

## Interview with Greg Porter

For Hum 2504: Introduction to American Studies, Prof. Emily Satterwhite, Spring 2010

Occupation: Dishwasher at Backstreet's Restaurant

Time and Place: 3/22/1 9:08 pm- 9:17pm

Interviewer: Mallory Hanna, freshman Political Science major from Virginia Beach, VA

MH= Mallory Hanna

GP= Greg Porter

MH: All right, state your name, job title, and the name of the organization you worked for.

GP: Gregory Mark Porter, dishwasher, Backstreet's restaurant.

MH: Okay, how long did you work there?

GP: two months

MH: ok, umm what do your parents do?

GP: My dad is a mechanical engineer works for an architectural firm, and my mom is an electrical engineer, but she is a homemaker now.

MH: Okay, and what were your living standards as a child?

GP: Pretty good.

MH: Yea.

GP: Like middle class.

MH: Middle class, did you have money set aside to go to college?

GP: um yes.

MH: How did you get your job at Backstreet's?

GP: um I was walking through Kroger one day, and I ran into my buddy Eric Gundlach, and he was like, "Dude dishwasher just got fired for throwing away half of our silverware because he didn't want to wash it. Do you want a job?" And I was like, "Yes man." And I went and filled out an application, did an interview and got the job.

MH: All right, uh did you need a job, or did you just want a job?

GP: I needed a job.

MH: okay, and uh what was your typical daily workload?

GP: um I worked for five to six hours starting at 6 or 7:00, and I would just wash dishes constantly. There wouldn't be any breaks dishes would just keep coming back and then afterwards I would have to clean up the work place and put dishes back where they belonged. And on days like football games and basketball games I would be there for seven hours or so. Umm and that was just real intense during those days.

MH: okay, umm and if you don't mind me asking how much did you make?

GP: uh I made \$7.25 minimum wage plus 10% of all tips including delivery and server tips. And I got a free meal every shift.

MH: um okay compare your workload with your pay.

GP: Um I'd say I got paid more than I deserved. [laughter]

MH: okay.

MH: what did you like best about your job?

GP: Umm, I liked the food the best. [laughter] I always got calzones or pizza, custom made sandwiches once a day (coughs) it was it was really good. And the tips were cool cause it funded my alcohol for the night, and then some.

MH: What did you like worst about the job?

GP: Doing dishes [laughter]. No, no no the isolation cause I was in a completely separate room from everyone else and I couldn't hear anything because the dishwashing machine was loud and the spraying was loud and the scrubbing was loud and people would only pop in from time to time, so I didn't really have the ability to talk with my coworkers.

MH: Okay. [pause]

MH: um and you didn't, did you have any like talking, conversations with the customers or no?

GP: um, no, not really cause I was always in the back.

MH: um how did you like your coworkers?

GP: They were all cool, they were all nice. Um, they were just chill.

MH: How did you like your manager?

GP: Um, well he fired me, and he didn't have any sympathy for my situation (fractured bones in his hand). So, I don't didn't like him. And he was kind of kind of uh I don't know he just make me nervous cause he was always had this this really lame look on his face, it might have just been his face [laughter].

MH: okay, if you could have changed one thing what would it have been?

GP: ummm, [pause] I would have liked to have people working with me, so I could have talked to them. I would have put the dishwashing area closer to the cooking area, so I could talk to the cooks cause they're cool.

MH: um

GP: I just didn't like being isolated

MH: Understandable.

MH: uh, how did you get to work, was transportation an issue?

GP: Uh, at first I walked and rode my bike, but as soon as I got my van I drove there.

MH: Okay. Um, when you walked and rode your bike was in any weather conditions?

Did you ever have to not go because of not being able to get there?

GP: um, no cause I mean I can walk through basically any kind of weather. I just have to put clothes on, but I have lied when it was really really snowy that I couldn't get to work.

MH: okay [he coughs]

MH: um, [pause] did you like working in a restaurant? Do you like the restaurant environment?

GP: It was alright, it was pretty cool. Um, there's a lot of people, I mean a lot of people I never even talked to, I never even got to know their names after two months of working there, because there's the servers there's the cooks, there's the uh salad sandwich makers, and uh there's just a lot of people.

MH: Okay.

MH: uhm [pause] so what was your best experience, your best time at work?

GP: Uh my best time at work was when um I was in the middle of cleaning up the dishes and my manager was like, "Hey Greg dude, I know you know where to get bomb weed." So, he asked me to take off real quick and go pick him up and eighth and I was still getting paid while doing that. And I had him doing my dishes, while I was going to get him weed. And he also really liked the weed [small laughter] and he hooked me up [laughter]

MH: All right, um what was your worst experience at work?

GP: Uh, it was probably one of the game days when it was really really hectic, and uh [pause] I don't know it was just uh like and overload of dishes. There were lines out the door with people waiting to be seated, it was just crazy. I made like sixty dollars in tips that night, its like 10% of everything.

MH: What advice would you give to someone working in a restaurant?

GP: I would say just do your job and make sure you come in and I mean everyone pretty much qualifies unless your absolutely retarded. But, I would just say do your work, and don't take it too seriously, but serious enough to not get fired.

MH: All right, and earlier you said you needed a job, what kind of money expenses do you have?

GP: Umm, I have to buy my on food and pay for my own gas, which is pretty expensive since I have to go to Dublin everyday back and forth for school (New River Valley Community College). And other than that my parents take care of bills and everything.

MH: Okay.

MH: And uh what kind of career do you want to have?

GP: Umm

MH: Do you want to have a career in the restaurant business or do you wanna

GP: I kind of want to be a biologist because I think meiosis is awesome, and same with mitosis. And all of those cool biological processes.

MH: All right, so where do you see yourself in five to ten years?

GP: Umm, either really really really rich because I'm doing some cool musical stuff, or really really rich because I am a really good biologist. [giggling]

MH: All right, and is there anything else you would like to share?

GP: umm, nope.

MH: okay, thank you.