

Jenna Wright, Kylie Sturgeon  
Introduction to American Studies  
Interview Transcription  
Interviewee: Bobbie Sue Blevins

---Start Transcript---

Interviewer: Will you please state your name, your job title, and the name of the organization you work for?

Blevins: Bobbie Sue Blevins, and I work for D2, and I'm a supervisor in Mangia.

Interviewer: How long have you worked at your current job?

Blevins: Twenty-five years.

Interviewer: Wow, that's a long time.

Blevins: And that's a really long time.

Interviewer: Would you please tell me a little bit about your family background?

Blevins: Well, I was born in West Virginia. And my mom- well I have seven brothers and six sisters.

Interviewer: Are you the oldest, or the youngest, or...?

Blevins: No I'm not the oldest. I'm the fourth from the bottom. So, there's fourteen in all.

Interviewer: That's a busy household!

Blevins: Yeah. My father worked away too, he only came home on weekends.

Interviewer: Really? Where did he work?

Blevins: He worked on a railroad. He had a good job.

Interviewer: What did your mom do?

Blevins: She had to stay home.

Interviewer: Yeah. Would you describe, in detail, a typical day at your job?

Blevins: Oh goodness. Well, if I come in here one morning, without, somebody pissing me off, you know. Well—a typical day, I just come in and say “hi, how're you doing”, you know, and just come in and do my job. I have to speak to everybody first before I go to my shop.

Interviewer: And you work at the...?

Blevins: Mangia, pizza shop.

Interviewer: How did you come to work for Virginia Tech food services?

Blevins: Well, I was a head cashier at Kroger. And this lady said, "Bobbie, come over to Dietrick". This was before we renovated, you know, it was cafeteria style and she said "Come over, they need help". I said, "I don't know if I want to go over there or not". So the first day I came, they put me to work. And then the first month or so, I said this job's not for me, I'm not coming back. But I've been here twenty-five years. When I first started here, everything was so different. The salt and pepper shakers were in glasses, they weren't in containers. And we had candles, we put them in a jar and put salt around them. I mean, we've come a long way. To me, change is good, and sometimes, change isn't. Especially with people from the old school, where I'm from. When we were hired in, everything was so strict. See now, it's laid back, it's different.

Interviewer: Were there a lot of students working here?

Blevins: Yeah, well not as many as there are now. When I came here, believe it or not, I was probably the youngest one. I was thirty-one, and I'm sixty-four now. And all of them were older women, but you know, they were set in their ways.

Interviewer: What do you like best about your job?

Blevins: I like working with the students. It used to be I couldn't say that, but now I can. And you meet a lot of people, with different backgrounds. But I like working with the students, you know, they respect me and I respect them.

Interviewer: Could you describe one of your most memorable interactions with a student?

Blevins: I used to have a student that went home with me, two to three times a year, and we did things together. She calls me. But a lot of students, in the past, like probably seven or eight, I still have contact with them. They, you know, send me cards and a few of them call me, as far back as fifteen, sixteen years ago. We still keep in touch.

Interviewer: That's awesome. Do you have to travel very far to get here?

Blevins: Twenty-five miles, one-way. I live in Pembroke; you know where Mountain Lake is? Cascades? I live over there.

Interviewer: Could you talk a little bit about how your family life affects your work (or vice-versa)?

Blevins: Well, it probably doesn't, now—and it probably didn't then. I have three children, and it didn't, not at all. I mean, I don't think so. I work 11-8 and my husband works his own hours, hours that he wants to.

Interviewer: What does your husband do?

Blevins: He's a drug investigator, for Giles County. He was a Virginia state police, and then he got into drug investigations.

Interviewer: Interesting.

Blevins: Yeah, I guess you could call him a nark.

Interviewer: [Laughing] Now if you could change anything about your job, what would it be?

Blevins: I don't [laughing] know. [Looks off-camera]. Look at Jed look at me over there [laughing]. Um...what would I change...well, probably the supervisors. They're way younger than I am and maybe if you got some older, mature people in here. That would probably be the change.

Interviewer: Yeah definitely.

Blevins: Because you know, students, its just like Jed, you know, he's 26 years old and sometimes its harder for somebody older to get used to the new people's way of doing things because you know they want things done their way. You know, but probably I would know best.

Interviewer: Because you've been here longer?

Blevins: Yeah, because I've been here longer.

Interviewer: What do you think is important for people to know about what you do here?

Blevins: Well....umm...

Interviewer: Like what's most important?

Blevins: You mean for the students or just....well I try, I don't know if this is what you're looking for, but I try to keep a clean shop make sure the sanitation water is what its supposed to be and make sure that people are serving what they're supposed to serve, you know, like portions, certain portions. Is that what you were looking for?

Interviewer: Yeah, I mean, I guess more in terms of how hard of a job it is

Blevins: [laughing] Well, it's not hard...

Interviewer: More so, of what kind of work goes into it?

Blevins: Well there's work, going in and fixing the pizzas from scratch. You know, its what we do. It's a lot of work but usually I don't do that. I come in on the evening shift and its already

done. But the most important I guess you know is keeping the pizzas and stuff out there. Making sure everyone has their choices of what they want to eat.

Interviewer: What advice would you give to a young person seeking a job?

Blevins: To work here?

Interviewer: Just a way to make a living.

Blevins: Work hard. You know, and be honest. And just work and do all that you can do. I mean of course if you have to brown nose you know you gotta brown nose to get where you, of course, I never did but that's what I would tell somebody. Do the best you can.

Interviewer: That's good advice. So where do you see yourself in 5 to 10 years?

Blevins: [laughing] Out of here. No, well everybody asks me this everyday. They say Bobbie when you gonna retire? Well you have to be able to put the job behind you and see I cant yet. Because I have too much fun over here. But I want to retire in maybe like 2 years and then I want to work at the hospital

Interviewer: The one in Montgomery?

Blevins: No, the one in Giles. We have a new hospital and I wanna work there.

Interviewer: And wh--

Blevins: [interjecting] Don't ask me it, no. [laughing] I knew it was gonna be your next question. I wanted to be a blood supplier that like takes samples to from one doctor's office to the other. Is my hands in the way?

Interviewer: Oh no, you're fine.

Blevins: Okay, cause sometimes I talk with my hands.

Interviewer: Nope you're good.

Blevins: like carry blood samples from one doctor's office to the other. Id like to do that. Like three days a week. But I also have 8 grandchildren

Interviewer: [laughing] that's a big family. Umm I guess the only other question I have is there anything else you'd like to share about your job or family life?

Blevins: Well I mean, I enjoy working with the students, um, I know them by name and I carry on with them um and try to get on their level, sometimes that's hard to do, and uh I just come into work every day, happy as I can be, always singing. You know, course I don't know the song all the way through. They say well Bobbie you got me singing that song. Its on my mind and vie

been singing it all day. But I like the students, most of them.

Interviewer: Yeah I feel the same way. Alright, I think that's about it.

Blevins: Did I do good?

Interviewer: You did awesome. Thank you so much!

---End Transcript---