

Interview with Gail Pease

for HUM 2504: Introduction to American Studies, Dr. Emily Satterwhite, Fall 2011

Occupation: Housekeeper, Johnson Hall, Virginia Tech

Time and Place: October 30, 2008, 12:30 p.m.-1:45p.m., Lane Hall, Blacksburg, Virginia

Interviewer: Vivian Chen, Freshman International Studies major from Chantilly, Virginia
Kaitlyn Cotter, Junior Communications major from Chantilly, Virginia

GP=Gail Pease

VC=Vivian Chen

KC= Kaitlyn Cotter

VC: The other maintenance workers aren't as friendly

GP: Really?

VC: Yeah, I think so, I guess if I say 'good morning' they say 'good morning' as well but... yeah, okay.

KC: Okay, so these are our formal required opening questions, first of all can you please tell us your name and if you don't mind, your age?

GP: [Laughs] Gail Marie Pease and I'm 54

KC: Thank you

VC: Will you please tell me your job title and the name of organizations you've worked for and how long you've been working there?

GP: Well, I Work for Virginia Tech, and I am a senior lead worker

VC: Oh okay right you told me that once you said like oh I help out other workers if they need help and you train

GP: Yeah, I train uh, some of the new people, and if there's openings like say we don't have enough help then ill go to another buildin' then help them clean it or whatever. Fill in as needed.

VC: Uh hm okay

KC: What's your family background like, where did you grow up?

GP: I grew up in Salisbury, New Hampshire, and after I got married I moved to Bristol, New Hampshire and we've moved to Florider, West Virginia to Virginia back to West Virginia [laughs]

VC: What's the reasoning for the traveling?

GP: Well my parents moved to Florida, and we went down to visit, it was kinda nice and we thought well we were in our 20s, you know, decided we'd move down there and then my husband kinda got lonely for the snow [laughs] so we went back to New Hampshire, then my parents moved to Virginia and they're in their 80s, well they were in there 70s then and I'd like to spend as much time with them as we could, you know before anything happened which I'm glad we did, because my father died about... 4 years ago, so, and my mother is still here and so were still here and well probably stay afterwards too so. Its nice down here.

VC: Yeah I like it its like in the middle

GP: The winters are great

VC: Yeah Florida is too hot, New Hampshire for me at least is a little too cold, Virginia is moderate.

GP: Yeah

VC: While you were like going back and forth, was it hard for you to find a job in each state?

GP: Umm, well when we lived in New Hampshire we both worked at a factory and we were there 25 years, so when we moved to Florida I didn't get a job cuz we were only down there like 4 months. You know, he got to missing things, so we moved back to New Hampshire we both got jobs back where we were, so I mean it wasn't hard at all for us. I mean, he called us and they said sure come back so we did. It was quite easy. And when we moved down here we both started working at Virginia tech and we been here since. It's been 11 years. So actually just had them 2 jobs.

VC: Uh the factory and... What kind of factory was it?

GP: It was an automotive, bearings and seals and parts like for the motors and stuff like that. He was a supervisor and I was a housekeeper.

VC: Oh okay

GP: Which is what I am now, but I did do other jobs, quality control and um, worked as a press operator and just different odd jobs you know, and mostly housekeeping though.

VC: Okay, that's interesting

GP: Got a lot of experience housekeeping [laughs]

KC: How did you first get into the housekeeping?

VC: Or actually factory cuz when you went to work you it was more housekeeping right?

GP: When I started at the factory I went there as a uh, it was called K Street and what we did was we sprayed this solvent, like, almost like a cement type stuff that like sealed the parts together. So, um I started out there then an opening had come up for housekeeping so I applied for that. And been there since.

VC: Okay did you require special skills for housekeeping, like I don't know like stamina?

GP: At that time it was just basically cleaning offices so I mean not really, they train you so I mean anybody could start out in housekeeping and then get trained. It's really not that hard, lot a chemicals though, lot of different chemicals and if you're allergic to them it can make it hard for you but so far I've been lucky, so.

KC: Okay. So what's a typical day like here for you?

GP: Well... like today for instance, I come up here and I'd start cleaning the bathrooms, we always clean the first floor first. And I'd start, you know doing bathrooms, well today I did showers. So, I've been doing showers all morning along with the bathrooms. And I'm so glad I got one left to do, [laughs]

VC: Which one is that one?

GP: On second floor

VC: Here at Johnson?

GP: Yeah, yeah. But a typical day is, you just do one thing after another, you know, I mean I don't think about what I have to do I just automatically, probably cuz I've done it for so many years, I just automatically do whatever I see needs to be done

VC: Right

GP: I've had some buildings where, hmm, a typical day was not so great [laughs]

VC: Like which buildings? Not Johnson right?

GP: No, no, I won't name the other building, but the minute I walked in, in the morning, your feet would stick to the floor

VC: Oh goodness

KC: Oh gosh

GP: You know and not being a drinker that was like ugh, and like the kitchen would be a mess cuz they had a party, and then you like, go by the public bathroom and there might be vomit in the sink or, [whispers] is that okay to say this stuff [laughs]

VC: Yeah, yeah sure you can be honest

GP: You know, the toilet would be... bad, that would be a typical day, I'm so happy to be here

VC: That's a typical day?

GP: Out there it would have been, where I was

VC: Okay, Was that before you were a senior manager?

GP: Yes, yeah this, that was when I was just a housekeeper so, but there isn't much difference between what I am now and housekeepin' I uh, just you know the title was a little bit different but I'm still doing housekeeping. So it's just like they add a little bit more to me

KC: Is there new benefits that came with the title?

GP: Yeah a little bit more in the pay, not a whole lot more, [laughs], just a little, but I guess uh eventually, hopefully I'll be like a supervisor so this is kinda like training for us. It's something new they started this year so, you know there was 5 of us that were lucky enough to be chosen and hopefully or 1 of them was already supervisor now so you know hopefully this is leading up to our training to being a supervisor, which'll be good. Then we really get the pay. [laughs]

VC: Seems like your every day work, like takes a lot of labor and stuff, like a lot of physical work

GP: Yeah it takes all day

VC: Is it tiring?

GP: It can be, like especially if your not feelin' good. You know, there's, if you were like allergic to dust or something that can be like make it really hard, but if you, the way I found, if you keep the building up, then it's not hard on you, you know it's when people, like they might walk onto into a hallway and say it looks pretty good I'm not gonna bother sweepin' it today, well,' it really is dirty and by lettin' it go, the next day or the next day its gonna be a lot more for them to do you know in the end so if you do it everyday it doesn't build up on you.

VC: That goes for a lot of stuff, like as students with homework I mean it'll build up

GP: Yeah its kinda like laundry, you know

[laughter]

GP: If you keep putting it off and putting it off pretty soon you have 4 or 5 loads, if you did it when you had one load it it's a lot easier on ya, and less time consuming. But a lot of new people don't realize that they should form a system to get everything the same, you know, everyday if they can and then if they can, they'll get faster as they go along, then they can put in a few extra things but they don't see it that way.

VC: the way you put it, it sounds kinda like it's like a systematic thing you think, everyday?

GP: I think so, I'll do the same things everyday, and then, like, I'll get a little bit faster, I'll be able to add other things that I cant get, you know, all the time. Like yesterday, for instance, I got done with the bathrooms, I had a little bit of extra time, in fact I wasn't even done with the bathrooms but I put 'em in in-between cuz I could get 'em done, I was able to get like the corners, you know in the hallways and stuff. I only managed one floor, but maybe tomorrow I'll be able to get the other floor, but you know addin' a little bit each time and pretty soon the building, I think, is gonna be really clean because I think some people they don't bother

KC: Does the routine bother you at all? Would you like to have different tasks involved?

GP: I do the same things, but I change it around so that I'm not, you know, like I might, we always have to start on the first floor because that's where everybody comes in, tomorrow I might go to the second floor tomorrow or yesterday or something I might've gone up to third first, I'll change it around so that I'm not like minute by minute doing the same thing I mean were allowed to do that, we can, the only thing we have to do is first floor first but other than that we can change anything around that we want as long as it's clean by the end of the day.

VC: So you have to do, I'm kinda confused, you say you could do the second floor the second day if you didn't have time or something?

GP: No, what I mean is like, everyday we have to clean all the bathrooms, but I might usually go do the first floor then go up and do the third and then the second, well one day. Then next day I might do the first floor and then the second floor then the third to switch it around

VC: Oh to switch it around, and by the end of the day it's all floors, but it's a pretty flexible schedule, but you told me lunch schedule is a little different?

GP: Well we have break time from 10 to 10:15 and we have lunch from 12 to 1 and then another break from 3 to 3:15, that's when people if you wanna make phone calls you do it on them times if you wanna go have a cigarette you do it on them time, like if I want talk to you, I can go find you or whatever in that 15 minutes or the hour lunch break. You know, but a lotta, you know again, people don't really go by the rules sometimes but you can't control all of them and somebody would have to watch them all the time, and it's not me. Not my job yet. [laughs]

VC: Um is there, are there any, okay we talked about some problems, the vomit and stuff like that it's kinda dirty, do you still have to clean those up?

GP: We do, we have training for that, we have what they call body spill kits and we keep one on our buggies in case we should run into that, it's got the sand and it's got the gloves and the mask and the apron and the booties and disinfectant and stuff like that. We use that, like, the sand, it's not really sand but it kinda looks like sand, we would put that on the vomit to dry it up so we can scoop it up, it's got a little scoop, it's all in you know a sealed bag and it's on the cart in case we use it, once it's open we have to turn it in and get a new kit, whether or not anything else was used in it we have to turn it in and get a new one because by opening it it's not um...

VC: Clean anymore I guess?

GP: Well, they need to keep track on you know, the amount of body spills and things like that, the equipment that's used that way they can say well she used this out if it and this and this and this and well this hasn't been used and stuff like. We don't really have anything to do with that cuz we turn it in and another groups tends to that

VC: Okay

KC: How do you feel when you see those situations? Like the students being disrespectful, does that affect you?

GP: If they're disrespectful to me or to somebody?

KC: Just in general I guess, like does their attitude and how they interact with you, does that affect your work?

GP: So far I've been really lucky [laughs] I haven't really had that problem too much um, I'm trying to think, well I might've and I've been here almost 11 years so I'm sure I've come across it once or twice it's hard to remember back then, but everyone's been really great, you know you girls are all great and stuff. Before I came down to Johnson I was in upper quad so that was all military, and they were pretty good you know so, then before that I was out in oak lane and... [pause]

[laughter]

KC: Your expression, is there any more you wanna say about that?

GP: Well that was uh, I had a boys building and a girls building, and you run into... situations. Needless to say their buildings are a little bit wilder. You kinda seem like, sometimes that remind you Animal House, the show, they' what fraternities and sororities out there so it's a little different.

VC: I think its funny how people like don't think of maintenance workers they have all these experiences that are not just part of they're every day routine but life going on around them I think that's kinda funny and interesting.

GP: Well yeah it is interesting out there. But the girls that I had out there they were great I used to make cakes, bake cakes and they would order them for rush and everything and I would make their rush cakes. You know I just kinda bonded a lot with the girls not like, personally outside of tech or anything, but like you girls, day to day, you know, I would see them and stuff and it, it was nice and the boys they were pretty good they were just boys. There's a big difference sometimes.

VC: Okay sorry this is really a tangent but you bake? What do you like to bake?

GP: I would bake cakes mostly like you know, like uh character cakes like you know superman, and Cinderella all that, I've done wedding cakes before. I probably have about 400 cake pans.

KC: Where did you, or how did you get started with that?

GP: Making 'em for the kids and the grandchildren

VC: Really, aw I wish I had...

GP: I'd see one pan and I'd want that and id buy it then pretty soon I had 50 then a couple 100 now I got 400.

VC: That sounds like my mom, my mom likes to go to homes goods cuz its cheaper there, she likes to buy pans and baking equipment and I love it too

GP: Do ya?

VC: Yeah I love um, I don't like baking cakes as much, I like baking cookies, single things basically yeah

GP: I like doing the character cakes

VC: Are you good at decorating?

GP: I, uh I do think so. I have like, this album that I'd keep pictures in of the cakes that I've done you know some day if you guys'd like to see 'em

VC: Oh my gosh that so cool

GP: Yeah there's actually this book, it's like a 9x 11 book and its maybe like that thick and its got cake pans in it and I've have almost all of them. It was like one of those collection things. You know from EBay, you just you know I could like buy them left and right from EBay

VC: Is it a hobby basically for you or..?

GP: It was, I used to have a lot of relatives, you know when I was up north that would order them and want me to do cakes cuz you got grandchildren, I got 12 grandchildren so we were doing, I was doing quite a few. But I like decorating them and stuff, I'm not really crazy about decorating like flat, plain sheet cakes, they're too flat but I've done some of them too.

VC: Speaking of your grandchildren, how many children do you have?

GP: I have 3, but like one daughter the one that lives down here, she's got 6 kids, she didn't have 6. She married a guy, my daughter had 2, then he had 2, then they had a baby, then they had another one. So they've got 6 now, kinda like a brady bunch. And then I've got a son and his

girlfriend up north, 2 are hers. Then when they got together they have 1 so um, and my daughter married a guy that had to kids and then she also had one so we gotta lot.

VC: Are your children like your children, are they like...

GP: Ours? Yeah they're ours. [laughs] This is the only marriage, so that's a good thing. Been married 35 years, been together 38, so, we're good friends. He's quite understanding when I said I had to leave at 12:30 he's like okay, but its been good.

VC: What other hobbies do you have by the way, other than like baking?

GP: Well, I can draw, I can draw pretty good. Um, I like taking a lot of pictures, I love taking pictures. Uh I don't know, I like horseback riding and horses and stuff like that, we have a little farm so we raise baby calves. Yeah, feed them with the bottle and stuff. We bought 11 at an auction one time, along the fence line we had 11 bottles on it but they're only day old ones right off their mothers and stuff. So, we enjoy that we've got 2 boxers, dogs, they're funny. [laughs] Uh... I don't know. Traveling. I love to travel, in the United States, I don't wanna go out over the ocean and stuff.

VC: Why not?

GP: Well, I love flyin' but I don't like the thought of it going down in the ocean

VC: Oh okay

GP: There's sharks and stuff in there and other than that I'd be fine

VC: Have you been out of the country?

GP: No, no I haven't been out of the country

VC: Just paranoid I guess?

GP: Well probably, I wouldn't really care to go on a cruise. I just think I'd rather fly then go on a boat, I've been on boats, just the thought of a boat and sharks, I watch too many movies, [laughs] about that you know like Titanic and stuff, well they're weren't really many sharks but... you're in the water and you have no place to go, well I mean when you're in the air you down have any place to go but down either but you know when you hit you're gonna be dead, so I don't want fish nibbling at me [laughs] well would you?

VC: Well no but I love traveling so much

KC: I do too

VC: I love airplane fright so much, they say like the chances of getting in a car crash are more than getting in a plane crash but you know if you're in a car crash at least you'll survive if you're in a plane crash you're pretty much dead.

GP: Yeah you're closer to the ground and stuff, I don't know, but it's so pretty up there

KC: Yeah its my favorite when your up there and look down and see the baseball diamond and all the houses I love that

GP: Yeah I like it when you're up above the cloud, we were up there one time and all of a sudden this other plane came up out of the clouds and it was like right on the other side of us we were like woah and it was gonna miss us

VC: I know but the fact that its right there, its like have I been up here too long?

GP: And we saw a rainbow up there that was pretty, I thought that was really cool

VC: Yeah, yeah good for you, have you been in when its like raining or whatever?

GP: Uh uh

VC: Okay that's good I've been on it when it was like shaking and I was like get me down!

GP: I don't know if I'd like that. I would still like flying more than a boat, like a cruise. I don't know. I just, and I'm a pretty good swimmer but hm, I don't think I could hold out that long

VC: Hmm that was such a tangent but that was interesting, I wanna go traveling now, next week you're going down, or up to New Hampshire

GP: Yeah we call it up, for 2 weeks its gonna, it's be great, yeah, I'll get to see my other 2 kids, we see 'em bout once a year, for bout a week.

VC: Is that once a year, like next week?

GP: This'll be the first time this year, yeah

VC: Okay yeah, but you say once year?

GP: Usually we go up in July

VC: Oh okay

GP: But we didn't go up this July, I think, I think I was trying tt encourage them to come down, its to easy for us to keep going up there you know its bout time they come down. They haven't been down for like 4 years so kinda give 'em a boost. But then my husband called an old friend up there, he had made a deal bout 20 years ago, he said like 20 years ago, my husband got picked for a moose hunt and you can only apply every 3 years if you get chosen, but you put your name in every year but it doesn't mean you're gonna get picked, so my husband got picked one year and he took this friend with him and they got a moose and everything alright, so that's fine. So that guy kept putting in for the last 20 years and never got chosen, my husband has too but he never got chosen either, well his friend got chosen this year, so his friend called and said I wanna keep my end of the bargain up, he says I got picked for the moose hunt do you wanna be my sub-permitee. And my husband said yeah you know, cuz its really hard to get and we thought that was really great. You know, I mean he didn't have to call him, cuz I mean after 20 years my husband probably would've forgot, but the guy wanted to be honest, and he kept his work and he could've asked his son whatever you know. So I thought that was pretty good and my husband got excited and were going up. So next year I'll have to wait for the kids to come down. They're all excited and my daughter is, she can't wait. So. That's good.

VC: The fact that you're taking a leave of like the next few weeks, how do you do that, like is there a process?

GP: I just put in, sign a paper, put in for it then it gets approved. They can disapprove it they don't very often unless were really, really short of help or if there is something major goin' on.

VC: Right

GP: Like move in or move out, they like everyone to be here. But I didn't have a problem. I mean my boss approved it and everything so what they'll do is they'll get someone to cover the building for me so that'll be good.

KC: How is your relationship with your boss?

GP: Its...okay. [laughs] Um, I think it was a little strained to begin with because this is new for all supervisors to get a lead person and, I think being the only male supervisor, maybe he felt a little intimidated you know, having me under him. So to speak, you know, because he probably didn't know what my job is. You now what I mean he's probably real leery you know but I'm only here to help him

VC: That's interesting cuz how instead of being the opposite, because usually in class we like to discuss like you know how sex affects like workplace usually it's the woman that feels intimidated, but you're saying the other supervisors are women?

GP: Yeah all of them and you know from what I've been able to tell is they have a good working relationship with their lead workers and um I think in the beginning, mine was more strained because I don't know if maybe he thought I was gonna replace him or, you know I'm only here to make his job easier you know. Take some of the load off him but I don't think I sank in you

know so I think it was strained in the beginning. Now it's, it's getting better. I mean he had the word things differently you know, to me, cuz I was never in this position before either, so, this was new to me and I wanna learn the stuff but it was uncomfortable in the beginning but now it seems to be okay. I think he's finally realized, hey I'm here to help him out make it easier for him, if he's busy he can send me to do other things, so maybe by the end of the year it'll be real comfortable I don't know. Hopefully.

VC: How long has this, how long has he been your employer? He's your employer right?

GP: He is my supervisor, Tech is my employer

VC: Okay so is it you then your supervisor then the guy then the guy is employed by VTech? Is that how it goes? The hierarchy?

GP: I'm, well, we have housekeepers we have lead people, which is me, then my supervisor then we have a manager then we have a director of housing and then after that would come Tim Gift then up above, so there's probably at least 6 people above me then I guess it would be... well I know... whoever the president is, it would go up the line all the way to him, I would say

VC: Right.

GP: Probably at least 6, 7 people above me.

VC: Okay so it's not as simple as I thought it was.

GP: No they each have to answer to each other, you know if I do something wrong he has to answer to his manager who has to go to the director and then if its real bad it goes up above that and then everyone starts looking into it so it can be a long process, I'll try not to get in trouble so, no problems!

VC: Okay, so, I don't know, Kaitlyn do you have anything?

KC: Um well, I guess kinda shifting gears just a little bit, what advice would you have for someone who is considering your line of work?

GP: A housekeeper?

KC: Uh huh

GP: I'd say go for it, I mean if you can advance in life even a little bit you might as well go for it, you know you only get one chance you know and if the position is open why not, what are they gonna do, the most they can do is say no, but if they say yes well hey all the better, well id say try for it

VC: What was your form of education like?

GP: Well I went to grade school and stuff and graduated and took a couple like home study courses, one of them was... (let me turn this up just a hair [her radio, required for housekeepers to carry at all times]... business management, and lets see computer basics and wildlife and conservation. I wanted to be a conservation warden. Never did though, never did. I probably would've but, I was married and I just couldn't do that to my husband you know because he really loves the outdoors, it should be him, you know doing it and I'm like you know I'm not gonna do it, you know you kinda get that way I think so I didn't bother

VC: Do you feel like you have to subordinate your goals for your husband?

GP: No well but I didn't wanna be a fishing game warden where he was more into the outdoors stuff. You know it would kinda be like, doing something he probably really wanted to do you know like it really wasn't that important to me. I took engineering. That would surprise you right. But it was mechanical engineering, it was like drafting and stuff. I enjoyed that um. I was in, I was working as a housekeeper at the automotive factory and stuff and I was raising 3 kids you know married and everything and I wanted to do like a home study course and that was fine, I was doing really good at it and I think I would've been really good at it and then they changed

from drafting tables to cads and I thought ah another 4 years, you know I don't wanna do this for another 4 years, because you know it was hard to do it, you know, I worked 5 at night til 1 o'clock in the morning so it was getting hard to you know do it. So I just stopped doing it because the factory that I was working for would pay for it, but you had to work for them doing it after, and I thought you know I cant go another 4 years like this cuz it was really hard you know trying to raise the kids, you know getting them up for school in the morning and everything else, I'm like I cant do it. If I would've been single, it wouldn't have been a problem.

VC: What age did you get married, I'm sorry?

GP: I was 19 and back then back then that was considered old, and back then a lot of people hadn't gone together, like we went together for 3 years. A lot of people known each other less than a year and they'd get married and they're all divorced practically now. Our minister that married us was like wow 3 years you've been together. I had to see what he was like when he got mad, so it took that long for him to get really mad, [laughs] I gotta see what he's like when he gets mad. I gotta see what he's like before we get married. , Well you know then I had to make him mad, just so I could see what he was like when he was mad, well you like to know. I wanted to know. I mean if he was abusive it wouldn't have lasted. I don't care how much I loved him, you know so, I didn't want to get into something I was gonna regret. So it was like causing an argument just so I can see what he was like when he was mad, and he wasn't mad, he just hollered and stuff, so I was like well, I can put up with that, now we don't even holler or anything now we just don't talk for a little bit and it smoothes itself out and things are great. 35 years later, well 38 actually. That's a little bit of advice don't pick at the small things you know its not worth it you can get over 'em

VC: Yeah its like when we were little we used to, but come one there's more things to think about

GP: Right, I mean if you really wanna make it last, you know, I've got 2 sisters one was married 5 times and the other one was married 3. Huh? its like you guys, how do you do it, I said, I don't pick at the small things, you know, things that aren't that important, you know, they blew it up and everything and it didn't last. You, you cant do that. You gotta work it out and stuff.

VC: That's my quote of the day, 'don't pick at the small things.'

GP: And like I got 2 daughters, like when they would go with somebody, I says my only advice to you girls, and yours too, when you go with a guy, I don't there's gonna be guys watching this too, when you go with a guy, how he is right now is how he's gonna be 10, 15 years from now, if you don't like it now you're not gonna like it then. Because they don't change too much, they can say they will, they don't. You gotta like 'em the way they are

VC: That's so true, my dad was like oh ill give up smoking for you honey, blah blah blah, my dad has not quit smoking

GP: Its hard, its hard to change because they're in a, well, they're set in their ways the same way you are, and id say it too my son too, I'm like if you don't like what she's doing now, in 10 years it's gonna be the same. You're young now you got time enough to find someone else. That's the way I feel, you know, don't get stuck in something you're gonna regret, you know, especially after you have kids, that makes it really hard, but we were lucky so, [laughs] anyways, that was my advice for today

KC: Well, speaking of 5 to 10 years where to you see yourself?

GP: I'm hoping a supervisor, hopefully here. So well see how it goes

VC: So you're 58 now?

GP: I'm 54

VC: Right so...

GP: I, I could still be here when I retire

VC: Really? What age do you think you would retire by?

GP: Ummm, probably I'll still be here when I'm 65, I think, if everything goes okay, as long as I conduct myself the way they want me to then I'll be fine, I don't really worry too much about it

VC: Do you enjoy working here?

GP: I, I do. Uh, it's like any other job, no matter where you go you're gonna have days when you wish you weren't

VC: Exactly it doesn't matter where..

GP: We have them here too, I mean, but most generally it helps when you get along with your coworkers, because it makes a big difference. If you don't like coming in everyday your not gonna last. You're gonna hate it here you know. I try to enjoy myself coming in everyday that way when I get up in the morning I don't, I'm not going 'uhh I don't wanna go it' you know. It's like go in get it over with get the day done with, I don't, you know cause problems and I don't create 'em so everyday's been pretty good [laughs]

VC: Just like me in school, like I hate this class but if I have a friend there then

KC: Something to look forward to

VC: Yeah I think that's everybody no matter what you're doing you always need something to look forward too

GP: I think so...

[radio]

VC: It's okay. Do you have time?

GP: It's fine, yeah.

KC: Cause it's 1:15 now.

GP: I got time for whenever you guys are done.

VC: Oh no. When is the latest you can be here?

GP: My work is...as long as my work is done, I'm fine.

VC: Right. Do you have to work over time if, if ...?

GP: No, they don't allow overtime, um. On uh, move in and move out sometimes we'll work Saturdays. Unless they have a flood in one of the buildins' or, you know, something major, they might ask us to stay over and they will pay overtime then.

VC: Okay.

KC: What are your daily hours?

GP: We start at 7:30 in the morning until 4:30. They, we don't get paid from 12 to. That's an hour that is our time. So, I mean, it's an eight hour day... It hasn't been too bad.

VC: Okay. [Pause] I guess if you had been given a chance to do it, um, over, would you have chosen a different path? I know you were going with that fisherman...fishing thing but...

GP: The fishing thing?

VC: Yeah, you wanted to be a fish hoarder or whatever. What is it?

GP: A what?

VC: What was it?

KC: Fishing warden or...?

GP: Oh, a fishing game hoarding?

VC: Yeah what is it?

KC: What does that mean?

GP: It means... Well it's kind of like a uh...almost like a police person that goes out into the woods or on boats to see if people have their fishing license or to make sure they are not killing game out of season and stuff like that. Basically, you know, like going out watching out for forest fires and stuff like that.

VC: Is it because you're a nature person?

GP: I love it outside. I do. And I love animals and...

VC: Especially the cows that you bought at the auction.

GP: Yeah, yeah. [Laughs]

VC: But, like, if you could do it all over, would you pick another path, a job path, if you didn't get married or...?

GP: Well, you know the funny thing [Pause]. I'm not crazy... I'm not really crazy about housekeeping. Everyone grows up they hate housekeeping. You know, almost every child does. I never wanted to clean; that's what I ended up doing [laughs], you know. Being a, you know, a housekeeper for the factory and for here and stuff. If I had to do it over again, I probably would have stayed with the drafting. I probably... You know? Because back then I was like nineteen, you know, twenty years old and... [Pause] You know what? I kind of like the cads now, going from the drafting board to the cads which aren't computers. But at that time, I think I was probably more afraid to do that because it was you know, I just got used to doing the drafting on the drafting boards and then it turned on over to computers and I think that scared me a little bit. Now, I think it's interesting. Now I probably, I probably would have gone through with it had I known, you know, but I'm doing what I'm doing [shrugs]. I've had a lot of experience so this is probably where I should be.

VC: In terms of, like, maybe, like, white collared jobs, did you ever want to me, like, or aspire to be like a doctor?

GP: Na uh.

VC: Never.

GP: Na uh.

VC: Never thought about it?

GP: No. Never really wanted to because I think I always thought well, what if I made a mistake? You know, with somebody? I don't think I could handle that, you know.

KC: Uh huh.

VC: Yeah.

GP: That's a lot of responsibility, you know, if you are treating someone else's life and I'm like no...I'm too self-conscious and stuff. I think that probably [pause] would have made me nervous. I don't think I could have done that. And I don't, I don't know. The higher job you have, the more stressful it is. And I don't really want to be stressful. Some people can handle it, some people like it.

VC: So I guess you're the type of person who is like, um, whatever it takes to get the money I want it and then I just want to enjoy life. Is that how it is or...?

GP: Well, housekeeping is not a very profitable job [Chuckles]. I mean, it doesn't pay a whole lot. Um. Fortunately, you know, my husband also worked, and we both worked at the same place, you know, so we were able to take breaks together and everything else. He works here. Um. So we got to see each other, during, you know, lunch and stuff like that. It hasn't been bad. It's kind of like being at home almost, but you don't see him constantly but you see him every now and then, you know? He could be outside working on the car. We could be at work, and he

would be in another department and then we'll see each other for lunch. It really hasn't been that bad. And the thing about housekeeping, it's kinda, um, self-satisfying because when it's clean you look at it and you go: "That looks really good!" You know? Especially, like, during the summer when we are doing floors. We are stripping floors, like these hallways, and you get all that dirt and grime and all that stuff off and you don't notice it during the year, alright. We wash the floors, but they are still not, um, really really really clean because the finish is building up, okay. But then someone would strip it off and then you put on that first fresh coat, it sinks in a little bit. Put on the second one: it's shinier. You put on the third one, it's really shiny. Then you, you like, buff it, right? Well, it's kind of like, uh, kind of like melting the finish to make a nice, you know, clear sheen. So you look down and oh it's so shiny. It's like wow is that pretty. That's when you get your satisfaction. You know? When things look really clean. Or when you have people comment that it's really clean like "Wow, this is clean". That's where you get your satisfaction. It doesn't have to be a high-paying job. I don't think [Laughs]. I mean...you know?

VC: Yeah, little things like that make me happy. Like if I clean my room. What about you?

KC: A little bit.

VC: Yeah, still satisfying.

GP: It's kind of little dirty dishes. Once you get them done, you're like: "Yeah I'm glad that's done."

KC: You feel so much better.

GP: Yeah, [Laughs]. You know, you wash a floor or something like that. There's a reward to it, you know? Not a lot of people probably see it, but you feel it inside. That's all that matters.

VC: Especially if it is your work and you got it accomplished.

GP: Yeah...yeah. And then you know, like, uh, we have inspections every month. I don't know if you guys know that. Every building has inspections. So once a month, they just did mine, in fact, uh, just last week. We have a certain amount of items to be inspected and in this building I think is like 64 items. So my boss goes around and he looks at all these different things. And if it's not clean, we get marked off for it, which we call a gig. And the highest assessment, they call it assessments, the highest assessment at the end of the inspection period, cause each building gets expected differently, each person, you get a ribbon if you have the highest grade. Now, you guys had your rooms inspected right?

VC: Yes.

KC: Uh huh.

GP: Okay. Well, it's basically the same thing. At the end of the inspection, uh, the highest grade gets a ribbon and then in May they have, um, we have a housekeeping breakfast type thing and they give out awards. So we get seven inspections a year. Like, uh, before I came down here I got all got all seven, which meant, uh, for the whole year I had the highest grading out of all of our buildings, which was five of us [pause] five of our buildings so there was give people. Well, I got all seven, which meant that was really good. So at the end of May, I get awarded a certificate that said I have the highest assessment for...and I have an office over in Lee and they are on the wall over there. And the ribbons I thought about maybe about putting in the closet down here. I mean, why not hang them up? I mean, I got em', what else and I suppose to do with them, you know? What good are they at home? You know. And I think it encourages people.

VC: Yeah, yeah that's what I was saying.

GP: I really think it does in a way. It...like...should encourage the others to do a little bit better so that they can get one. I think. That's the whole purpose, I guess. But it's just a little reward they give us and the certificate is nice too.

VC: Yeah... [Pause] Tell me about the fashion show. I didn't really understand...

GP: Oh my goodness, that was fun! [Laughs]

VC: Yeah, can you explain to her, she doesn't know about it.

GP: Okay [smiles]. What we did was, they, our, uh, director comes up with something for us to do every year. We have, like, a cookout for the employees and usually it's, um, at the end of September during, uh, I guess housekeeping week. And this year, she picked a fashion show. So what we had to do was we had to make an outfit out of housekeeping supplies. Well, that was pretty good. So what we did was we took [laughs] a hose for the base, well, we made, we decided on a Southern style dress. We took a hose and then we took black trash bag and we, you made it so it was like a dress then...

VC: Oh, okay.

GP: Then we took, uh, clear trash bags and we cut them and made them frills and then toilet paper tissues for a layer, then more frills, more toilet tissues, frills, more toilet tissues. And it made like, you know, a blowed out dress, you know? So the top of it, we had made a black dress underneath that was a French maid style.

VC: French maid style?!

GP: French maid.

VC: Oh my goodness.

GP: And it had, it came out and it had the frills that we used, you know, the trash bag. Everything was housekeeping supplies. We had an apron made out of, uh, showed curtain cut into the shape of an apron. We had the duster hanging off it, and a rag, and a, uh, magic eraser, and we had some, uh, shower brush hanging off that. And the top of it, it came to, like, a square. It had little frills. We had bow downs with frills around that, which the blue and white, which is the toilet paper wrapping that we used on the outer skirt, came up over it so nobody knew it was a two piece... Because this looked like the skirt to it and the black and blue really went together good. And we made a little hat for, for the person. For her. For the maid's hat with the little frills around it. We use the vacuum cleaner on top of the bag, you know, the little cardboard thing. And the other hat, we used a, uh, um, scrub pad for the floors. The black one and we used one of our clear buckets that we use to, like, uh, put our cloth in like the, uh, disinfectant and stuff. We used that and covered it with a toilet tissue and we made a flower off it. So that came on top of the maid's hat so nobody saw it.

VC: Uh huh.

GP: And I'll tell you why when I get to it [Smiles excitedly]. Then we made a, I made a parasol with a branded plunger, right? Took another, um, shower pad that we do, you know, for the floors.

VC: Right.

GP: And that was black. And then put a clear trash bag over it. And I made tassels all around it, you know, and then puffed it out with toilet paper inside that so that you could hold onto it. So that was the parasol. Then we made, um, a purse. We took, uh, you've seen shower shields? [Turns to Vivian] You've seen them when I wear to do the showers.

VC: Yeah, I've seen it.

GP: I tape two of them together and with blue duct, uh, with blue painters tape and used the handle to, you know, hold it, the elastic part. And we put gloves in there... and just different cleaning materials, you know? Brush and everything else. Let's see...

VC: So a purse for the French maid?

GP: Nope, the purse was for the Southern belle.

VC: Oh okay. Right.

GP: See, everyone is thinking it's the Southern belle. Nobody knows there's a French maid yet.

VC: Oh okay...

GP: So we get the purse. She had on blue gloves. Uh. We use shower shoes [laughs], which were really, you know, black ones. We, we put, uh, a little bow on top of them. We made fish net stockings, but how we did that. We took a black trash bag and we, uh, taped it, like. Alright, no. We took a clear trash bag and used electrical tape to put the, you know, the crisscross like fish net stockings and then we gathered it in the back and we put duct tape down it like the lines you would see in the back and had em' going up to the mid-thigh [cough]. We made a black garter. It was like, um, braided and then a little bow on the end of that. And for earrings, we used, eh, the shower hooks over the ear [laughs] and dangled down and had these here [Tugs on her lanyard with ID] attached to it so this hung down for the ear bobs, you know?

VC & KC: Oh, okay!

GP: And let's see...

VC: Wait. Literally your card was hanging on [points at her own ear]...

GP: No, no the shower hooks were hanging behind the ear and...not the card. And...

VC: Oh, the clip.

GP: Just this part was hooked onto them. And we took razor blades with the covers on them...

VC: Okay, Whoo!

KC: [Laughs]

GP: And we put em' on duct tape for the chocker and used one of these for the disease in front to match the earrings.

VC: Oh...

GP: So it was kind of cool. That was for the Southern belle. [Cough]. Well, she'd come out of the, uh, truck, right? Oh and we made a fan. We took two little of our brushes that we use to clean the sink and we used a clean sandy sag bag for the fan because it had that crinkle. Yeah, we use that and then put, like, little toilet tissue, uh, feathers on the sides of it and stuff. So when she'd come out, she was fanning herself, right? But, her back was to everybody. She was up in one of those box trucks and we had a, uh, um, ramp that'd come down and then the walkway that goes down to the pavilion. And this was the runway so people were lined up on both sides, you know, taking pictures, whatever. So when our turn came, the person that was up in the truck ready to come down was actually the boss.

VC: Oh my goodness.

GP: [Nods] It was a guy...

VC: As the Southern Belle?

GP: Yeah [laughs and rocks back and forth]

VC: Oh my gosh.

GP: [Still laughing] He had it all on, you know? Even the French maid's dress and everything! So he's is standing up there with his back to everybody and then he turns around and he has got the fan in front of his face and, um, Maurren G. Laurens, which is our director, she was on the speaker phone and she was the one who announced, you know, things. Well, we had written out a paper describing everything with a storyline that went to it. So she's there and "Now we have..." and she looks...she looks deeper and she goes: "We have Michael Spencer [laughs]." You know, and she was like shocked and I'm crackin' up. I was laughin' and I'm taken pictures of people's expressions and stuff, you know? So he comes down the ramp and he is, you know, fanning himself and he has got the parasol and he's walkin' down there. He is trying to do it real

dainty, you know? So she is describing, like, the parasol and when she had got done he had dropped it, you know? And then she'd do the fan and whatever, and then he'd drop that. And then she'd do the hat and he'd take the hat off. And then that little one we had duct tape to his head...right? That's up there and, uh, they're, like, laughing because he has gotten this little tiny hat on now. Well, he's still holding the purse and I kept trying to tell him he could drop the purse, you know? But he didn't so he finally did and then he's startin' to unhook it cause we had it clasp, from the, with a bungee cord underneath the belt, the rim of the, the big skirt, right? And everyone is lookin'. Well, he starts dropping that and that's when the French maid dress was on him with the fish net stockings' and everything. They all cracked up. Oh, we had a blast!

VC: That sounds so fun!

GP: It was really good. T-they laughed so hard because nobody expected a second dress.

VC: And a guy, basically.

GP: Yeah, yeah! So he's walking up and down and he is trying to pose, you know? [Laugh]. And finally she, he pulls up his dress just a little bit above his knee because he has got his work pants on underneath, but they were rolled up.

VC: Right...

GP: And he had his work shirt on underneath the dress cause you wouldn't...

VC: Thank goodness! I was like, wait, stockings and yeah...

GP: He wouldn't take anything off you know?

VC: Right. And you made him be a separate maid!

GP: It was his idea!

VC: Was it? So he consent to it?

GP: Yeah! Well, I told him I was afraid that the girl that was going to do it might chicken out. So he says: "Well, let me see if they fit" and we are like "...okay." You know? So he went in there and he tried them on and he goes, well he says: "I'll wear them." And we are like: "...Really?" You know. He's like: "Yeah, if Chelsea doesn't mind, I'll wear them." And I'm like "Oh, she won't mind", you know? So, you know, my friend, one of the other housekeepers, I asked her and no, no, she loved the idea. So he took that off, well after she described everything he pulls his dress up a little bit to show his garter, right? And he goes: "Glen?" which is our manager, "would you help me?" [Laughs]. So Glen would come over and Glen. He's cracking up...

VC: Oh my god!

GP: And he was trying to take the garter off, you know?

VC: How did, did he take it off like [gestures hand movement]

GP: Yeah!

VC: Oh my gosh!

GP: He is trying to take it off over the fish net stockings and stuff and it looks so funny! I mean, he still had his white stockings on and stuff. It was good, everybody loved it!

VC: Do you have pictures?!

GP: Yeah, I do. I don't have them... Wait a minute, I don't know.

VC: I wanna see these pictures...

GP: I'll look in my... I'll look in my bag to see if I've got my camera.

VC: It's okay, no big deal I can already picture it!

GP: [Laughs].

VC: It's pretty hilarious.

GP: But it was really... we got first place.

KC: Of course! I wouldn't expect nothing less!

GP: [Laughs] They're like: "How did you guys win that?" And I said: "You know what? It's always the element of surprise. That's where you get em!" It's things that people don't expect. It was hilarious! I mean, he was so good. I mean, it wouldn't have been as nice had Chelsea done it, you know?

VC: Right, it was funny. No, but I think the fact that he was a guy wearing double clothing and that's little...

GP: Aw man, it worked out good. Yeah, the only thing is we had started out making the dress for her, you know? So we had to enlarge it a little bit, you know, for him. But, like, right here [points stomach region] you can see the top of the apron because his belly would come out a little more than hers did. But it turned out really good. We had a good time. That was really good...

VC: And these were all the employees at V-Tech, right?

GP: They, every year yeah. They did their own dress, you know. There was, uh, I think there is five other areas or five areas in all. But one was a bride, and, uh, another one was a fashion model. Um, there was another guy that also dressed up. He kind of looked like a...do you know what a Kokopelli is?

VC: No, I don't.

GP: Alright, a Kokopelli is an Indian dancer. Um, he kind of looked like that cause he had, like, mops hanging off him and, and he had a broom that had, like, a beads from Mardi Gras wrapped around it and stuff. And he had wings and everything. I mean, it looked really good too! He was really good, but, uh, we got, we got first place. It was great, I will say that.

VC: Would you consider, like, the other people here sort of like your... Do you consider yourself best friends with the employees here or...are they like your family or not really? Because it seems like you really bond with them.

GP: Well, you're here a long time with them so...It's almost like you girls that are living in the same building. You know. You're together, you know, well, some of you for 4 years. We're together all the time at least... Well, they don't usually change everyone around within six years so... between five and six years, you're with the same people. Kind of like you girls. And you do bond with them. You know. You can have best friends and everything, you know. But then you got people who, well, people that um... [Pause] will talk about other people, you know. We have all those problems that you would have at any place where you work. It goes on here, too, you know. So, basically if you do your work and keep to yourself you don't get into that situations, you know. And you do have best friends, but you don't really tell anyone everything. Because, you know, you got a lot of people who like to talk so it's best they don't know your whole life.

VC: That's true. It sounds like high school.

KC: Yeah...

GP: Yeah, and it's kind of like that. Yeah. And like I said, it would be the same as in the this building, you know? You might have a best friend, but you might not tell her everything.

VC: Right, that's true.

Because they might get mad, you know, and have to go tell someone else. I mean, it happens everywhere.

VC: Uh huh. My mom is an accountant and she works in an office and that happens too.

GP: Yep. No matter where you work. So we have the same problems within our department that you would have anywhere else. You know. And they'd probably handle it the same way as they would do anywhere else...

VC: Um... in class we talk about the American dream a lot. Um. It's funny, this Chinese guy, he's an international student, came over here and I was like: "What do you think about the

American dream?” And they say: “Big cars, big money, big...big everything, consumerism, but um... so I was just kind of appalled by that because I don’t think of that when I think about the American dream. I think: “Oh, you can move up the ladder” or “Do what makes you happy.” What do you think the American dream is for you?

GP: [Smiles and snickers]. Hm...I really don’t really have any American dream. I mean, it’s just day to day living. I mean there’s...you can wish for more but it doesn’t mean you’re going to get it. You know? And you can try for more but it doesn’t mean you’re going to get it doing that either. I mean, you might strive for the American dream and...and. Look at all these rich people. They’re not really happy. They’re really not. They worry about someone kidnapping their kids; they worry about someone breaking into their houses; They worry about, you know... being watched too closely. How can they be happy? They’ve got the money. They can do whatever they want. But they’re really not that happy. I think the middle class, um, is probably going to be the happiest people because they don’t... They worry about day to day living and stuff, but they don’t have to worry about people basically stealing their kids, cause they aren’t going to get much because they don’t earn much [laughs]. You know. So I... [Pause] I just say the American dream would just be find someone your happy with and have your family and grow up. I mean, sure I’d like to be rich like everyone else, but not the problems they have... Have you ever watched this show where uh, it was about people who became instant millionaires?

KC: It sounds familiar...

VC: There are a lot of shows like that.

GP: Yeah, but it showed about what happened to them after they won the lotteries and stuff like that. Some of them died, you know, like killed themselves because of problems or because they lost all of their money fast. Now, what good did it do? What? Would you really want all that money?

VC: I’m thinking about, like, Michael Jackson and how he went into debt...

GP: Yep.

VC: He got into debt and had to do a tour and he was depressed because he was maybe doing drugs and stress...

GP: Same with Elvis, you know. They, they...the movie stars or the singers...they’re trying to make everyone happy that they are ruining themselves. Well, what good is it doing them?

VC: Yeah.

You know? I mean, it’s actually sad because they’re ruining themselves, ended up dying... [Contemplates]. Yeah...They weren’t happy were they? They didn’t even get a chance to be happy. It’s like waiting too old to retire. By the time you really do, you can’t enjoy it, you know? Cause they’re up in the age all the time. By the time you get ready to retire, you’ll probably be seventy-two! What are you going to do at seventy-two?!

VC: I know, you can’t travel.

GP: [High tone] Yeah!

VC: That’s like my grandpa...My grandpa is eighty something. He keeps saving and saving for his grandchildren, I’m like: “Grandpa...grandpa, my Ye Ye, like, I’m like dude you need to spend your money. You’re eighty something. Stop saving for us, you got to live your life. Stop it.

GP: And the thing is, like, a lot of people also save things for their children. Their children may not want what they save.

VC: That’s so true. Like, I’m well off. My parents say to my grandparent: “Father, please just go, go live your life and stuff like that. You don’t have to save. Like, you have got to think about

yourself sometimes and your happiness instead of impressing other people and making other people happy.

GP: Well, that's... a lot of people say, well, you know: "I'm saving for my children" or "I'm going save this coffee table. It's an antique for my, you know, for my daughter. She may like chrome [laughs], you know? You know what I mean? [Laughs more] She may not want an old piece of wood. I mean, and I'm the same way. I use to save antiques and my husband, he goes: "Why? They probably don't even like em'." And I'm like: "Yeah, that's a piece of our background" or whatever. And he goes: "People nowadays don't care about older things and which a lot of them don't, you know? They're going into... How many old, old cars do you see?"

VC: Not a lot. Once and a while they bring them out and it's pretty cool.

GP: They bring them out for show.

KC: Right.

VC: Yeah.

GP: But that's it!

KC: They're in the garage all the time.

GP: And the things nowadays ...and their car is like if you hit something you've ruined it. At least with the older cars, you dent it a little bit you get it banged up, you know? But anyways, sometimes it's just not worth saving a lot for the next generation because they may not appreciate all the effort you put into it. And you're wasting your life, saving it. And you're... You're giving up enjoying yours...so they can take it to a pawn shop. Don't make sense does it? But... we all do it. I do it too. I save, save rings and jewelry for the kids [chuckles] and they may not be the style they like. I think they'd rather have something that you wore like a necklace or earrings or something like that that you actually wore rather than something that was put away in a box and you haven't worn...

VC: Then again it's about your happiness cause you feel good that you're saving it for them.

KC: Yeah, but some people go to extreme, you know? Save, save one or two items for em'. How many things do you have from your great great grandmother?

VC: Oh, not many.

KC: You know? I mean...

VC: Have you ever watch the show called Hoarders where they keep stuff?

KC: Yeah, oh my god... Oh! Some of them is like...wow. It was bad. I don't think even I would want to go clean it. You know? Haha. That would be bad.

VC: Yeah...um... I think that's just about it.

KC: Yeah, I think we're about ready to wrap up just because of the time. Is there anything you want to add or you want to clarify?

GP: No.

VC: It seems like you're pretty satisfied with your job.

GP: I am. I am.

KC: You have a really great attitude and outlook on life, I think.

GP: Thank you [laughs].

VC: That's very inspiring. Especially now, like, as a college student at least, sometimes I'm like: "Should I do what I want or should I do what my parents want me to.

GP: I think you should do what you want.

VC: That's exactly what I'm going for.

GP: Because, you know, I never tried to talk my kids into doing something that I wanted them to do because that's me, you know? It's not what they're going to like. I've got a daughter that is

really good at art, too. And she got third place in the art competition for the state of New Hampshire. And she had a scholarship to go wherever she wanted to. But at that time, and she's only sixteen, at that time she didn't know what she wanted to do. And I said: "Well don't about it", you know? You know...if she really wanted to do it, she would go for it. But if you don't know what you want to do, then you shouldn't try to do something. It's going to be a waste, you know? Know what you want to do before you do it. I just don't... I just hate to see people waste their time doing something, and then it's all for nothing. I didn't really...when I was growing up I just wanted to have a horse farm [laugh]. Raise horses and then I didn't get to. I raised kids instead. That was good [laughs]. Yeah. But I mean, sometimes we don't do what we want to do. VC: I'm just interested, what do...Are your children happy with their jobs? That they're doing right now...

GP: I think. Well, my youngest daughter is a stay-at-home mom. That's what she chose to do. Now my other daughter, she is, uh, hm... She has a title and I don't... She works in an office. I can't think of it right now what it is. But she would say to my younger daughter: "Well, all you do is stay at home." Well I said: "Laila," her name is Laila. I said: "There's nothing wrong with that, you know? That's what she wanted to do. She wanted to baby-sit. I said she's watching someone else's kid so that they can work doing what they want to do. I said: "Believe me, babysitting is not that easy." Everyone thinks you're home all the time.

VC: That's a big responsibility.

GP: Yeah it is it! You know? Something happen to one of them kids you are responsible for it, you know? And her, my youngest daughter, Kelly, wanted to bring up her own kids there's nothing wrong with that. I worked. I had to baby-sit. Sometimes I wish I had been home with them, but that's the choices we make. Fortunately, my mother watched em' so they were close enough. But I mean, I found no fault in my youngest daughter wanting to stay home, being a stay at home mom. If, if her husband allowed what she did, then that's fine with me, you know? My son and my daughter, they both work. They're steady workers. They're kind of like Alan and I, you know? They...take pride in the job that they do and I think that that's good. You know? But you know I kind of got a little...put off when she would say that to my other daughter because hey, she's got an important job too.

VC: Right, everyone has jobs.

KC: Yeah!

GP: Yeah. One day an engineer said to me, her name was Rosie Holmer, she as at the time I think at the time she was twenty-four. I come into work one day in a factory where I was doing housekeeping. And I said something like: "Well, I'm just a house-keeper." She said: "Gail..." She said: "You're not just a house-keeper." This was my first lesson in appreciating my job. And I said: "Yeah I am." And she said: "No you're not! And don't every say that again!" I said: "Well Rosie, I do house-keeping." She goes: "Let me tell you something." She said: "Your job is more important than mine." And she was a mechanical engineer. I said: "How?" She said: "Think about it this way: when we have a customer that comes to this factory..." She said: "They come in through that door. If it is messy, they're going turn around and walk right back out.

VC: That is really true.

GP: She said: "Your job gets them in this door. And if this place is clean, then our parts are clean." She said: "Your job is more important than mine because if it weren't for you, I wouldn't have that customer." I was like wow [smiles], you know, that kind of boosted me up a little. I said: "That's a good way to look at it Rosie, I never thought about it that way!"

VC: Made you stronger...

GP: She said: "You're job is very important and don't let anyone ever tell you that it's not. I said: "Okay!" That's quite a bit of wisdom, you know, for someone that young. I was in my thirties then, but I thought it was very nice of her to say that. And I thought, you know, to this day that, like, you know housekeepers, and we're training them and stuff. And I tell them that same story that she told me. I said housekeeping you've got to have pride in your job. I said because if you do a good job it reflects on the type of person you are. And I... I believe it. So, I try and do a good job.

VC: You do the best you can out of anything.

GP: Yeah [laughs]. Because you guys look at the halls or you look at the building. If it's dirty you're going to go "Ugh...Gail is not a very good house-keeper", you know? But if it's good and clean, you go: "Well, our housekeeper, you know, keeps it up and stuff." I want the praise, not the criticism.

KC: Right.

VC: Right. Sometimes I walk into certain dorms and they smell and they're dirty. And I'm like y-your impression... You don't think the housekeeper is off duty. You just have a huge bad impression of the whole building in general, you know? You're like I don't want to be here.

GP: Yeah.

KC: Right...

VC: But my friends say Johnson is so clean.

GP: [Laughs].

KC: It makes you want to be here!

VC: Exactly.

GP: I, I think this building is great.

VC: That's true. That, that experience that you had with that one...Rosie?

GP: Rosie.

VC: Right that perfectly explains a lot of things.

GP: Well, she made me feel good [chuckles]. She kind of, you know, set, and like I said I was young. You know? I hadn't but cleaning that long when she told me that. And that was my impression of housekeepers or cleaning people. Well, I'm just a cleaning person. You know? You think of it as the low person on the totem pole. But their job is very important. And I've said that to my supervisors before, you know? And I, I'd tell them the same thing I just told you. That this person had told me this back years, forty years ago, you know? [Chuckles] So ... And I try to instill into our new people when I get to train them. I mean, I don't always get to train them so... I wish I could because I have my, you know... There's certain things that I think should be done a certain way, but...

VC: Inspiring figure I guess...

GP: Yeah... I like to... You know... I just want them to do their best, you know? Because I truly believe their... your work reflects what type of person you are.

VC: Mmm hmm... I believe that too.

GP: Good [smiles].

VC: I think that's good.

KC: I think...yeah! Good place to end it.

VC: Good lesson...good lessons! There are a lot of lessons, not just about jobs: about marriage, and all that jazz.

GP: [Laughs]. I hope I didn't go on too much.

VC: No you didn't.