

Kit Konzik
Intro to American Studies
Professor Emily Satterwhite
November 3, 2008

Transcript of Interview

Kit Konzik: Would you please state your job title and the name of your organization?

Interviewee: I am bouncer at Awful Arthur's

Kit Konzik: Where are you originally from? And what did your parents' do for a living?

Interviewee: I'm originally from Alexandria, Virginia. My parents, my mother was an accountant and my father was an engineer in the army.

Kit Konzik: How long have you worked at your current job?

Interviewee: About a year, two years now.

Kit Konzik: What would you say was your worst day on the job?

Interviewee: I would say some of the game days when it gets out of control. I have to deal with a lot of drunks.

Kit Konzik: Any specific things about dealing with the drunks that was so bad?

Interviewee: We had a kid stumble over the stairs and pretty much almost bust his head open and had a concussion so we had to try and carry him out of there and at the same time make sure he was ok until the cops and ambulance came over.

Kit Konzik: What would say was your best day on the job?

Interviewee: I would say football days are good at the end of the day, get paid for all the hard work.

Kit Konzik: What were some specific things that made those days so good besides the pay obviously?

Interviewee: Normally if you have a day that goes pretty smooth, not a lot of drunks, it makes it a lot easier.

Kit Konzik: What is unique to this job versus any other jobs you've had?

Interviewee: The environment, I've never worked in a restaurant before environment before, like I never did the serving stuff, so. I wouldn't really consider it unique as far as, in general, but its unique for me as far as being in a restaurant environment/bar, rather than being another desk job or design or something like that.

Kit Konzik: How is this job different from what you expected when you after the position or when you were hired?

Interviewee: I did security or bouncing before in the D.C. Area, so it was a lot different when I came to a small college town, as far as what we did, responsibilities, what we were looking for and all that.

Kit Konzik: What were some specific things about the responsibilities and what they were looking for?

Interviewee: The level of friendship, friendliness towards the customers is a lot different than when you're working up in D.C. In D.C. you pretty much had to maintain that level of, you know if you don't like the way we are doing our stuff you can leave. Here we are rather more customer based, you know helping with working things out, making sure everything is ok.

Kit Konzik: Do you like that better?

Interviewee: In some situations, it's nicer to be able to just toss someone out but it is kind of more rewarding if you can work something out with someone, but you don't always have the time to fix everyone's problems.

Kit Konzik: What level of freedom does your job allow, while you're working?

Interviewee: I think aside from being on the premise and wearing the work t-shirt, there are certain codes for the dress code, where you're supposed to be wearing. But, besides that you can be walking around, really not a lot of restrictions. Actually came in recently, we are not allowed to be texting. Apparently, it became a problem with the waitresses.

Kit Konzik: Are there any opportunities for advancement in your particular job?

Interviewee: Not doing it here in Blacksburg in a small level operation but you could advance to bouncing or security in bigger metropolitan areas.

Kit Konzik: What were your reasons you would recommend getting a job like this?

Interviewee: It's a really nice job, especially if you have, you consider yourself an insomniac and cant really sleep much at night or tend to sleep later than everyone else. Also if you don't want to go out a lot during the weekend and blow money away it could be a really nice way to save it since you'd be working rather than spending it.

Kit Konzik: Is your current position one you see yourself in long term?

Interviewee: No, it's just pretty much until I get a more serious job, as far as engineering.

Kit Konzik: If you could change a few things about your job that would make it a long term choice, what would those be?

Interviewee: Definitely need to be in a bigger area, as far as back like D.C. And be more of a company based type of security rather than just being part of the bar operations.

Kit Konzik: So an independent security company?

Interviewee: Yeah

Kit Konzik: Could you walk me through a typical day at your job?

Interviewee: Depends if we have a function or we're just coming to work for a band, normally we have a band on Saturdays and Fridays and on Thursdays we have a karaoke, so it depends what you're doing. But if it's a set up for a band, normally when you come you help set up the signs around the place about the drinks, where you're allowed to have drinks and when you're allowed to start smoking and all that. After you set up the signs and everything, you start going around and checking ID's because we turn from a regular restaurant to a bar at ten o'clock I believe or 9:30. All of the stuff is done then. Normally a second or third bouncer is there by that time, if you're the first one. They help you do that, after that you start setting up downstairs. If you're charging someone would be working at the door, checking ID's, trying to spot fakes, trying to make sure people aren't coming into the restaurant with stuff they shouldn't be coming in with. Besides that, you could be working behind the bar, pretty much helping the bartender with stuff, if they need more drinks from the cooler, if they need kegs changed, if they need mixers. That's another part of it, besides that you could be walking around and making sure people are ok and that no one is getting out of control and no one is getting in fights, stuff like that, spotting anything that is shady or not beneficial towards the business. You start doing this until the band ends, usually the bands end around 1 o'clock to 1:30. By that time is when you start pretty much letting everyone know that it's last call and you start letting them know that they need to leave soon. There is a lot of things that go there, you got to make sure that no one is still drinking beyond 2 because you lose the license if people are drinking after 2 o'clock so you got to stop them a little bit before that, make sure no one walks outside the bar with alcohol, an awful lot of people try to do that for some reason. Once the bar and everyone is out, you start clearing pretty much the drinks and everything, you do some light cleaning as far as tables go and behind the bar just to organize it. After that you take some trash from behind the bar out and you're done for the night.

Kit Konzik: That would be for the band. What about for other types of events you have going on?

Interviewee: Normally depends on set up, sometimes we have conferences or Mondays we have TechLive, the radio station that talks about the games. Normally it would require a little bit different set up in terms of furniture, tables and stuff like that, so we'll do stuff like that also. Besides that the beginning and ending routine is the same. Of course you are not charging but you're still making sure people are of age. Depends, sometimes you have special events, the band will have a list of people who are ok, who are underage but can come in, depends on the agreement of the band with the bar on that night. Normally that means that they pay extra because that would require extra monitoring on our end because we are a strictly 21 and over bar on normal weekend days. Besides that its almost all the same towards the end as far as closing goes.

Kit Konzik: How is management towards treating you guys and do you get along with them?

Interviewee: The way our restaurant our is dealt with, most of the bouncers and security just deal with the bar manager. They don't really have to deal with the other different aspects of management. Which is kind of nice to only have to answer to one boss compared to other places where you normally have to answer to, restaurants especially, where you sometimes have to answer to a couple of bosses. Makes things a little difficult when one person is telling you something and another is telling you something else. So when you're dealing with one boss, the bar manager, it's kind of easy to have issues resolved because it's just dealing with that one person. If you got an issues, he lets you know if you can do anything about it and vice versa.

Kit Konzik: Has there ever been a time when you have had personal disagreements or problems with the bar manager?

Interviewee: Not really as far as myself. It's really not a job that requires a lot of, if you're an easy going person, like myself, it's a really easy job to maintain and there's no reason to have conflict or issues with the management. The conflicts happen when other managers tries to let us know something goes against what the bar manager wants. It can make it difficult to maintain the two streams, line of authority going on.

Kit Konzik: Has there ever been a time when you just wanted to walk off the job and say "I'm done."?

Interviewee: Sometimes when you have to deal with really difficult customers who are being rude and the manager would just like to be decent with them, sometimes you get really frustrated with it. But depending who the closing manager is sometimes at night a lot of them tend to say "no, if you're being with my employees, they really don't have to take this and you're more than welcome to leave." But sometimes yeah I'll think, "I have other education, why am I still doing this?"

Kit Konzik: Could you describe a specific instance where you did feel that way?

Interviewee: Some of the time when you're dealing with the people who are being rude or something. Had this one time this guy was intoxicated and he decided he was going to swing at me, so he didn't end up hitting me but still I'm thinking in my head, "Why am I still doing this? I don't need to sit around here dodging drunks trying to fight them"

Kit Konzik: Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years from now?

Interviewee: Hopefully not still working in this job, that would be pretty sad. I'm done with an engineering degree so hopefully working in an engineering firm somewhere. As far as 10 years, hopefully doing management in an engineering firm still somewhat though dealing with a lot of people, that'd be nice.

Kit Konzik: My final question is, is there anything else you'd like to share?

Interviewee: As far as jobs go for a college job or right after college bouncing is really not a bad job, you get to meet a lot of people and deal with a lot of people. Also there is a lot of

opportunities through meeting customers around town based on wherever you're working at. You make some good connections working in a such a social environment and it's really a nice job to have when you're in college I believe, but I wouldn't really recommend it as far as a career, I think that someone could always do something better.

Kit Konzik: Well, thank you.

Interviewee: You're welcome.