62)	5.00 (135)	4.66 (302)
UNATTRACTIVE (n=)	3.42 (166)	3.31 (106)	3.17 (30)	3.20 (204)	3.68 (98)	3.36 (131)	3.36 (171)	3.21 (105)	3.50 (62)	3.41 (135)	3.36 (302)
FEMINIST (n=)	5.54 (163)	5.31 (105)	5.20 (30)	5.52 (202)	5.24 (96)	5.57 (129)	5.31 (169)	5.32 (103)	5.31 (59)	5.56 (136)	5.43 (298)

8. Maiden Name Retention

8.1. Indirect elicitation

The means for maiden name retention are summarized in Table 3 on page 73. Using the criterion outlined above, there was only one adjective in the maiden name retention scenario for which subjects 'sat on the fence,' or did not take any clear stand. The adjective was YOUNG, with an overall mean of 4.22. A significant religiousness main effect ($df=2/282$, $F=7.716$, $p<.001$) did, however, emerge from the ANOVA, with the non-religious group rating the woman younger than the religious and religiously neutral groups. This is at least somewhat consistent with the hypothesis that religious people have stronger stereotypes than non-religious people.

The overall mean for CAREER-ORIENTED was 5.14, which is within the predicted range, indicating that while the stereotype is not as strong as one might have predicted, a woman who keeps her maiden name is perceived as being career-oriented. The ANOVA results showed a significant sex main effect ($df=1/282$, $F=5.071$, $p<.05$) and a significant education x religiousness interaction ($df=2/282$, $F=5.655$, $p<.01$). Contrary to Hypothesis II, the males considered such a woman less career-oriented than the females did. Perhaps men still do not think that women take their careers seriously, whether or not they change their name. Alternatively, giving men the benefit of the doubt, perhaps they simply sat on the fence more than women did, not really having any clear idea about how career-oriented women were. In the two-way interaction, the well-educated non-religious people considered a woman who keeps her maiden name significantly less career-oriented than the other groups did. This is in keeping with the hypothesis that predicts that non-religious and well-educated people will not have strong stereotypes of such women.

For RELIGIOUS, the overall mean was 3.19. This confirms the hypothesis that a woman who keeps her maiden name will not be considered religious by most people. Less than 6% of all subjects rated such a woman with a 5, 6, or 7, and the overall mean would have been much lower but for the nearly 48% who gave her a neutral 4. The ANOVA revealed a significant religiousness main effect for this adjective ($df=2/282$, $F=3.079$, $p<.95$), with the religious subjects giving a higher rating for RELIGIOUS than did the non-religious members of the sample. The same pattern was found earlier in the Ms.-use scenario, and is probably a function of people's tendency to perceive in others characteristics they themselves possess.

As predicted, a woman who kept her maiden name was not considered dependent. The overall mean for DEPENDENT was 2.73 and there were significant main effects for sex ($df=1/282$, $F=17.145$, $p<.001$) and education ($df=1/282$, $F=4.711$, $p<.05$), and a trend for sex x education ($df=1/282$, $F=3.300$, $p<.10$). The males considered such a woman to be significantly more dependent than the females did, as indeed they did in the case of the woman who used Ms. The reason is undoubtedly the same in both cases. The lower educated group also saw a woman who retained her maiden name as more dependent, and in the two-way interaction, the lower-educated males stood out as considering her more dependent than the other groups did. These results are not consistent with Hypothesis II, which predicted that males and lower educated people would consider such a woman to be quite independent.

SUBMISSIVE was given an overall mean rating of 2.23, indicating that a woman keeping her maiden name was not considered to be submissive. In fact, fewer than 4% of the subjects rated such a woman 5 or above, and just under 15% gave her a neutral 4. The rest rated her firmly in the not submissive range. A significant sex main effect ($df=1/282$, $F=13.354$, $p<.001$) emerged from the ANOVA. The males rated a woman who retained her maiden name as being more submissive than the females did, probably for the same reasons that they rated her as being more dependent. While the overall mean is consistent with the predictions of the hypotheses, the sex difference is the opposite of what was expected.

WELL-EDUCATED scored only slightly above the fence-sitting range, with an overall mean of 4.66. The score is still within the predicted range, but the stereotype for WELL-EDUCATED is obviously not strong. There was a significant religiousness main effect ($df=2/282$, $F=9.260$, $p<.001$), with the religious group showing a stronger stereotype than the neutral and non-religious groups did, as Hypothesis II had predicted.

The overall mean for UNATTRACTIVE was 3.36, indicating that, contrary to predictions, a woman who retained her maiden name was not considered unattractive. It is noteworthy that nearly 58% of the subjects rated this adjective with a neutral 4. Unattractiveness does not, therefore, seem to be a part of most people's stereotype of such a woman. In spite of this, the ANOVA revealed a significant sex main effect ($df=1/282$, $F=11.104$, $p<.001$), with males giving a higher unattractiveness rating than females. While the mean for UNATTRACTIVE was lower than predicted, the differences between the male and female means are consistent with the hypothesis.

FEMINIST had an overall mean of 5.43, but given the problems discussed earlier, it is difficult to say what that actually

represents. There were no statistically significant results for this adjective.

8.2. Direct elicitation

The responses to the direct questions on whether people did/did not or would/would not change their names when they married were as follows:

Of the 74 people who did change their name when they married, all were female.

Of the 67 who would change their name, all but one were female, and the male's was a conditional decision to change.

Of the 40 people who did not change their name completely, 10 were female and 30 were male.

Of the 104 who would not change their name, 36 were female, 67 were male, and one did not identify his/her sex.

Twenty-five unmarried people did not say whether or not they would change their name.

The above figures suggest that while it has been traditional for women to change their name when they marry, there is a change in the direction of more women keeping their maiden name. Of 103 unmarried women who answered one way or the other (i.e., not neutrally), 35% said that they would not change their name if and when they married.

Below are some of the reasons given by women for why they have made the decisions they have made about name-changing, along with two comments by men on their views of women's name changing. By far the most common reason given in favour of women changing their name was 'tradition' or 'convention.'

Women's Comments

- i) Believe a woman should be proud to take the husband's name - also makes things easier.
- ii) Did not know I could keep my own surname.
- iii) I believe once a girl marries the man should be the head of the family. Also the female should take the male's name.

- iv) I hated my husband's name and preferred my own. I also didn't want the bother of changing all my identification.
- v) It is a reflection of a patriarchal society which I do not accept. Taking your spouses name seems to reflect submission to someone else's authority. I want a marriage which is a partnership between equals.
- vi) I think of my name as a very integral part of my identity. I would want to be known by it to others.

Men's Comments

- vii) No. My wife would change her name, or I probably wouldn't marry her. (I dislike women who burn bras!)
- viii) I am a male and I shouldn't have to change my last name. I think that a woman should be honoured to change her name to the man's or else she shouldn't get married to him and they could live together.

9. Correlations Between Ms.-Use and Maiden Name Retention

My third hypothesis predicted that there would be a strong positive correlation between stereotypes of women who use Ms. and those of women who retain their maiden name. In order to test this hypothesis, the SPSS subroutine Pearson Correlation was run on the data. A cursory look at the means tables suggest that there are indeed tendencies for mean scores to pattern similarly for the two scenarios. Table 4 below summarizes the overall means for both scenarios and gives the Pearson Correlation value (r) for each adjective.

TABLE 4: PEARSON CORRELATIONS FOR STEREOTYPES
OF WOMEN WHO USE MS. AND WOMEN WHO
RETAIN THEIR MAIDEN NAME

	MEANS: NAME RETENTION	MEANS: MS.-USE	PEARSON CORRELATION (r=)
YOUNG	4.34	4.22	0.40255
CAREER-ORIENTED	5.36	5.14	0.53893
RELIGIOUS	2.80	3.19	0.52918
DEPENDENT	2.54	2.73	0.63499
SUBMISSIVE	1.96	2.23	0.47160
WELL-EDUCATED	4.77	4.66	0.51607
UNATTRACTIVE	3.17	3.36	0.63740
FEMINIST	5.40	5.43	0.64225

Although the correlation coefficients (i.e., the r-values) are not as high as one might have expected, all of the adjectives show positive correlations, as predicted. Furthermore, significance tests performed on the data show that all of the correlations are highly significant ($p < .0000000005$), given the sample size.⁶

Thus, even though the correlation might not appear to be especially strong given only the r-values, Hypothesis III was confirmed, since all correlations were positive and indisputably significant. The Pearson Correlations have shown that people's stereotypes of women who use Ms. and women who keep their maiden name are significantly related.

10. Summary and Conclusions

The study reported in this paper had as its goal the testing of three hypotheses. Briefly, the three hypotheses were:

- Hypothesis I - Women who use Ms. and women who keep their maiden name when they marry will be stereotyped as being young, career-oriented, not religious, independent, assertive, well-educated, unattractive and feminist.
- Hypothesis II - People who are male, older, less well-educated, religious and non-feminist will tend to have stronger stereotypes than people who are female, younger, more highly educated, not religious and feminist.
- Hypothesis III - There will be a strong positive correlation between stereotypes of women who use Ms. and stereotypes of women who retain their maiden name.

The results lent a moderate amount of support to Hypothesis I, since, although none of the stereotypes was especially strong, all but two leaned in the direction predicted. The stereotypes were consistent for both Ms.-use and maiden name retention, thus supporting Hypothesis III. Specifically, women who use Ms. and women who retain their maiden name were stereotyped as being fairly career-oriented, not particularly religious, somewhat independent, somewhat assertive, fairly well educated, and somewhat feminist. Contrary to the first hypothesis, neither youthfulness nor unattractiveness was considered to be part of the stereotype.

The results of the study were less clear-cut with respect to Hypothesis II. In clear contradiction to the second hypothesis, age did not prove to be significant as an independent variable for any of the adjectives in either scenario. Feminist orientation had to be omitted from the analysis, as explained in Section 6 above, because there was no consistency at all in how the subjects understood feminism. The situation with respect to the other three independent variables was, unfortunately, much less straightforward.

For the independent variable sex, there were significant differences between the ratings of males and females for the adjectives DEPENDENT, SUBMISSIVE, and UNATTRACTIVE in both scenarios, and for CAREER-ORIENTED in the name retention scenario only. Yet only for the adjective UNATTRACTIVE were the differences between male and female responses consistent with Hypothesis II. For DEPENDENT and SUBMISSIVE, the results contradict the hypothesis. Likewise, the adjective CAREER-ORIENTED produced results that were contrary to Hypothesis II, since males considered a woman who retained her maiden name to be less career-oriented than did females.

The independent variable education produced only two significant main effects. As predicted by Hypothesis II, people with less education stereotyped a woman using Ms. as being more CAREER-ORIENTED than the people with more education did. Contrary to the prediction of the hypothesis, however, the lower-educated group thought the woman who kept her own name was more DEPENDENT than the higher educated people did.

The fact that both sex and level of education behaved contrary to the hypothesis for DEPENDENT suggests that there might be a problem with respect to that adjective, rather than solely a problem with the predictions of Hypothesis II. It is possible, as mentioned above, that some people misread the word DEPENDENT as INDEPENDENT. It is also possible that some people simply used the scales improperly, as they appeared to do for the adjective FEMINIST (see discussion in Section 6. above). Similarly, the fact that some people did not know the meaning of the word SUBMISSIVE might have rendered unreliable the results involving this particular adjective.

There were some very interesting results for the independent variable religiousness. Significant or almost significant differences were found for this variable in both scenarios for the adjectives YOUNG, RELIGIOUS, and WELL-EDUCATED. In every case the religious group had a stronger stereotype than did the non-religious group. These results fully support Hypothesis II. People who rated themselves as being religiously neutral did not, however, pattern consistently with either the religious or the non-religious

groups. The confusion of some people concerning how to use the scales might have contributed to this problem.

In summary then, Hypothesis I, concerning the stereotypes people held was moderately confirmed; Hypothesis II, concerning the independent variables, was neither wholly confirmed nor wholly disconfirmed; and Hypothesis III, concerning correlations between stereotypes of women who use Ms. and those of women who keep their own name, was strongly confirmed.

The results of the direct questionnaire revealed that overall, people sometimes use Ms. of other people, but women rarely use it of themselves. In many cases, Ms. is used for convenience only if a woman's marital status is not known by the person addressing her. Concerning name changing, most women reported that they either have changed or would change their name upon marriage, although just over one third said that they would not do so. It appears that while some women are still tied to what they understand as the traditional obligation of a woman to change her name upon marriage, others are beginning to think about the issue and to realize that they need not forfeit their name just because they are getting married.

The results of this survey are not conclusive, primarily because of the problems of misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the bipolar scales and of some of the terms (e.g. feminist, submissive, dependent). This study does, however, point to clear avenues for future research concerning stereotypes of women who use Ms. and women who keep their maiden name. It would be interesting to investigate further the independent variable of religiousness, taking into consideration not only the subjects' degree of religiousness, but also their religious affiliations and their location on the theological continuum, from liberal to conservative. Alterations in the grouping of subjects by age might also produce interesting new results.

Variables such as ethnicity and occupation of the subjects could also be incorporated into a future investigation. As mentioned above, the present study did not seek to include representative samples for these variables since there was already a large number of independent variables being investigated.

Statistical attitudinal surveys, especially in the area of language and sex research, are still a relatively new phenomenon. Much work needs to be done, first in tightening up the format and methodology of such research, and then on interpreting the data which are obtained. It is my hope that this paper proves to be a

foundation upon which other researchers might ground their own related studies.

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FOOTNOTES

¹I have had extensive contacts with many different religious groups over the course of the last twelve years. I am currently a member of The United Church of Canada, but I have also attended regularly and/or otherwise been involved over a period of time with Brethren, Pentecostal, Baptist and Anglican churches. In addition, I attended an interdenominational Bible College for two years. I have also completed a course on Language and Religion with Professor W.J. Samarin of the University of Toronto. Although the majority of my experience has been with Christian groups, I have also had a fair amount of interaction with Jewish and Moslem people.

²An earlier version of the questionnaire was used in a pilot study of 28 students in a second year linguistics class at the University of Toronto. In the pilot version, the descriptions ended simply with *'..is,'* rather than with *'..is likely to be.'* The change was made in the wording because the pilot subjects expressed extreme unwillingness to make as absolute a statement as the first format implied.

³The format of the questionnaire and the scales used were based on a 1978 Language in Newfoundland Questionnaire (S. Clarke and L. Smith, Memorial University of Newfoundland), which is typical of language attitude questionnaires.

⁴The groups used in this study were: the United Church Women of Runnymede United Church, Toronto; three classes from Erindale Secondary School, Mississauga, Ontario; a men's floorhockey group

at Runnymede United Church; an introductory Latin class, York University; an introductory Linguistics class (evening section), University of Toronto; members of a Ukrainian Pentecostal Church, Toronto; employees of Ogilvy and Mather Advertising, Toronto; employees of Atkinson College and of the Faculty of Fine Arts, York University; and the staff of a public elementary school in rural southern Ontario.

⁵Subjects are quoted verbatim, including their own spelling, punctuation and grammatical constructions. Corrections were only made when it was absolutely necessary for comprehensibility. Underlining and capitalization are the subjects' own, except at the beginning of each quotation, where all were capitalized for the sake of uniformity.

⁶The calculations for significance were done by Sheila Embleton, using the formulas for the t-statistic for the correlation coefficient and the z-statistic for the correlation coefficient found in Hewlett-Packard. Hp-65 StatPac2. (1975. Cupertino, California. p. 68.)

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