

DEE MUELLER

Q When did you hire in?

A I hired in in 1977. Made my ninety days by the skin of my teeth. Thought I'd walk off.

Q What did you walk off for?

A I was told to.

Q By who?

A A guy on the line.

Q You know that I've heard this story a number of times. What was the situation?

A I don't know really. All I know is he come up to me and said, "When we all walk off, you're going with us." I said, "I can't do that." "Yeah, you can." I said, "okay." I don't know, all I remember is, yeah, we all walked off, and Mr. Canton got shit-faced, and I got a little nervous, so I went back. Right. And that's when I was on afternoons and we didn't get done until about three in the morning, something like that. Around about that, you know. I stopped at the bar, and I went whining to John Stolling (?). He told me I was in trouble and they gave me a probation for a year.

Q Where were you working? What shop?

A Body shop.

Q What were you doing when you hired in the first ninety days?

A Well, I started off in the cab bus and then they put me on the Bronco line, right in front. They had a fixture that I put on and put all the holes and stubs, the trim and all that good stuff.

Q Explain what that is-- the fixtures, the trim...

A Okay, Um, the fixture is what I had to clamp on the side of the whole truck, then you drill the holes and then you put it on the truck.

Q You drill the holes back in?

A Well there different. Well, yeah, yeah. And then weld the back of the... I dont know what the front was called. But that what I was welding the whole time. I told myself I wasn't going to let this job depress me, because I had to many mouths to feed. I stuck it out and I got damned good at my job.

Q Was it an art?

A Yes, yeah it was. Danny Telsmont (?), he just works off of me, he's always telling me " Dee-Dee, man, nobody does this job like you." I could do it drunk, high, straight, tired.

Q What was hard about it?

A The hardest part was-- my hands are gunk.

Q There gunk... even though they're hanging from the ceiling, they're heavy. What are they, fifty, sixty pounds?

A No, I don't know, maybe thirty. Once I got to know the guns, it's just automaticaly, I just had to make sure it was guided right. But, um...ya know it would be like-- shit I got alot of mouths to feed and I like the money, so I'm gonna do my job. That's where I stayed the whole time. I got laid off in '81. That's why I stayed in the body shop. I think I kind of got pampered though after, 'cause I got to do my job so well. I dated a foreman there for two years, so that helped.

Q How did that help?

A It was like easier. Nobody really fussed with me. The reason was because they new I was going with him. It was like... as long as I did my job, which I've always done well. So yeah, I never got into any trouble after that. I mean I was always at work, I never was really seriously got hurt. I've only been hurt since I been back now.

Q What happened then?

A Well, I almost knocked myself out, once. I had to have stiches and all that. It's like, oh...I don't ever remember ever having this much shit.

Q In the body shuffles were these the most dangerous...

A To weld. I had a few...I mean I have little marks all over me. After awhile it was like coveralls didn't really help. I wear my T-shirt, but I really never got burned. That was it.

Q Let me ask you...you say you were dating a foreman for a couple of years. That came about because of a mutual relationship, it didn't come about in any kind of special way? Something that happened?

A Right, Right.

Q And the guys, did they hassel you about it?

A No, now they're confused about it. No, they all knew. I mean we used to go to after work parties or we'd all just get together, it was no big deal. Ya know. No, I just kind of mutually liked the man. In fact I just talked to his brother. I want to see him I havn't seen him since my boys' funeral. And I told him, "tell your brother I'm back to work and I'd love to see him. So he was like, yeah. Plus I know alot of people in the plant, kind of. Vandercliff (?), he's my buddy. And everybody teases me about that one now. "Oh-yeah, ya know the planner, he takes care of you. Ya know, it's like if he comes by and I see he has a coffee, I'll hop over that rack and grab the coffee. "I'm sorry man I'm thirsty." It's like how can you do that...but I've always done that. Ya know.

Q Well, you're a super friendly person.

A I try. Alot of people in here don't like me. They tell me that I'm snotty and that I have a real bad attitude and that I think I'm really, ya know, cool. So, it's like, I'm sorry If you don't, ya know. Don't talk to me, it aint gonna break my heart.

Q Who do you get that from more men or women?

A Women.

Q I hear that to. How does that come out?

A I think they're just, maybe they're just jealous in a way, that they're not so open. I mean, I've always been like this. Ya know, I mean I've talked to people every where.

Q So, you worked from '77 to '81?

A Uh-Hum.

Q Then you got laid off?

A Got laid off and was buying out houses in Alpena. So I loaded up and went to Alpena. Then, we had a fire and it took everything. I had to come back home here and do what I had to do. Buried my sons and then I moved on to Boston.

Q The fire took your children?

A Uh-Hum.

Q Do you have a problem with that at all?

A Ummm...yeah, aint nothin' really. Some real grief. I was just, you know, on one of those trips. It was just a bitch. That's what it was. 'Cause I was really pissed off 'cause I had had everything that anybody could ever want. I mean, I worked at Fords all them years...I had lots of things...nice things. And...Uh...there was just a little New Years Eve party and we just got a little bit too high or drunk or whatever the case was. Then the fire broke out. The people that were downstairs got out...we'll he was damaged, he got a hundred and some stitches and divorced over it 'cause he was with another woman. The people that were upstairs, when I seen her I wanted to put her face in the cement or the wall whatevers first and uh, well, they had got out and then the fire department was there and that's all we had was two boy's upstairs. See now, I do have a daughter, she's 15 and lives with her grandparents. She wasn't with us, she was down here for Christmas, thank God. Then they called me da-da-da-da-da-da-da. Then my one son died up there and then they shipped my other one here. That was the year of the real

bad snow storm, real bad.

Q What year?

A '81-'82, four years ago, five years ago now. Yeah horrible snow. So, we had to put the helicopter down and then that's when he died. But, they brought him here and we talked to him for awhile, until I lost my mind. So, my brother, Carmel, he was on his way to Boston, to work there. So, I went to Boston and I got real umm..., well, it was my oldest son's birthday, March 1, I don't know what came over me and I grabbed the little things I felt like taking and I went to the truck stop, took my brothers' car and went to the truck stop there. Then I hitchhiked to Huston, Texas. That's were my best friend lived (the one that crawled down the fire wall) and I stayed there...and ya know, that's where I stayed. The beginning of '84, my Mom here called me and said "you guy's come home, you guy's gotta go up to Oak Rapids (I don't know if you know where that's at) and take care of your grandparents. So, It was like, I guess I have to do this 'cause my Grandmother raised me for a long time...so I'll do this. So, I got sold what I wanted sold and packed what I wanted packed and came home. And I lived in the "great white north". Then they got real sick and I couldn't handle it. My oldest brother, we put them in a home. And here's my brother that I went to Boston with, he was back home (he lives in Traverse City) he works as an executive in a portrait shop. So, next: we wanted to go to Petalumas, California. We packed. And ya know, since my daughters' taken care of, ya know, I don't worry about her. So, off to California I went. And...um...it was just to expensive for me. So, I came home and my Mom here lives downtown. And then it was like okay, I got this job and ya know, I'm gonna work and then ya know, I'm gonna settle down and bullshit. So then here comes this year, and it was like well, I just, ya know, I got enough money saved I just gotta do something here...

I think I'll go back to Texas, where everything's groovy. And me and my Mom travel a lot, ya know, so we went to Florida and the Bahamas and I come back and forth here. So, I packed everything, like I was going to move anyway, and I went to Dearborn Heights. This friend of mine had this humongous house and so I moved, put everything in storage except for the things I needed. And then...um..right at the end of July, right after I got to work, my sister called me and told me that I better come over to the hospital to come over to get mom. Well my Mom is buying another key in (?) so I have to come back home. Because she runs an office..or an apartment complex.

Q An apartment complex downtown here?

A Right, right. And it was like somebody had to come home and be with her. Well, Dee, you're the one. So here I am. Back in Detwa, living back at home, dealing with all....and working.

Q It's not easy.

A No, no. I think my Mom's sick but, I mean she's sicker than I thought. I'm making it the best she's had, ya know, I sent her ass to Las Vegas for Thanksgiving.

Q How old is your mom?

A She's 55.

Q Lets take a little step back. You are how old?

A 32.

Q So you were born 19?

A 54.

Q And where were you born?

A San Deigo, California.

Q And your parents...what did they do?

A Umm..my Mom, she was a waiters..she's been a waiters all her life. My Dad loves my Mom, she got pregnant..they weren't married. And so he loved

her. Well, she lived in California. So, she had me and then it then it got to be to much for her to deal with a baby. So, she came home.

Q She came home?

A Detroit. She's origionally from Detroit. Born and raised.

Q And where did you come back...when you came back to Detroit? Where do you live?

A Lincoln Park.

Q Lincoln Park. I lived in Lincoln Park for a couple of years, on Southfield and Layfaette (?).

A Oh yeah? I live on Dix and Champaine. That was my first job. yeah, until I got mad and put a super ? in my bosses face.

Q What did he do that got you angry?

A Um..he told me to get off the car. And I told him, ya know, everyone sits on the hood of this car. I was off work, I didn't have no uniform on. Nobody knew, except the people that knew me,, knew I worked there. Right. Well, he called me in and embarrassed me, so I picked up this piece of ? and pushed it in his face and walked out.

Q ?

A No, uh-uh.

Q ?

A Uh-uh. ?

Q Umm.. ?

A Do what?

Q ?

A No.

Q You lived in Lincoln Park. You went to Lincoln Park High?

A Oh yeah. And then um, ya know, it didn't last to long for me I had...I was a little rough kind-of person. I was a little fighter. ?

Q Uh-huh. ?

A So, I had a long history of the tenth grade, in and out, in and out, in and out. And then...well you couldn't go to school pregnant back then, so when I got pregnant, it was like, "hey you guys--I'm gone now." And so off I went.

Q And then you had your daughter? At...how old were you?

A I was 17.

Q And where did you live with your daughter?

A Flat Rock.

Q Further down river. You had your own place?

A Me and my husband had been married for almost eleven years. Got divorced right in the eleventh year. Took my maiden name back and said, "I'll never change it again."

Q My wife, in her first marriage she didn't change her name and she was lucky 'cause that marriage only lasted a couple years. She still has her name.

A Yeah, I'll never get rid of my name again. Even if I decided, ya know, if I meet someone I really want to marry, I'll use my, ya know, my last name, my middle name on the licence and stuff like that. 'Cause I'll always wear my name, I'll never change it. Never again.

Q What did your husband do?

A He's a laser..glass..owned a glass company..well, his father owned a glass company. For years and years and years. Then Roney and his brother took over ownership of it. So, yeah, laser..I don't know what else they would call it. Oh yeah..oh yeah.

Q And where did you meet him?

A Oh Christ, I've known Roney ever since I was 9-10 years old. He was living

Q When you were little, what did you think you would do when you were 32?

A Be a nurse. I always wanted to be a nurse. I like blood. Basically I do.

I mean if someone is bleeding at work, I see blood, I'm right over there--let me see it, ya know. Before when I got cut, ya know, I wanted to see her stitch me up. And she just looked at me and acted like, you're really wierd Dee. And it was like...no, I want to see what you're doing. Yeah, I thought I'd be a nurse.

Q Have you thought about going back to school to take advantage of any of that free ?

A No, no. I was gonna, at work there, they had that apprentaship test thing here not to long ago, right. I signed up, me and Woody had talked about it and I had signed up. I was deffinatly going to do it, but my Mom, ya know, I got priorities. I had to go to the hospital every night, so I just didn't take the test. I blew it. So, I haven't really thought of going back and doing anything. Ya know, I mean not right now, there's just too much. Ya know, a job at work and a job here. And when they call me at the restaurant I definatly will help her out, 'cause I'm...That's what I told her this morning--don't expect me to work too much here all the days that I'm off. Between my Mom and I'm getting my own apartment back, so I've been trying to paint that, ya know. It's ya know, I've just got a lot to do. So I can't think about nothin' really, except work and work.

A Yeah. When you um...got married, lived in Lincoln Park, did you raise your daughter in Lincoln Park?

A No, in Flat Rock.

Q Oh, Flat Rock, I'm sorry.

A That's where I had all three of my kids.

Q And when were they born?

A '71--well Renee' in '71. '73 and '75. They were only like 18 months apart.

Q How did you get that job at Ford's?

A Unemployment office. I bugged the shit out of them. I went to every unemployment office in the area. And..um..I had this, ya know, I heard that

one of the factories were hiring, so I just kept on showing my face. They just got tired of seeing me, I think. And..uh..they..uh..sent me down there and I went down and uh..yeah..ya know..I went down did what I had to do and they called me. I really don't think that too many people thought that I was gonna make it, but, like the one's that we all hired in together, 'cause they all kind-of...I mean I'm a hefty girl...but I was real hefty..ya know and it was like, right, right.

Q They didn't think you'd hang in on the body shop job?

A No, oh no.

Q What do you think probed you to do it?

A The money.

Q Yeah. Before that you weren't getting a decent wage at where you were working?

A No, I was a waitress at this bar. I myself know what I'm really like when I'm really drunk. So, it's helping me to work at that. 'Cause you know, I didn't get married with very many kids because I'm like...fuck you..well, if you grab me again, I'm knockin' you off that seat bitch..and I don't care who you are. So, no. And Ford's, it was like \$6.00 or something when I hired in there, an hour and it was like..I was excited. And the higher I got it was like, I liked it. And being like..dating....Kim would make me work all the O.T. , I mean, ya know.

Q O.T.?

A Overtime. You're gonna stay and sweep for an hour after this. And it's like, no I aint. Yes you are, you need the money. Ya know, the kids' taken care of...but I said yeah, you're right, ya know..so I did. I did a lot.

Q Yeah..how much did you make the first year? The first full year?

A Oh, I don't know, 32-33

Q And the year before that you made...

A Nothing.

Q Ten thousand, five thousand?

A If that. It was like I tried to go on A.D.C. for awhile, I mean everybody done it..right? I couldn't deal with them people. Noo..I can't do this.

Q That was your hardest part..I mean I'm sure that's true. What was such a hassel? 'Cause everybody says this.

A Oh, well besides the booklet , you had to..I mean..they..it's too much and they wanted to know everything and then you had to wait to get assistance and well, I remember, my son had really bad nose bleeds and I had to take him to Seaway Hospital and 'cause I didn't have insurance and I wasn't completely on A.D.C. they wouldn't really treat it. I lost my mind. It was like, fuck this, ya know, I'm gonna have to get me a job where I can get insurance and pay for this stuff. So, yeah and ya know, food stamps...ya know, how do you use them...like monopoly money, ya know...God....no, it didn't last to long.

Q How long did it?

A Oh,, a couple weeks. Just enough to get into the grove and then I got my job at this bar and it was like I'll deal with what money I make ya know. So, it was okay and my in-laws were really good to me.

Q You were still married then?

A Yeah, I was still married...he was just gone. He was gone..we were separated for like..couple years..before we got divorced. I just heard..I was in the hospital for one of my ungodly reasons..I don't remember for which now. This woman was talking about after being married for ten years, her husband could claim on her social security bla..bla..bla. And it was like I don't care how much money I got..he aint getting any of it. So, I started our divorce it didn't come through, but then it finally came through.

Q So, you hired in, you got re-called back after being laid off from '81 till '85.

You got called back at the end of the increasing Bronco sales?

A Right, well they had called me...no..they..um..Wayne Assembly sent me. See, when I got laid off at Michigan Truck, I went to Wayne Assembly for awhile. And so Wayne Assembly called me back here in...May...June? I got this telegram thing, right. And so I went down and talked to Mr. Smith at regulations there at the assembly plant and...oh I was on my way to Florida, ya know. I mean, come on buddy, I can't go back to work right now, cant you just put me down a couple steps and then, ya know, ya know, if you need me when I come back, yeah, I'm only gonna be gone a week come on. And so he told me as soon as I got back.."Dee-Dee, you call me". And so when me and my Mom got to Miami...well...hell...the Bahamas is right across the street..like lets go. So, we went to Nassau and she happened to hit at the casino...well hell, lets stay a few days,, and that turned into six days and then we went back to Miami and then we outstayed our vacation and went to the beach and then we stayed there a week. So, when I came home I immediatly called them and they told me, "it's over with now baby, ya know it's too late, we aint takin' no more part-timers, we aint takin' nobody. So, it was like, okay, I blew it. But, I had fun on my vacation. And this is all in the same week I got a call from Michigan Truck and I jumped on that 'cause I like the truck plant a lot, better than the assembly, anyway. But it was like, oh my God.

Q Why did you like the truck plant better?

A Um..it's friendlier and it aint so clean...I mean..it aint as friendly like body shop there was like spotless compaired to are body shop.

Q All robots to, isn't it?

A Yeah, basically. I mean there was a lot then but I don't know people just like.."I don't know"..just the way they talked and shit. They weren't like..um..flexible as we seem to be at the truck plant. I think we work a little

bit harder. They take more things for granted than we do, 'cause I mean, I don't know. Maybe we take a little bit more pride in our trucks. I don't know, I just didn't like it. I didn't like the people. Some of the people I got along with really good. One black dude, I slapped him so hard my hand hurt.

Q From what? What happened?

A 'Cause he grabbed my ass--it pissed me off. It was just like I wasn't in the mood. Sometimes it doesn't bother me because, just like now, there's a few guys that come down--they'll squeeze my cheeks, right, and it's like, so, when I'm walking by them I--oh yeah--hey, free feel for a free feel guys. Ya know, that's why for a while no one would do it no more. They don't even... 'cause it's like--I'm the only woman down here...if you guy's are gonna do that--I'll be grabbin' you guy's in a heartbeat, now. There are a couple that do it now that..that's okay... 'cause they're alright.

Q Was that hard to deal with in the beginning? Was it similar to being a waitress, was it a hassel? How was the difference?

A Not too much difference, really. A waitress puts up with a lot of shit. And ya know, I do to...but I'm not really...I don't know...a lot of people don't anymore even. I'm like one of the guys now, kind-of...now, ya know now...ya know now anyway. I get into the grove. I'm only female...so, even when I was body shop, there was no female's. But even after awhile ...some of the wives would come up to me and tell me, "you don't have to worry about Mike no more" ya know. "Dan tell's me he's there farting with you guys and you're there--hey I know he's, ya know--I aint gonna worry about it." It's like some of the wives--you think I won't..shit...watch me buddy. It's like, she aint that bad. Even the wives...we have a good time.

Q You go to parties together?

A Hell yes. Yeah but, that made me feel good, ya know, the come in and

say, "we don't worry about them, if they're with you." It's like well thanks, ya know! But really, thanks..ya know?

Q Working in a plant that has very few women. When you told me the other day that you wear you purple shoes to keep the guys...when you wear these purple gym-type shoes and you work right on top of the pit, tell me a little bit about that.

A Well, ya know...down there where you get a little dirty, their not as bright. But uh yeah, yeah that way to, right they know if I'm walking on the line...I want Barbara to know it's me. Ya know, if I yell something ..they ain't gotta wait to see who it is..the voices..all's I gotta do is see my shoes and they know it's me. Yeah yeah, and I told the assistant plant manager I just wanted to blind people. 'Cause everytime he goes through he goes like that.....oh yeah. That's why I wear different things, ya know...I wore my pajama top in here! Hey, I'm here though, I'm doin' my time. Leave me alone, ya know. I always tease Brian Shokly(?), but man one day I'm gonna wear an outfit in here and knock....no Dee-Dee don't. 'Cause one time in the body shop, I couldn't remember what happened or why but somebody had to say something about what I was wearing--that I was distracting the other workers--the men. So, Brian..and uh..he told me

Q Your union rep.?

A Yeah, right. He said that this guy was complaining and I said listen man ya know, look at them..their coveralls..their paint are all the way down, I can see their underwear. Don't you think Gary checks...I ain't..you tell them to snap up..I'll snap up. I had a bathing suit on under my coveralls. Ya know. By the end of the shift..they all snapped up. 'Cause it was like bullshit..ya know, 'cause you could see like..ooo...she might she have some tits there. They snap..I snap..they don't snap..get away from

me. Ya know. Me and Brian..still..he tells me, "man, don't be bending over...why did you wear something like that?" Ya know? And it's like "hey..I just wanted to wake you guys up, come on".

Q Was he antagonistic or was it just a friendly..trying to figure out what to do with this new situation?

A Right. Well, Brian's always been good to me. Brian has always been real hell of a guy...I mean..yeah..I've talked to Brian, I mean he know's about the boys..he knew the boys, right..kind-of. And..um..yeah..yeah..I whine to Brian, if I have a problem where I feel like I need...him and Bernie.. Bernie Outon (?)

Q Oh yeah, he's a special guy.

A Oh, Bernie adopted me, day one in about a half hour. I think some of the slack I've gotten from the bullshit--I mean the first couple years there Bernie was kind-of like leave her alone, she's alright and shit.

Q How did he do it? And talk a little about Bernie and your relationship with Bernie?

A Bernie--I think--had um..he knew..I don't know..Bernie used to stick up for me so much that, I think when he does something...some people paid attention..'cause he knew..I mean Bernie's been there forever.

Q Thirty-five years.

A Bernie always just sits with me.. right away and it's like..he's pretty cool. And then um we just um started going out. Bullshitting..drinking...lets go out after work and have a drink. Come on out to Miland to the hall and it'll be like yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah Bernie I got..Bernie's..Bernie's coming..üm..oh I used to through some good parties. Wald lake..so, um Bernie was always at them--I got some good pictures.

Q Good pictures.

A Yeah. And ya know, Bernie and Jim made it a lot easier on me. I don't

know Bernie just..um..like..ya know..gabbing off with my forman and Staffy(?) and me didn't get along. He'd call me a little white girl. The next thing I know, Bernie's chewin' his ass OUT! And then he would stay away from me. Which I'm sure...if he ain't got nothin' nice to say to me or he can't talk to me..stay away from me. Don't get me started... 'cause I got a bad temper..once I get started and I like Bernie...Bernie's been good to me, his wife is the bomb..every mother should be like this--she is so cool.

Q In what way?

A Everytime I used to go up there..I haven't been up there in a couple years. But..uh..I used to tie on some good drunks up there. And she always made me feel so good..ya know, I mean..I could always go there. I mean they invited me over there for the holidays, Thanksgiving--you know the whole family come on up. Oh yeah, I think if I called Bernie day or night, he would help me if he could. I'm sure of it, I'm sure of it.

Q What do you think made it a special relationship?

A I think he kind-of felt sorry for me in the beginning, right. A girl who never worked...has never really done anything like this and um..she needed this job so...ya know 'I'm gonna give her a break'. I don't know, Bernie..he's just special. He's always been. He's my buddy. Even when I come..like..when..I..like..ya know..when I make my socks(?) over the left, ya know, four years of forty-five. When I come home from Texas for awhile, or ya know, California..always getting in the plants through Bernie..always..I found a way to get in there, ya know. Usually I could go through Wayne Assembly and cut through the back doors..come up in the body shop and surprise them. Yeah, I don't know..I dunno..Bernie's one of a kind.

Q You feel like you're popular at the plant.

A Yeah, he's cool.

Q What about..did you get hassled by some of the foreman or some of the other co-workers?

A Kavanau(?).

Q Kavanau. Anything with blacks and whites?

A No, I got along with basically everybody. I mean, John Stolling used to give me the keys to the Lincoln and shit..to drive because he was just so drunk. He'd say, "Dee,I can't drive, here want the car? And I'm like fuck yeah I want your car..look at this size..I love driving big cars. Ya know. But no, Kavanau's the only person that ever gave me any shit. He just now took his retirement, he had a real bad heart..he worked in the body shop back back on the line.....Deanis Kavanau. He was my foreman for awhile. Well, everytime I got put on that shift. He didn't like me and I didn't like him. He was about the only reason why I ever had to go to relations those years, because ah..he had threw a drill at me ..right..so I spit in his face. And that's what they did.

Q

A I wasn't gonna bend down and pick it up. So, I just spit in his face.

Q He threw it at you. Why did he through it at you for?

A 'Cause my fixture hat broke..right. He called James Core(?), he works in the body shop now, he works right next to me and Danny Telsmont(?) and I don't know...pick up my fixture and hold it while I do the job.. I said you're out of your mind..Isaid this thing's next to my foot--we're talking a couple hundred pounds here, man..I ain't...and he threw the drill at me. And Handson(?) was coming up the line..he was right there. And..Uh..oh yeah..I told him..I said Jim..I'm going to labor relations. He said, "go baby..go." And I'd be back..right..Kavanau had to go down there when I came back and they had put a fixture up on chains

..it's still on that same 'cause you know, when it fell, I mean ffffeeeewww..it would've definatly crushed my foot. And I just told 'em and he told me I had to do it and I told him I wasn't, ya know. So, he threw the drill and I spit in his face. I went back to work, Denis went down there and then he had the power drive and something else and Denis was off work for about a week or two.

Q They had witnesses, guys from...they all stayed with your defence.

A Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean it was like..what the fuck. So, yeah but he was the only one..I never got in trouble, really. I got along with everybody..Jarvis.....I still take him a coffee. When I'm in the mood. So, yeah..yeah.

Q Being a mother, how did that affect you...what was the situation?

Time, family and...how were you able to juggle that?

A OH...no, no problem. The girl that had babysat for me, she lived in the same complex I did...she just moved in..I mean she was like..she called me mom. She uh...she lived with me. I never had to worry, I mean I could work any shift-any hour. 'Cause they knew what they were going to get, I mean it was nothing to go to the store and spend a couple hundred dollars on nothing..if thats what they wanted, thats what they got. Oh, I had no problem..no problem.

Q The kids you mean? Do you think that part of you giving them anything that they wanted..was because you were working away from them so long working?

A Yeah, a little bit. 'Cause I wanted them to have things that they--I never had, right and I had the money. I mean they didn't get EVERYTHING but they got a lot. Diane, the babysitter, she ah, she got expensive things. But she deserved it--she'd be there. I could call her up and say..I'm working overtime and now I'm going to the bar..there's this place called

the Q-Corner(?) and we usually go there and shoot pool until the sun would come up. And then I'd finally go home. Right. By the time I came home, she'd have the kids up and ready for school or whatever.. had them breakfast and everything, ya know, she deserved whatever I gave her. No, I didn't have to adjust anything. Everything worked out real good. I was very fortunate. Real lucky.

Q How much of a shock was it when you got laid off? What did you think when you got laid off? Did you think you'd be coming back?

A Uh..yeah.

Q You thought you'd be coming back.

A Eventually, I knew I would. Hell yes. It was like..I don't think now..there's just too many things going on. I mean I cant wait to get back and see these robots on it just amazes me. That blows my mind. The ones in the body shop..I knew..I mean come on..they can do the job any man can do..maybe better. But on the jobs like that has got to be..oh, I can't wait to see how they do that.

Q What do you think that will do for your job?

A Take it away. And I think ya know that they're taking away more and more and like the ones that they're adding on to, to me that's going to be there no matter what..they're gonna be working their balls off, ya know.

Q Talk a little bit more about that. What do you see happening? How do you see that?

A To many...(what's the word I'm looking for?)...automation, things coming in. When I hired in ten years ago, it wasn't like that. It was like a few robots here or we complete my deal and have a robot do this job. But it never came about. Now it's like...now since I've been back...it's like WOW, what happened to that...damn has it changed. I figure they'll be putting them on jobs that I never thought they could do it. But they

can. So, it's like what's stopping them from doing it in 5-10 years now when there's gonna only going to be three people in the whole place just making sure their machines work. That's what I think is going to happen. There's too many people that are smart enough to put these things together ya know, to make them.

Q Do you think it's a good change or a bad change?

A I'm not sure. I think it's a good change for the company because of the simple fact that robots aren't going to fuck up as much as humans do. They're going to be there every day, they're going to do the same job no matter what, they're going to do it the same way no matter what. Ya know ..if the tire gets 25-weld it's going to get 25-weld..it ain't going to get 15 or 19 or..and 3 up on top and 2..ya know..it's going to be just the way it's supposed to be.

Q So, you've worked in the body shop? And you've been around welds. You've been around robots? They work pretty well?

A Yeah, when they do break down....fffeeuuummm....somebody's there. I've very seldom seen a problem to where it went over until a couple hours to fix. Yeah, everything's gonna get done the same way..every trucks gonna get done the same way. They know the way it's supposed to get done.

Q And that's a disadvantage?

A Not having a job for the people. When I get laid off..which I know..I think and from some of the rumors that go around--the other people I got hired back in with say February we're all getting laid off again. End of January beginning of February. Well, I'm going to miss the people that I work with, but hey...I can get another job. Where there's just me, where these men who have families and stuff that are buying things..it's gonna be difficult, that's too bad.

Q Is it worth it? Are the robots worth it?

A I don't know, I'm not...I don't know...I can't say. I think it's more good than bad. Just for the fact that these trucks are going to be done the right way.

Q You think the quality's going to be better because of the robots?

A Right, I think. But, I'm not sure.

Q That's what it's about, that's why I'm doing the interviews.

A I think it's going to be better for the way they're made. But there's some job's I don't think can be replaced--by robotics. I mean some things you just can't dig.

Q What...do you get a picture of this job now? Five in the morning you wake up and it's time go to work. What's your day like? What do you on the job? What do you do on your break? How do you get through the day? Let's talk about that for a little while.

A Okay, I get up. I get up about quarter after three.

Q Quarter after three. That's the earliest?

A Because I ride to work with Larry Williams. He picks me up anywhere between...eh...ten to four or ten after four. I can't just get up and go. I gotta get up slap myself around..ya know..coffee..cigarettes. Usually I try to put mascara on..sometimes, I don't. And then I go to work and get a coffee and sit there and bullshit. I usually run the to get in trouble. I have to see what's going on. And then I do my job. I have fun in the beginning of the morning. Usually..I'd say...3 out of 5 days...I usually smoke a joint...in the morning. Well--maybe half. By myself...in the locker room. Oh yeah, I need that in the morning. A lot of times..a lot of people I talk to...I've been smoking pot though since I was eleven, so shit come on. It was like, how can you work..I get so relaxed, I just cant motovate. It gets me going.

It's like music..that's why I have my stereo.

Q Oh, so you bring a stereo to work too?

A Yeah, no matter how tired I get, my muscles are sore, my fingers ache...if I hear a good song, I just like..nothing bothers me. Just do your job Dee-Dee. I just hook up a bunch of um..what do I hook up here...I hook up the battery thing...um...for the guy to put the battery in. The focus regulator wires..I don't know..It makes everything work though, I know that.

Q Well, I don't know what they do. So, don't look at me. I'm as lost in an auto plant as I am around electrical wires and stuff.

A There's three or four wires and I know by memory if something dont work when they put the battery in. I put this canaster in that looks like an oversized coffee can that has these two little nuts that I can never work right. But, I usually I get them to work right. Which is in the goals of no problem. Oh and ah....I don't know what they're called. I know the guy that works with me knows what they're called..at the other end of me. The jack..I gotta tighten the jack. Usually the guy next to me has the wrong ones in, so I dont tighten them. The guys in the pit--they're guys to work with. Like some mornings I'd go in there, when my Mom's in the hospital..when I leave work I go right to the hospital..when everybody isn't home..I get in the car and I go. That's out in Royal Oak, on 13 and Woodward. So, sometimes I'll be there until 10-11 o'clock and I'll just find out how she is, ya know. When I come home it's like 2 hours later...take a shower go to work again. So, I tell them guys, "man, I have had no sleep..keep me motovated today..so I may come up with some off the wall shit.

Q What kind of off the wall?

A Boag things, or ya know, Hillbilly has a way of ya know...he talks a lot about sex. That we do talk about.

Q A lot about sex.

A A lot about sex..oh boy do we talk about sex.

Q Give me a typical conversation?

A Oh, what would you do with feathers and whip cream? How would you do this? Sometimes I think to myself, God, if I had a boyfriend..you're a man, would you like me to give it to you..and it's like OOLALA. And then we'll start talking about that. Just everything and anything. But they're fun to work with. Nobody that I can think of is really bad to work with.

Q Is there anything that you don't like to talk about at work with them?

A Ah..no..no, not really.

Q Any game to get through the day.

A Right. Right, I might come up with some off the wall jokes. Like the other day I kept saying, "how does a Polok get his self off...jack up(?) Some days when I have a bad dream about my boys, right..'cause I have nightmares sometimes. I don't even talk them days. It's like it takes me five hours to even smile. The guy in the pit—the one that works right down below me.."I haven't seen your dimples all day..what the fuck." And they'll just start talking goofy shit, ya know. The sand..they'll start talking about the ocean and I love the ocean, so that puts me in a good mood. So, it's like okay, I'll forget about it. By the end of the day I forgot..I hadn't forgot it..but it didn't invade my mind as much as it did when I got here at 5 o'clock.

Q A lot of people think, all the workers are pretty hard. Do you find the guys on the line or the other women are hard people or sensitive?

A Basically I think they're all..I wouldn't use the word 'hard', but we're a

little rough, kind-of. Everybody, in there though--outside there I find that people are so much different. They're not so..even swearing right. I have a bad mouth, just like growing up smoking pot...I'm sure my first words weren't 'hi' and 'bye' and 'thank-you'. I just grew up with that. I find a lot with the men..I don't associate with too many women, except for Cathy--she's a good friend. They're different, they're not so(?)...like ya know, you're in that plant trying to do our job and somebody causes shit....you jump into the fence. I know if I'm right about something..ya know..if I..ya know..when I first got put on chastes (?), I didn't even know who the man was that was high on..and he came down bitching at me because I wasn't hooking up the wire right. So when he got done, I said "wait a minute here..don't yell at me..I'm right next to you I'm gonna fuck and that ain't even part of my job..what the fuck." And he came down and said sorry..and I said me to but ya know still when I'm out there I don't do that....as much. When I know I'm right..when I'm right oh man I'm like a pipe tank. I go for peoples throats..it don't bother me. Cause if I'm right..I'm right. I basically like my job. I like the money. I like to take my mind off of what's going on at home. The plant always has a way of doing that..something's different every day.

Q How can it be different? How can it be different when you do the same job day in and day out?

A Yeah..but I get breaks, lunch.

Q What do you do during your breaks? What do you do?

A Oh well..I first go to steeler ducks (?) and by my Larry a coffee. Cause we have a thing..and then I roam through the body shop, right and bullshit. Somebody always says something..like..ah..how ya doing today? Oh what a fuckensonfucker wont do his job. So I run over and say.. "hey why wont you do your job..this is a gravy job. And I get them pissed

off. That one man in the dog house..he's always threatening my life. It's like "you think this job's so easy"...And it's like "yeah this job's easy..I've done it..I know it is..you're a whiner."

Q So you get out of here without feeling too bummed out at the end of the day?

A Oh yeah, I very seldom am in a bad mood.

Q What kind of music do you listen to?

A Everything..everything. I even put on country once in a great while.

Q What's your favorite music?

A Probably the blues. I got ah like..at work I basically listen to the Rolling Stones..off tape.

Q Lets talk about the Stones..what do you like about the Stones?

A Everything..Micks lips. I've never seen them but I grew up with them. My brother..

Q He's older right?

A Um-hum. Stones and the Beatles..I grew up with. They've been enpounded in my brain. I like the beat of the music. But then I'll go from the Stones to WJLB, ya know? When I can get it on the radio. I think I did that 'cause, me and Larry always say "these pudge boys cant take this music. And I get everybodys attention..woo-shit..what's that shit you got on there now. It's like..WJLB.

Q When you ride to work with Larry at ten to four..what's that like?

A Oh man..It's an adventure.

Q Tell me a little about who Larry is.

A Larry Williams is the..

Q I mean I love Larry..

A Yeah, he's great. He didn't remember me 'cause when I worked on the Bronco line..right..cause I worked right across and Bobby..the guy I always used to dog..I always used to yell "you guys got it made out there..you

don't do shit!" So, when I came back to work, that's where they put me. Everybody that came by said hi to me. And Larry just kind of like..hi, how ya doin'. And I just started laughing and I said you don't remember me do you? I used to be able to sit on my hair..when I worked in the body shop, I had long hair. So, then it dawned on him. And then we just started bullshitting then. After..uh..lets see..I was back to work about two weeks and I was at home putting up my Moms lamps..my Moms ceilings are like 12 ft. and I fell off of a 10 ft. ladder. When I hit the floor I just gowged my head. So, I had to go on medical at work. So, I got down to the plant and showed Woody my papers..I mean I was hurt, I couldn't walk. So, the first week, I didn't move. Then I started feeling a little better, right. So, I thought I could go back to work now. Then I thought..no I better not, I cant stand..I cant do a lot. So I felt good enough to go to the hospital to see my Mom. So, I went to the hospital to see my Mom, and I had taken these pills that the doctor gave me and he had guaranteed me it wouldn't knock me out or nothin'..cool. So, I went to the hospital. I told my Mom..man I'm starting to ache..I'm going to take a couple of these pills and go home. Took a couple pills, pulled out on Woodward..did not see this man coming and recked my Mothers car. What's a person going to do..I hit my head. So, here I go back to the hospital..damn I got a hard head..you're okay. I had to go back to work. 'Cause I had to pay for my Moms car...and I didn't want to tell my Mom I recked her car. So, I went to work and this guy Larry Williams..I said to him "excuse me, don't you live somewhere downtown?" And he went,"well ya know..down...why?" And I said bla..bla..bla..bla I live downtown, I just recked my mothers car and I need a ride to work. So, charge thirty I don't care what it is..I just need a ride. And that's how it started.. in the middle of August. And now some days I could drive..but Larry

pick me up. It's fun. It's like some mornings I can get into the car and just fall right back asleep. Some mornings, Lori comes in with one of these off the wall moods..it's like turn up the stereo man..I lay in the back seat jammin'. Some mornings..let's smoke a joint. Some mornings I just smoke one by myself and it's like..baby..baby..how can you do this to me? And I say, "I'm sorry Larry I'm sorry I need this..I still have a half hour and you have to go to work. He picks up three other people.

Q Oh, he picks up three other people?

A Right, right.

Q I didn't know that.

A Yeah, he picks up Dee..the woman that works on the undershield job and paint there. And Wine, I'm sure you know who Wine is. And then there is me. And then they stop and pick up Larry..I don't remember Larry's last name. Black dude works on a chain job sometimes.

Q Oh..Larry..yeah..yeah.

A And then the mornings that Wine's geared up he'll start arguing with Larry and it's like I'm sitting in the middle and my head will be going..ba..ba..ba then Larry will start..Larry turn up the radio..I cant stand it no more. Then sometimes it's like..I should've drove.

Q And he waits for you at the end of the shift to drive you home?

A Most of the time. By the time he gets done and in the locker room he only has to wait twelve minutes..if that. It's worth it to him. Somedays he doesn't though..when he's in the 'baby I just gotta go' mood, I'll find my own way home.

Q How do you get home?

A I bum rides. A foreman over there that I got a ride from a couple times.. in paint. And then there's this guy that Larry knows..I still ain't met because Larry said they're usually on ten hours over there. He'll wait..

so it's no biggy. Or I hitch a ride over to Dearborn Hieghts. 'Cause some nights I just don't go home. It's just like I can't do it. I'll call..my brother's home now..so..for awhile..so it's like how's mom? She's okay? I ain't comeing home. I'll see you tommorow. Lori's great though. White woman in the Cadillac..she calls me all the time.

Q That's the story. When I worked there the other day..that's all they kept talking about. White woman in a Cadillac.

A Chili, right? He gets(?).....some days I'll go over there. On break I automatically go over there. And by Larry talking, that's the first thing I do. Some mornings, if Larry looks really tired, I'll come up behind him and fuck man I wish I had....(?)....I'll kiss him on the cheek. And then Pee-Wee starts. It keeps them goin' for I know a couple good hours. Then he'll come over to the chassis and he'll fuck on me..come up behind me and kiss my neck and I'll tell 'em man would you knock it off..there might be a man interested in me and now you're going to ruin it for me. Oh baby, but a white woman in my cadillac..I just cant take it, ya know? And then a couple people come up to me and asked me if he was my boyfriend. Is that your old man? I tell 'em..oh yeah..yeah.

Q It's almost like a fantasy world..like a world you'd make up. Right, and we all do it, just to get through. What's the hardest thing about working in an auto plant?

A Getting up.

Q Getting up in the morning. And going to work.

A Once I'm there, I'm okay. Getting up is the hardest thing for me to do. It don't matter what job..I've never been taken off my job since I get it. But I had a fear there for a while..when I'd go on a seeler duck..sometimes Patsy would loan me out. And it's like ohman..I wish this was my job so I would know I could just come and do my job. I don't want anyone to tell

me where I'm going that day. I have my job. So I ain't got that worry somedays..I'd hate to be some of the ladies in there now. Like that one, Sharon and that..she's like useless. I couldn't stand coming in there every day not knowing what they're going to do with me.

Q You like it when you have the same job every day. I'm the other way, I like not knowing.

A Well see, I like my job. If I go in there really tired or I can do my job no matter what kind of mood I get up in because I know it. What if I wake up..sometimes my skin feels like it's going to fall...so I want to smoke a joint..well I cant smoke a joint and then go in there and not know where they're going to put me. cause I definately don't want to get hurt and I can get hurt. I mean I walk into things..sometimes..I mean I walked into a coming down over head. It almost knocked me out. Well I can't smoke a joint 'cause I don't know what I'm going to be doing.

Q Know you cant.

A I know, yeah. On the mornings that I feel like it.....

Q How have things changed from the time you were laid off from the time that you got called back? The day you hired in to now--which is almost ten years..how have things changed? Whats been the biggest change for you?

A The robots..more machines doing the job. And more machines going in than happening that. Like I said I think it was a lot of talk then but now they are doing it. It toke ten years to do it but they are doing it and that's what makes you think wow all these people that can put these machines together..they've been thinking about it for a few years in another 5-10 years they're going to be in. Then we're going to be out. That's the biggest change. I think basically the people are all still the same. Everybody there is there for the job..the money..for whatever reason they want.

I don't need that much money now. I did then.

Q Do you work every day? Do you take off days?

A Every day. I left for one day. But I went to work. I've never not shown up. Except the night we found out my Mom had leukaemia I stayed at the hospital, I didn't go to work. But then that was okay..nobody had any problem there. I've always shown up. Always. I've never missed.

Q Has there been a change in the relationships between the foreman and the folks on the line?

A I don't know.

Q Don't treat you any better or worse or the employee involvement program.. has that affected you at all?

A I think that's good, on one hand but when I first got, right seeler deck... and I went to a couple of them, 'cause I didn't know what they were about—lets see what's up. I didn't see too much happening myself, personally. Finally before I got taken out of there it was like why ain't nothing changed?

Q Why ain't what changed?

A That Nassau stuff, right. We used it constantly at that time. So, dont you think it would work better when it's clean..why wait five hours movin' it and then changing it. Why cant they change it once in the train before lunch. Ya know, change it in between lunch and end of the shift?

Q They used to and then they stoped.

A Then they stoped, right. So, that's why I'm a G.I. to this about that. And then finally at the end they did it. And of course Louie caused a fight but he'd come over to do it. And then it got taken off anyway.

Q They call you everything but what?

A White.

Q White.

A Nobody else ever bitched about this to some broad over here..God damn what the fuck she think she's doing. And it was like..hey buddy, dont then dont change nobodys but mine. Okay? 'Cause everybody else got real quiet. Oh I went off. You all got me going..'cause I'm the one with the mouth here, I start complaining and now that the man starts to do it and then you say we had nothing to do with it? Fuck you then. Just change your mind.

Q You said the agnoligments are the biggest change.....(?).....

A I think they should be shipped home. No, no. I think that there should be a few cars or whatever coming over and then a few of ours going over there. We spray painted the Mazda sogn black in Flat Rock.

Q You did?

A Yeah. Seeing all these little Japanese people going around Flat Rock kills me. I just die. It's like, God what are you saying, why dont you go fucking home. I dont think we should have them over here. I dont think we should have as many imports and exports as we do. Keep it in ...I mean we'll take care of us and you take care of yours. Like I said, send a few over, ya know we'll check it out. We'll send a few of ours over but not as much as what's going on now.

Q So, you don't like the idea of the Mazda plant..which is owned 25% by Fords.

A Right. But still..I mean that 25% ain't gonna mean shit really.

Q What about all the jobs they create?

A For what?

Q For the American workers here.

A There aren't gonna be that many, I bet. They're too many Japanese invading. That's the only word I can think of--they're invading. They're everywhere

down towards Flat Rock, Monroe, Newport.

Q Why do you suppose the Japanese are moving in there.

A They're bringing them over. 'Cause that's their plan. Alright, so they have to hire so many laid off Ford workers. I know people that went out there fun. I mean I got one of them applications things in the mail. I filled it out..I wouldn't have gone. 'Cause I ain't working for no Japs. That's it..I don't care. No, they had to hire so many Flat Rock Residents. Everybody that I know in that town..I've lived in that town for a long time....it's like their only doing this 'cause we don't have no money. If you cant find any of these jobs..you work at a gas station or store. I mean there ain't shit out towards that way..you shovel snow in the winter and rack leaves in the summer. I cant even understand these people..how can they work for them. I wouldn't have it here. I don't think we should have it here..maybe it's 'because -I don't know much, I mean..I shouldn't say that. I think that the more they bring over the less Americans are going to have..because of the fact they'll work cheaper or they'll work harder 'cause they're in the States or whatever. Where we go over there..we wont be treated as good as we treat them fuck them..go back to your own country. We'll take care of our own, you take care of your own. I just don't understand. If I had anything to do with it, I'd ship everybody home. The Japs, Arabs I mean all of them..go back where you came from.

Q Even the iron workers in the plant, you don't think they should be there working in the plant?

A No, everybody has a right to be there. Ket..Keta(?)..she's a riot..I cant imagine a day without hearing that mouth of hers. But Ket's been here forever. He didn't come here specifically to get this job..or maybe he did..who knows. Maybe just 'cause there're so many Philopinos in our

building. They come over and they got it descent, they've studied and did what they had to do, fine. But don't bring in fifteen people from your country over here just to hang out or see what they can get into. Fuck it, they're taking our jobs for luck and that ain't right.

Q There is no jobs there, so they come here. Let me ask you a question.

A Okay, so if they can do it here, why cant they do it there. They can come here and do nothing from scratch or have family money to start something..start it over there. Why come here?

Q Your last name is Mueller?

A Um-hum.

Q What's your ethnic background?

A German and Swiss.

Q You've been here for a while, you think?

A Forever.

Q Forever?

A Well my Grandpa came here..lets see..Grandpa was..I'm trying to think how old he was..he was young..20 maybe..he was a Bóxer from Switzerland and he had come to the States to box. And never left.

Q So, within the last say, 70 years. Okay, the question is..and I think what you're saying about the Japanese, Arab folks..that's a popular sentiment. However I think that's another issue. This country was built on immigrants from everywhere, right. There was nobody here. Greek-town..when you're in Greektown the Greeks came over here.

A Right.

Q And then Arabs came, Hungarians all the people you've named in the plant are immigrants basically, right? Your parents are immigrants, yor grand-parents were immigrants...what's different now? What's different..is it anger I mean you have it..you painted the sign, you've got some anger towards

these folks.

A Maybe it's because.

Q Is it the different color? They're not European?

A Oh, fuck no--I don't care about that.

Q That's not the issue?

A No. I think with me it's like..okay so parent or grandparents..when they came over, right they came over to work, basically or freedom, right?

Okay, so kids are kids. The people that are coming now, I feel are just um..I don't know..there's like some of them..maybe just the ones I know that come over here, they're just like..come, find a job where they can use they just kind of like take things. And then they're like gone..but they aren't really gone..they just go to another state maybe or something.

I just don't think it's the same thing maybe as it was 70 years ago..they dont come here now just to work hard and to make a living and be a little free. They come here now thinking that we owe them something 'cause their grandparents came here or whatever. You don't owe nobody nothing. ..I don't think. We got to take care of what we got first..which we're not doing.

Q Some of the people of our own are some of the people that aren't being takencare of now.

A Right. It's because of the simple fact that other persons...which is okay. ..hey..ya got to deal with it, I just kind-of feel that if we wouldn't have let so many people come over here..say the last fifty years, fourty years we wouldn't be in the shape we're in now.

Q Do you think..80 years ago there used to be signs in Boston that said no Jews, blacks or Irish allowed. In Boston and New York no dogs, no Irish, no coloreds, no Irish, no Jews. During WWI there was a sign that said you couldn't eat sauerkraut 'cause of WWI. People would change their names..no Germans allowed. Do you think we should have signs like that

again? Nobody allowed?

A No. 'Cause I think that's...not cool..maybe a little rude. No, you cant do that. That's just like blacks sitting in the back of the bus. I just think we should stop a lot of the people coming over. Huston, okay.. oh man..they use big busloads..they'd pop people right and left who didn't have a green card or whatever, ya know. You were over here working and ya know we ship 'em right back..that's what we should do. If you come over here and they have a family here or whatever and you come and you find that you're going to stay..you plan on this job and shit..cool..if you're going to change your citizenship and all that 'cause that's what you got to do. But these assholes at this company are..ya know well owned or rich or whatever. Bullshit, man. Don't even let them in the country. Just like San Deigo, the jerks from Tiauana..I couldn't believe the people that came through..in just that one day. This goes on every day, every month, every year. I can't imagine this. That's why people are sleeping in the streets.

Q Why do you think all these people leave their country?

A 'Cause they heard the states are so good. Some job opportunity. Freedom, whatever.

Q Do you think there's opportunity for your daughter? Your daughter's how old now?

A 15.

Q 15. What do you think she's going to do when she turns 18?

A I think she wants to..well I don't know. She can do whatever she..she's smart. Right now she wants..well she's going to be a lab technician. Renee' isn't going to be dumb and get pregnant or she's just like got too much going. Whatever she decides we're going to back her I know that. Maybe in a couple five to ten years she's going to be in a suit with a

briefcase or she can be a waitress..she can be a mother..and I told her dont she make me a grandmother till I'm 40..I'm going to beat her.

Q Besides talking with her like that with her like that. Have you talked to her about the difficulties of being a young mother? Do you have that kind of open relationship?

A Oh yes. Oh yes.

Q Different from your relationship with your Mom when you were younger or not?

A Oh yeah, oh yeah. My Mom didn't raise me my grandmother raised me. My grandmother, she never talked about...I learned about everything from my brothers--my two older brothers and it was always just the basics, but I never really knew the grease until I got out there and got pregnant..and had to be married. And then it's like Renee' is not going to do the things that I've done, right. I don't think. I'm planning she don't. But she might. If she does okay, we'll deal with it when she does. Especially now-a-days, it's too expensive to have a baby. I cant believe. If I had a baby now, I'd pull my hair out, I'm sure of it..it's like so much money, now..compaired to 15 years ago. Wow, even diapers and formula for a baby right now, is a fortune where I can buy a case of enfamil for \$4.00 now it's \$40.00. It's like wow, I can't imagine having a baby right now. I think people that have babys now..better know what they're doing. Better really be prepared. It's a fortune.

Q What do your two brothers do? Two brothers is what I hear.....Three?

A I got a total of three. One's a...well what I hear right now he's some kind of hot dog in the union at cadillac. He's been there forever, I know this. I mean I was still a young teenager when he got his job. And then that's the oldest. The next oldest--the one above me is an executive corporative chef.

Q In Traverse City?

A Yeah, that's where his home is, but he dont live there all year. He goes everywhere. Then I have my youngest brother who just now got out of jail..that's home. And I think in another two to three weeks he'll be going to California.

Q What did he do?

A Ah..fraud and embezzlement.

Q He's out now, huh?

A Yeah.

Q That's good. Do you think he'll be staying out?

A Yeah, for a while anyway.

Q How long was he in?

A Ah, he was only in for a little over a year, this time. He's been in and out of jail—he's been a troubled child.

Q Was he ever one?

A Um-Hum. Yeah. He's seems to be maintaining right now. I think it's just the shock of my Mother dying. He never expected this...nobody did. Yeah, so he's maintaining. I think him and my brother are going to drive up to California and my brothers just going to leave Michael there and then come home.

Q How old is your mom?

A 55.

Q And you never followed up on your Dad? Your Mom is a young woman.

A Yeap.

Q 55 is really young.

A Yeah it is. She's still like 30 in her mind. I mean that's why the disease is really kicking her out...'cause she's just too active. And now it's just like nothing..can't even get her out of the house. She's losing her mind.

Q Is that where you get your energy from?

A Yeah. Yeah.

Q Where do you get your fight..and say your not going to take it?

A I've had that since I was walking.

Q Did your Mom raise you like that..or?

A Basically, I was raised not to take no shit. I mean if you're in the wrong or you start something then you deal with it..but if you're in the right and somebody says your wrong..hey, you stand up for what you think is right. And if you're wrong you're wrong but if you're right you're right. I've never been pushed around or nothing like that..even when I was little. I mean I wasn't tuff..I could take care of myself. And that's because of my brothers. I mean they used to kick my ass. And I learned how to fight early. So, it was like I got into a lot of scraps, man. I used to just like ...bullshit!

Q Is there a lot of drinking in the plant?

A Ummm..not that I know of. Not around me. On Fridays we do. We go cash our check and down a couple. But, no. I've seen a couple guys drink all day and it's like..maybe I want a little shot of that..but then I know I know me, I love drinks. And I just have to avoid it sometimes. Except, when I'm in the mood. But then I usually dont get started until after work.

Q Is that a big problem in the plant..like a lot of peoples images are drinking and dope and thats what messes up the truck. That's why the auto workers are messing up in the United States..they get paid too much they're just a bunch of drunken dopers anyway.

A No. It's very possible. But I ain't seen very much of it..I mean nobody that I work with right now. I mean I never even smoked a joint with

anyone on that line. They all know I do. Nobodys ever come up to me and wow, I mean come on they know where I'm going when I go outside.

Q Ask Larry about (?).

A

Q Before your Mom got sick what kind of things did you do besides working in the plant. Recreations or...you travel a great deal.

A Travel.

Q Where would you like to travel to?

A Out of the States..I'd like to go to Switzerland. I'd like to go back. I mean I still got family over there. Aunts and cousins up the ass. I've never been out of the States. I cant think of any place I want to go now in the States. I've watched the sun come up on the East. I watched it go down in the West. I swam in both oceans. The Gulf. I cant think of anything else I want to do here.

Q What was the most special trip you've ever had?

A Probably, um..lets see..I don't know. Texas, I guess?

Q What..what did you do?

A That was my second time back 'cause I knew I was going back to stay. I liked it there a lot. 'Cause when I hitch hiked down there I stayed down there four or five months and then I came home for a couple weeks.

Getting shit together..making sure I knew what I was doing. And I couldn't wait to get back. I had my ticket before I left there to get back. I knew...I loved it there. Bahammas was exciting, right. I didn't even know we were going there. I just figured we were going to Miami and then Tampa. It was like Bahammas---ooo---out of the country, yeah I'd love to go.

Q And the traveling you've done around the country, which has been pretty extensive..were the people any different? Were they different from

people in the plant?

A Uh, no not basically. Everybody just...you just deal with daily things. Like I'm friendly, I mean I know it..every place I went..like when I went to Boston to be with my brother..I just didn't just sit there and wait for him to take me places..I didn't tag along..I went out on my own. If I see someone interesting...I usually dont go to bars, right. If I run into somebody on the street and they said hi to me, I say hi back and if they start talking, they start talking but if they dont..hey..I don't know you anyway. But, everybody in California has an attitude that they're so cool. Rich Murancollins (?) thinks that he owns the state. That's about the only state that I've ever ran into that...different. 'Cause they think they're so much better. Maybe 'cause they never know when they're going to fall in the ocean. They got to have their head up in the clouds now, 'cause it's going to go down. Basically though that's just me.

Q How much longer do you think you'll be in the plant?

A I don't know.

Q Are you worried about it or no?

A No, no I don't...not at all.

Q Will you save it?

A Well, yeah I have to.

Q How much do you make, how much do you save, how much do you spend?

A I usually spend whatever I want. Basically, well because I've been back to work since August...basically we've been going good. We love Visa and Mastercard's our best friend and she didn't know she was going to get sick and have to quit her job either, so I had a lot of bills and had to pay that. Plus when she first got sick, she didn't have insurance and the State didn't pick it up..so I had to pick up all the stuff. So, that costs a lot of money. Now, I just pay bills..I got a couple and my Mom's got a couple. I'll pay my monthly bills and then Renee' needs

something...she gets it. I mean it's nothing to go buy a.....she just called me up whining a couple weeks ago...and we went and spent something like \$80.00 on a pair of tennis shoes.

Q \$80.00 on a pair of tennis shoes.

A \$78.00 on high tops.

Q What's the name of them?

A I don't know. B.J.'s or something. Or I don't know.

Q And you got them for her?

A Of course I did. If I see somrthing that I want, I'll buy it. If I dont I dont. I'm not one for clothes, I mean I don't go clothes shopping, unless it's something I have to buy like for a wedding or a funeral...I mean if I have to go some place--I'll go buy something.

Q You're a sixty's dresser. You're a Rolling Stone and Beetles dresser.

A I'll probably die in my Levi's. I ain't one for getting dressed. I mean I never have. Clothes really don't mean all that much to me.

Q What is important?

A What is important.....My Mom, that's all. My Mom and my daughter. What they want..I try to get them what they want. As long as I have what I want, which ain't much--I'm okay. And I usually have what I want.

Q Do you think you'll hit the road again after you lose your job?

A No, if my Mom dies. If my Mom dies, I'm going back to Texas. Oh I am going back.

Q What part of Texas?

A Pasedena. It's about 17 miles from Huston. 17-20 give or take. I still have some very good friends down there...in fact I could probably still get my old job back.

Q What was that?

A Leasing agent in an apartment complex. That's where I helped my Mom learn how to do the books. I know how to do the books--that's all I did. If my Mom dies, that's it I'm gone. See she has in her mind that if she gets better..she wants to move to Florida..next year..this year--around June..July, she wants to move. Being if I'm still working at Fords--which I don't know, if I'm still working though and she wants to go..I gotta go..I'm gone. And when she does go, I'm back in Texas. There ain't nothin' here.

Q What do you like in Texas?

A Everything. I like the heat, I love the beach, people down there are friendly...they weren't friendly at first, it was like a Yankee--another Michigander.

Q A lot of folks from Michigan down there?

A Yeah. A lot of them came back though 'cause they couldn't take it..it it was like everybody was getting laid off. The people that I know are still down there... 'cause you just look for another job. Why come back here and have to look, right. You have to look where ever you go...so stay down there and stick it out. And they're still down there.

Q What kind of work do they do?

A He's married. He's in construction, she's a manager of Forest City or something like that. One of them is a manager of an apartment building--he does everything and anything. Just working people. It's better...I like the heat. It's like I'll wash cars to stay down here.

Q Is the standard of living expensive down there--about the same?

A Same, a little bit cheaper--maybe. They don't have Vernors, that was a whine. They didn't have Coors here, so we sent Coors. They didn't have Vernors here, so we sent Vernors down. I don't like Michigan. I mean I like it..I like the change of the season..so great I'll come back

every....four times a year to see it. But, I don't want to live here. Just like now--we're definately going to get a big snow here sooner...I mean spiders are out, they say they're confused. They think it's early hibernation or something. But there ain't no snow yet...but when it comes--it's going to come big time, I'm sure of it. I'm sure we'll have a killer storm.

Q You don't like the snow.

A No. We're going to the Bahamas on the twenty third of next month, so I can't wait. I have my whole day planned...I'm just going to lay in the sand. Swim and lay. Just get all the heat I can...'cause I know what it's going to be like. Maybe it's just all the shit thats been happening in Michigan, too. More tragic than good. But I'll do my job...stay there till they lay me off and then get me another job..do what I got to do.

Q You collect unemployment for like a year, right? You collect it?

A We will. I did. Right. Yeah, I got that big check.

Q What are you going to do the rest of the holiday?

A I'm not sure. Whatever. My Mom's pretty sick right now, so...I'm just going to stick around the apartment and paint my apartment and start moving my....try to organize that I guess.

Q Same complex as your Mom?

A Yeah, same building.

Q Exactly downtown Detroit?

A Right on East Jefferson.

Q So, you're really part of the rennaissance in Detroit.

A Four blocks from it.

Q So, what about the rennaissance center..do you like living there?

A Yeah, I do 'cause I come down here a lot and I go ice skating a lot at Hart Plaza.

Q So, you really take advantage of downtown.

A Oh yeah, yeah yeah yeah. That's why I haven't ice skated yet, 'cause there ain't no snow. It seems wierd to ice skate without the snow. But there's lots to do down here for a single person. I would never live with children or..no..uh-uh..no.

Q Why's that?

A 'Cause there ain't much to do for kids..I mean they can come out for the weekends..but during the week we're like.. to me being in a suburb or someplace you got parks...I mean you got stuff here too but downtown just ain't no place for a kid.

Q Weekend place, it's good.

A Right, there's things to do--come on down. Ya know, bring the kids. Skating or just roaming around Hart Plaza..I mean come on. There ain't nothing for kids to do. Where like me, a single person, there's a lot to do. A lot of bars. And friends that I go with--'cause I wont go by myself. But I like got friends like lets go check these places out..lets see what it's all about. The soup kitchen, there's a lot to do.

Q So, you like the rennaissance..the whole rennaissance..downtown development.

A Well, Colman basically sucks.

Q Why do you say that?

A He's an asshole. He's like...well being at the restaurant..I wait on a lot of people and it's like they have to cut down on a lot of things, right. Their expensive cars. He still has his little Limo and his body guard and his chauffer. He still does everything that people in the city can't do. His people that work for him can't do, but he still does it, anyway. He should be the first one to get rid of the big car and all that bullshit. But no. He's a lousy tipper.

Q Is he?

A Yeah. And he expected people to jump up and down..when he came in.

Well, we didn't. And then one day he came in--not to long ago...

Q Is the restaurant down in.....

A No, right down here on Jefferson and Rabard. He came in and it was he sat down at the counter. Well, I went back to have a cigarete, right..give me a minute. He ain't no big deal...I don't run for nobody. But I was coming around the corner and the dishwasher went "do you know who's sitting at the counter? And I went, "no". He said "the mayor". I said "fuck the mayor, I'm having a cigarete". Well, I looked up and he was sitting right there...and I said "I suppose you want coffee, sir. And it was like, yes I'd like some. But his body guard's a doll, the same one...big white boy...holy moley. I'm sure he has a couple, but this guy was gorgeous. But I ain't going to jump just 'cause you're the mayor..you wait just like everybody else. He might have done good things for the city..but the people mover, I think..is a laugh. He should've done what everybody else had to do..cut down some..but he hasn't as far as I know of so, i think he's just...I don't know.

Q I wont ask you what you think of Ronald Reagan. Because you said you didn't know who was president, before.

A No, I said I didn't know who'd be the president...60 or 70...I know he's the president now.

Q What do you think of the situation of the country?

A I think it's bad. Like I said I don't pay much attention..but I think we take a lot of bullshit. I think we should've just went in...and either kicked there ass or shot them. We shouldn't let as many things go on like he does. Wasn't there a saying out not too long ago..um..see..I don't know 'cause I don't pay that much attention. I just don't have time and the mind to do that. I think he's wrong..I think we should've just went in and done what we had to do and not take the shit that we take.

They think..they probably think we ain't shit. I just think we should've went in and kicked ass instead of taking the shit. So, they're going to kill our people anyway, right. Say 6 out of 10 times somebody's going to get hurt anyway..so if they are going to do it and threaten us..threaten us and do it..do what we got to do.

Q You're saying that you're not going to take shit from no one. The A&W guy, you don't think the country should take?

A Hey, wait..it's nothing like that. I think we get walked on too much. And that's why everybody keeps coming. I don't know. I think that if we stood up for what America was like in the 60's or 50's-60's...we wouldn't be in the shape we are now. We wouldn't have all this killer shit and people taking our people and threatening us and we're going to do this and that..we're going to kill 'em. Fuck you, we're going to blow your heads off...and then we'll talk.

Q You have a definate justification for being angry at the United States, for what the United States might of done to them over the last hundred years.

A No, especially..no, no. I don't know, no I don't think so, because I think we've gotten the worst of the shit. I mean we're the ones that had to go through the wars and the United States has backed this country and this person and got us involved in all kind of bullshit. It's like, why do that..that's not our problem..take care of whats going on here.

Q Trying to think of an nice exciting ending question..but I think you've covered a fantastic amount of stuff..ah..Are you going to tell people in Texas about what working in the plant was like? Or are you going to tell people in Texas..why...those auto workers get paid too much? \$13.00 an hour, you get Blue Cross Blue Shield, you didn't have to go to school, you bought a car at a discount, you made 30 thousand dollars last year. That's why all the Japenese people are coming over here...you American workers are to greddy..what would you say?

A Fuck you, we deserve it. We're doing work with grease putting up these trucks or cars or..and..uh..no..we deserve it. It's our jobs--ain't their jobs--our jobs. Go back and make your \$2.00 an hour.

Q When your daughter grows up and she's 30....how old are you?

A 32.

Q 32, what do you want her to say about her mom?

A She ain't bad. I don't know. My mom's alright...I got a good mom. That's all I want her to say..I got a good mom. That's a lot of fun. That's all. So far I ain't gave her no reason to say anything bad. Who knows..she might say that I'm a real bitch. That's what I want her to say..my mom's alright.

Q Kind of person that wants Larry Williams to remember you.

A Just me. Larry, I think me and Larry even if I get laid off..we're still going to see each other. I found a friend. Why don't you just buy the rounds, burn a couple joints or drink a beer...I'll buy the B&J just come on down.

Q Would you still work at the plant if you could?

A Sure.

Q You'd keep working at the plant'cause it's a good job..but if you lost it you'd go back to Texas?

A Yeah, as long as I have a time card man I'm there.

Q You're not going to worry about it if you lose it?

A No, I sure ain't. And the people that I've grown to know--I wouldn't say they are my friends yet. I got friends from when I worked here the first time that I still see. And they're not even back to work. But I am.

Q And you keep in touch. That's pretty unique..that doesn't happen too much in the plant anymore.

At least I know when I worked on afternoons, the dayshift folks would raise their family and stuff that takes over from their friendships.

A No, the ones I know I know their families too. No biggy, stop by if you're downtown. If I'm out their way..I'm coming by. I'll give you a call see what you're doing. Bring over a six pack, watch videos or a movie or something. The ones that I think that are going to be my friends or that I consider pretty cool. I definately try to keep in touch.

Q What kind of movies do you like?

A Scary, bloody, gory. I ain't into like turbo man.

Q What's you're favorite movie?

A I don't know. I like Freddy. I don't have a favorite..like I don't have a favorite son. My favorite color's brown. The scarier the better though. I like to....ooo....I like them scary. I feel I can get them guys..they do it to me so I hope I do it to them..put them out of the mood that they're in like if things aren't right or their wives are really being a bitch, it's like I come beboping in all smiles. And it's like I don't want to here this shit for ten hours...lets just like make faces at each other. One day I'm going to come in here with all my teeth and make some faces and really get you guys going. It's like you wouldn't do that..I said watch. I might, you never know. Me, I try to be in a friendlier mood.

Q Do you think they make up a lot of stories?

A No, maybe two out of ten. I do belive that a lot of..yeah yeah 'cause it's like I can kind of remember what it's like to be in a family..husband and kids and shit. I can't deal with the old lady wanting this and that and I got to come in here and deal with.....it's like well, now you have to deal with me too. It's different.

Q What kind of work did your mom do?

A She managed a place called....in cobo hall she was like a banquet type manager. She was a waitress and then she went into management. That's

where she ended up. She ran Masonic Temple for a long time. Everything was in her name for years.

Q What's the name of the place?

A Sentinal Center (?). Right here on Jefferson. And the restaurant was called Co-thirty lines (?). The police cant have liquor licence so it was all my moms. And I was like the person who hired, fired, payed..ya know, I done things. And then she just ended up like she didn't want to work that hard no more...so she just went back to being a waitress for about 4 or 5 years ago. Up until she got sick.

Q So, she's a downtown person too.

A Oh yes. She was born and raised in Detroit.

Q And did your grandmother...were you raised by your grandmother or grandfather or both?

A My grandmother. Grandma.

Q She worked at raising the kids or did she work outside the home?

A Oh, no just raiseing kids. And that's all my grandma did. 'Cause my Mom had her hands full...she had five of us..come on. It's like my Grandma took me and one of my brothers for a while and I just stayed. I bounced back and forth. I went to school in Lincoln Park and I was raised by....

Q You experienced both suburb and city.

A She didn't want me to go to school downtown on the east side so she sent me to my grandmothers for the school year and then I went back home. The only time she left Michigan was when she had me and that's when she moved to California. She was out there for a while and then in a year and a half she had me and then came home. I guess it was too much with a baby. That's the only time my mom ever left Michigan. Except for travels. We go to Florida every year. That was it. She just worked work work, my mom would work. It was a bitch running Cobo

hall there's a lot of banquet things there. We might not see her for days. She'd come home just enough to clean, take a shower and go right back. She was tough, she worked hard to get us everything we needed. And then some. And that's like with Renee' hey--you want a pair of tennis shoes that cost \$70.00, I'll buy them, I can do that. I might not be able to do that in a couple of months. It might be--you take a pair of payless or you don't get any. So, while I can do that, I'm doing it.

Q What was the fondest Christmas you can remember?

A I always had a great Christmas. But the fondest one I remember or the best I remember was in '71. That's when my whole family actually got together...the one and only time. I got 3 brothers and one sister and me. We're talking the parents, the grandparents, our kids, all the kids kids, right. That's the only time we've all been together. That was in '71 and we had a blast. And we haven't been together since. Lincoln Park. Got together at grandma's. And that's the only time--we've never been together since and I don't ever see us being together again. That was the best for me.

Q You didn't mention your sister, what does your sister do?

A She's a waitress.

Q Waitress.

A My sister..I'm sisterless, in my book. I don't like my sister. I haven't liked her in a while.

Q Is she in the area?

A Oh yeah. I seen her yesterday and I almost punched her in the face. She's self-centered and greedy. I think she thought my Mom was dying. When my Mom got sick, we didn't expect her to live very long...she just took advantage of the fact that my Mom was going to die, I think. She charged, charged, charged everything. And my Mom lived. And now she don't do anything. She cant wait till my Mom dies 'cause she wants my

Moms ring. That's the main thing. That's the only thing she talks about.
So, I don't talk to her. Just stay away from me. So, I don't have a
sister, really. I mean I have one...but.....