

**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY – SHAWN NICHOLSON
MILTON VANN, AN AFRICAN AMERICAN, DISCUSSES HIS CAREER
AS A PRODUCTION WORKER AND UAW MEMBER
AT THE FISHER BODY PLANT IN LANSING, MI**

[recorder clicking]

9Marilyn Coulter: Fisher Body Historical Team interview. Today is approx-, is February...

11Female: Six.

13Marilyn Coulter: ...6, 2006. It's approximately 11:10 a.m. We are at UAW Local 602 Frank Dryer Greenhouse. First we'll introduce the team.

16Earl Nicholson: Earl Nicholson.

18Cheryl McQuaid: Cheryl McQuaid.

20Jerri Smith: Jerri Smith.

22John Fedewa: John Fedewa.

24Gary Judy: Gary Judy.

26Marilyn Coulter: And Marilyn Coulter. Today we're here with Milton Vann. Milton, could you please say [papers rustling] and spell your name for us, please?

29Milton Vann: Okay. My name is Milton J. Vann. That's M-I-L-T-O-N, J as in Jerome and last name Vann, V as in Victor, V-A-N-N.

32Marilyn Coulter: [0:43] Could you please give us your address?

34Milton Vann: I live at 201 North Hagadorn, East Lansing, Michigan 48823.

36Marilyn Coulter: [0:51] Are you married?

38Milton Vann: Yes, 35 years.

40Marilyn Coulter: [0:55] And do you have children.

42Milton Vann: Two, two boys.

44Marilyn Coulter: All right. [0:59] Now where were you born?

46Milton Vann: Detroit.

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Detroit. [1:01] Were you also raised in Detroit?
3
4 Milton Vann: Yes. [tapping]
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [1:04] And your education?
7
8 Milton Vann: BS in Social Science from Michigan State 1971.
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: [1:11] And w-, uh, were you ever in the military?
11
12 Milton Vann: Air force.
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: Oh. [1:15] And how long were you there?
15
16 Milton Vann: Four years.
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: [1:19] And, um, what did your parents do?
19
20 Milton Vann: My father worked, uh, uh, in a factory, a working class people. Uh, it was
21 a company called Motor Products and, um, they went outta business in the
22 early '50s and he never went back to work. [sighing] Uh, I think they have
23 – actually have a Motor Products in Owosso or somewhere but I don't
24 know if it's the same company.
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: Hm. [1:44] So, uh, what did you do before you hired in?
27
28 Milton Vann: I was a student at Michigan State.
29
30 Marilyn Coulter: [1:54] So you're a student at Michigan State and you were studying [your
31 1:57] social science?
32
33 Milton Vann: My first one was med tech.
34
35 Marilyn Coulter: Oh, as a med tech. So, um, you're at Michigan State University. You've
36 come from a – your f-, your father was a factory worker.
37
38 Milton Vann: Right.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: [2:10] What brought you in to Fisher Body?
41
42 Milton Vann: Well after, uh, I had quit school in '66 and, uh, and I came back here in
43 '67 and this was, eh, the really only place that had – you know, was doing
44 hiring [at 2:26] any real substantial jobs and plus I come from –
45 [background noises] and from where [tapping] just about all my family
46 were autoworkers [clicking] for Chrysler primarily.

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: [2:36] So, um, did you know anything about Fisher Body before you came
3 in?
4
5 Milton Vann: [tsk] No, I didn't.
6
7 Marilyn Coulter: Hm.
8
9 Milton Vann: I remember one summer I, uh, I was gonna try to – a professor was gonna
10 get me a job here but I didn't know I d-, couldn't [see 2:49], [laughter] so
11 that – that's [inaudible 2:51] but I, I had no idea about Fisher Body or I
12 didn't know anything about Lansing other than it was the state capitol.
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: Yeah. [2:58] Um, what did you think about factory workers prior to
15 coming in here since you came from the automotive [tapping] town of
16 Detroit?
17
18 Milton Vann: [tsk] Well I [had an 3:03] [engine humming] opinion per se. I don't know
19 that, uh, they were – uh, you know, they were hardworking people because
20 I grew up [into 3:11] that.
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [3:13] So, um, when did you hire in to Fisher Body?
23
24 Milton Vann: Uh, 10/9/67.
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: [3:21] So do you remember how that came about? [3:23] Y-, did you, um
27 – how did you – how was your employment? [3:26] Did you come to the
28 plant? [3:28] Did you stand in line...
29
30 Milton Vann: Yeah. Actually...
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: ...[outside 3:29]?
33
34 Milton Vann: ...I came to the plant, I was expecting long lines like in Detroit [tapping]
35 and I got here one morning and there was – [laughter] there was nobody
36 here. You know, they were – this was during the Vietnam [throat clearing]
37 era and I guess they really had difficulty actually getting people to work. I
38 mean they would advertise in the newspaper, uh, you know, to get your,
39 you know, relatives or whoever to come and work at Fisher Body. But I
40 actually stood in line out in Detroit. [Contrast with that 3:53], Detroit,
41 even under, um, good times, I mean there will be blocks and blocks of
42 people [tapping] standing in line for [thumping] for factory jobs. 'Cause
43 one time [inaudible 4:01] but, uh, I was totally shocked. There was
44 nobody [laughter] in line.
45
46 Marilyn Coulter: [4:08] So you just walked right in?

1
2Milton Vann: Just walked right in and, [clicking] uh, signed up and I guess a few days
3 later, you know, I was working.
4
5Marilyn Coulter: [4:16] So do, do you remember, um, what job you did...
6
7Milton Vann: Eh...
8
9Marilyn Coulter: ...and what shift?
10
11Milton Vann: I worked nightshift and my first job primarily was trunk rubbers and I
12 stayed on trunk rubbers for about 5 years and I worked with this lady
13 named Hazel [Meredith 4:31]. Uh, I'll never forget Hazel who was one of
14 the few women who actually worked in, uh, in the Soft Trim Department,
15 what they called it at the time. Most of the women were working in the
16 Cushion Room.
17
18Marilyn Coulter: [Okay 4:41]. [4:42] Can you please explain the Soft Trim and Cushion
19 Room for us, please?
20
21Milton Vann: Uh, [sighing] well the Cushion Room is where they actually built the seats
22 and I guess they made a distinction between Soft and Hard Trim, eh, and,
23 uh, Soft Trim, I guess, is, uh, uh, you know, we were just putting in just,
24 uh... [knocking] [squeaking]
25
26Marilyn Coulter: [5:03] So that was more or less – the soft trim, was that more like the
27 interior stuff that people would see, like armrests and...
28
29Milton Vann: Uh, what's that t-, [laughter] wait a minute...
30
31Marilyn Coulter: ...[inaudible 5:11]?
32
33Milton Vann: Maybe we were in Hardware. Maybe [I get 5:13] confused. No. It was
34 Hardware. I think Soft Trim was up, up in [inaudible 5:16] somewhere and
35 they actually put in the seats and stuff and I was in Hardware. That's right.
36
37Marilyn Coulter: And...
38
39Milton Vann: You know, we did stuff like trunk rubbers, moldings, [thumping] uh, you
40 know, just the basic building up of the body after they come outta the, uh,
41 Paint Department.
42
43Marilyn Coulter: [5:31] Covering up all those sharp metal edges on...
44
45Milton Vann: Right. 'Cause I used to spray deadeners f-, fiberglass deadeners and, you
46 know, we'd put all that stuff in...

1
2Marilyn Coulter: Y-...
3
4Milton Vann: ...before...
5
6Marilyn Coulter: [5:40] You sprayed fib-, fiberglass...
7
8Milton Vann: Fiberglass deadeners.
9
10Marilyn Coulter: And that...
11
12Milton Vann: That's for soundproofing.
13
14Marilyn Coulter: Oh, okay, for soundproofing.
15
16Milton Vann: Right.
17
18Marilyn Coulter: [5:46] And that would go on the floor, on the walls?
19
20Milton Vann: Yeah, inside the – right.
21
22Marilyn Coulter: Oh, okay. So, um...
23
24Milton Vann: But primarily I was work-, I worked trunk rubbers and that was my first
25 introduction to, uh, you know, work, real work.
26
27Marilyn Coulter: [6:01] So what did you think about that when you walked in and you saw
28 the inside of that plant and you were taken [thumping] to your job? [6:06]
29 Do you remember that process?
30
31Milton Vann: [Oh, I 6:07] – it was, it was kinda, you know, you feel like you first day in,
32 um, [crinkling] in a strange school and you didn't know anybody and, uh,
33 it was overwhelming. It was, uh, it was a lotta people. You didn't know
34 anybody and, uh, you had to orient, orient yourself to it.
35
36Marilyn Coulter: [6:26] So was there anybody who took you under their wing or who, who
37 trained you? [6:31] Do you [remember] [inaudible 6:31]?
38
39Milton Vann: Uh, no, not really. The only person I remember really at the time was the
40 supervi-, the supervisor, Dick Bud, was my first supervisor and, uh, uh,
41 but, you know, once I got on the job, uh, eh, you know, and actually
42 learned the job, you, you more or less stayed there and I used to – of
43 course everybody hated it because you – the first time, you know, actually
44 doing production and the monotony and the, the, uh, just the – [be able
45 6:58] to endure the physical work to make the adaptation to the physical
46 work lifestyle.

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: [7:04] How was that for you, coming from Michigan State being a student
3 and then working on the assembly line?
4
5 Milton Vann: Right. Well it was, uh, it wasn't what I expected, you know. [laughter] I
6 escaped Detroit just so I could get away from the auto industry and to end
7 up in the [thumping] auto industry in Lansing. [laughter]
8
9 Marilyn Coulter: Yeah, that's a little bit...
10
11 Milton Vann: You know?
12
13 Marilyn Coulter: ...ir-, irony there, [I guess 7:21]. [throat clearing] [7:22] So, um, how old
14 were you when you hired in?
15
16 Milton Vann: I was 22 years old.
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: You were 22. [7:31] So at 22 and you came in and, um, you hired in, were
19 there any kind of new hire initiations or pranks or anything that were
20 played on you?
21
22 Milton Vann: No. I don't remember. We had a brief, um, orientation but, you know,
23 everybody was – people were pretty, pretty nice, nice people.
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: [7:50] So your first day was a pretty good day?
26
27 Milton Vann: Oh, yeah. [papers rustling] Yeah. I expect things to be – you know, 'cause
28 you got that high school mode, you think, you know, you had a lotta fear
29 and stuff but, uh, you know, you didn't realize these were adults. They
30 weren't children.
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
33
34 Milton Vann: And people – nice people in Lansing.
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: [8:05] Now did you say this was the dayshift that you hired in on?
37
38 Milton Vann: Nightshift.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: [8:08] You hired in on nightshift? [8:10] So now you said that Hazel
41 [Meredith 8:13] [tapping] was one of – was she like the only woman
42 around or was she [inaudible 8:16]?
43
44 Milton Vann: Oh, she wasn't the only one but they only had just a few women in, in, uh,
45 Trim Department at the time and I think I talked to you before
46 [background noises] ['cause they 8:23] used to have to give her extra time

1 to go to the [coughing] bathroom because the bathroom was downstairs on
2 the main floor and we were all upstairs. Both lines were upstairs at the
3 time. That's before we had the, the new part built in the '80s.
4

5Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [8:37] And so you said they had both lines, so they ran 2 car lines
6 [inaudible 8:41]?
7

8Milton Vann: Upstairs. Right.
9

10Marilyn Coulter: So...
11

12Milton Vann: And it's amazing they had over 5,000 people in the, you know – we had no
13 i-, didn't have a clue how compacted we were in there.
14

15Marilyn Coulter: [Oh 8:52].
16

17Milton Vann: But they had over 5,000 people in that plant and, and like I said [engine
18 humming] that's before they built the new, you know, downstairs, you
19 know, assembly line.
20

21Marilyn Coulter: Hm. [8:59] Do remember how many products you built back then?
22

23Milton Vann: We built – I think at one time we had over about 30 different car styles.
24

25Marilyn Coulter: [9:07] And that was colors and...
26

27Milton Vann: Colors [of 9:09] station wagons, police cars, um, uh, [sighing] 2 doors, 4
28 doors, uh, you name it, we b-, I think it was pretty close to 30 different
29 model cars we built [popping] in that plant.
30

31Marilyn Coulter: [Oh 9:22], that was very [interesting 9:22]. [9:24] So were there many
32 other African-Americans there?
33

34Milton Vann: Not...
35

36Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 9:29].
37

38Milton Vann: ...very many. That was 1 shocking thing about it because usually,
39 generally in the auto industry, you think there'll be lot of black Americans
40 and, and the, uh, production w-, was different here in Lansing. It was
41 predominantly white. You know, [inaudible 9:41] in your workgroup, uh,
42 [sighing] and it'd be 30-40 people, you know, may be the only black in
43 there.
44

45Marilyn Coulter: [9:50] What about Latinos?
46

1Milton Vann: Uh...

2

3Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 9:52].

4

5Milton Vann: ...just a handful and, and this is the first time I ever really come, come in
6 contact with Latinos and a-, and the American Indians.

7

8Marilyn Coulter: [10:00] Really? [10:01] And how was that for you?

9

10Milton Vann: Uh, that was interesting, uh, especially with American Indians. I know
11 [George Roy 10:05] who's probably still working, he came from
12 Manitoulin Island in Canada and I think it was about 4 or 5 guys who
13 came from Manitoulin Island and that's the first, first contact I had with
14 Native Americans or Native Canadians or whatever, you know.

15

16Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [11:20] And so what was the environment like for the African-
17 Americans and [clanking] the Hispanics and the, and the women?

18

19Milton Vann: I didn't s-, you know, uh [laughter] – there was such a few, I don't think
20 there was – I don't remember any conflicts.

21

22Marilyn Coulter: [And 10:35] very few in 1967. That's pretty great. [10:39] Um, so what
23 did you think of the people in the plant?

24

25Milton Vann: Well they were good people. [engine humming] I mean they were
26 hardworking people. Uh, everybody came and did their job. Uh, you
27 know, it was a new lifestyle to adapt to and, and that's the hard part, was
28 just being a-, adapt to a new [clicking] lifestyle and as time go on, [throat
29 clearing] uh, you, you really gain more respect because then you really
30 understand the big picture. There's no typical factory worker per se. You
31 know, there's a diversity of, uh, people, diversity of skills, diversity of
32 education, diversity of everything and I don't mean racial diversity.
33 [knocking]

34

35Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

36

37Milton Vann: It's just diversity of people.

38

39Marilyn Coulter: [11:22] Did you find a lotta people like yourself [clicking] that had come
40 from college and was working in the plant b-, [for whatever 11:27]
41 reasons?

42

43Milton Vann: Well in the sense that, like I said, there's no typical factory worker...

44

45Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

46

1Milton Vann: ...s-, everybody kinda – you could always sell your labor regardless. I
2 mean, we had lawyers. You know, Jack [Phillips 11:39], uh, [thumping]
3 he actually retired outta here and he was a lawyer. We had one guy from
4 Leslie who was a lawyer. We had all kinds of people.
5

6Marilyn Coulter: Oh, [that's great 11:47].
7

8Jerri Smith: Now you said you hired in on Trim. [11:50] Did you always stay in the
9 Trim Shop or did you go in Body or Paint [clanking] or anything?
10

11Milton Vann: I've always stayed in Trim and then I went – later on in QC [tapping] but
12 still I was in Trim.
13

14Jerri Smith: Oh, this is Jerri Smith. [thumping] [tapping]
15

16Milton Vann: Mostly, uh, n-, very seldom – I've maybe once or twice worked on the M
17 System or B System. I've always worked on the A System or C System.
18

19Marilyn Coulter: Um, now, Milt, you said that you worked nights? [12:14] Did you always
20 work on nightshift? [12:15] Did you ever work days?
21

22Milton Vann: I only worked days out of almost 37 years, 36.7 to be exact, I may have
23 worked, uh, a year and a half on days.
24

25Marilyn Coulter: Only a year and a half. [12:27] N-, uh, one would think dayshift...
26 [tapping] [papers rustling]
27

28Milton Vann: And that's on 3 different [papers rustling] occasions.
29

30Marilyn Coulter: One would think that days would be a preferred shift. [12:33] Were there
31 many people – do you prefer nights [inaudible 12:35]?
32

33Milton Vann: Yeah. You know, it's, uh – it was – we had our own special, [tapping] you
34 know – was one thing about the nightshift, I always felt special about it
35 because, you know, we had people who were part of the night-shifters.
36 [laughter] I mean we just enjoyed being on nights where everybody else
37 wanted to go to days. It was never an issue. I preferred, preferred, uh,
38 nights and even when I went to days, uh, I really had a difficult time. I had
39 to get back to nights. I had – I did everything in, in my power to get back
40 to nights. My world was really turned upsidedown when I went to
41 dayshift.
42

43Marilyn Coulter: [13:06] Really? [13:07] Was there anything that you noticed that was
44 different between the plant culture on nights versus days?
45

1Milton Vann: Uh, [sighing] well I wasn't on days long enough but, uh, see the nightshift
2 was a little bit more vibrant. You had probably younger people, um. Uh, I
3 think it was more cohesive on, on the nightshift from my point of view.
4 And maybe it's, you know, I may be wrong about that but, uh – I don't
5 know. Nights was special, [laughter] you know, to me, uh. I'm sure people
6 argue that the dayshift was [background noises] the same thing for them.
7 But, but like I said, we had our own permanent people who've been on
8 nights for years and who wouldn't prefer it any other way.
9

10Marilyn Coulter: [13:45] So, um, can you tell me how long did you do trunk rubbers
11 [tapping] or did you do that for a long [time 13:52]?
12

13Milton Vann: I did trunk rubbers for about 5 years.
14

15Marilyn Coulter: [13:54] For 5 years? [13:57] So 5 years, eh, w-, did you keep the same
16 partner? [14:00] Did you do that by yourself?
17

18Milton Vann: Oh, I had s-, a different part-, after, uh, I think Hazel ended up retiring and
19 then we had, you know, different partners and stuff.
20

21Marilyn Coulter: Oh. [thumping] [14:09] So, um, after 5 years, then where'd you go?
22

23Milton Vann: And I think I did deadeners, uh, started spraying fiberglass deadeners, uh,
24 and then 1 time I went to windshield clips and then, uh – John Powers was
25 our [tapping] general foreman and he asked me did I – he offered the, uh,
26 door glass for me and that was a really good job and, uh, I don't know if
27 anybody mentioned John Powers who gen-, who was our general foreman
28 who always had a reputation for being hardnosed but 1 thing looking back
29 in retrospect, [laughter] John Powers was pretty fair. But he – I mean, he
30 was like a despot but, uh, if you did a good job, he would reward you.
31

32Marilyn Coulter: [14:49] How'd he reward you?
33

34Milton Vann: Well, like I said, with the, uh, you know, with the job. And he didn't have
35 to do that, uh. And I remember 1 time, uh, Willie Fuller was, uh, wanted
36 to go to State Police Academy and, and nobody would, uh, give him
37 educational leave and John Powers personally went down to [Jerry Brooks
38 15:08] and demanded that Willie get, uh, an educational leave. And John
39 Powers, here's a guy who had a reputation actually for firing his own
40 [knocking] kid and plus he had a reputation [laughter] – a hell of a
41 reputation and, and, you know, I w-...
42

43Marilyn Coulter: [15:22] He au-, he fired his own kid?
44

45Milton Vann: He actually fired his own kid. So you didn't mess around with Powers
46 [laughter] but, you know, it was, uh, you know, it – like I said, it was – he

1 was hardnosed but looking back, you know, it's, you know, you kinda, you
2 kinda laugh because that's the way the culture was back [tapping] then and
3 that's the way it was. You know, we, uh, we knew our limits. [laughter]
4

5Marilyn Coulter: [15:44] Oh, so everyone [background noises] knew their limits?
6

7Milton Vann: They s-, definitely knew their limits. [laughter]
8

9Marilyn Coulter: Now you said that you worked on the trunk rubbers and you worked with
10 fiberglass. [15:54] Was there any kind of special equipment that you had
11 to wear when you're working with this type of...
12

13Milton Vann: Well...
14

15Marilyn Coulter: ...[inaudible 15:59]?
16

17Milton Vann: ...at the time, uh, [sighing] you know, we didn't have all the safety
18 precautions and even to this day, sometime [engine humming] I worry
19 about spraying fiber-, I think I s-, spent a year on that job and, uh, you
20 know, spraying that stuff and fiberglass, I think, has been known to be a
21 carcinogen but there was never any, uh, [background noises] you know,
22 mask or anything. Uh, they didn't push safety back in those days. [engine
23 humming]
24

25Marilyn Coulter: [16:23] Do you kinda remember when safety became an issue?
26

27Milton Vann: Well at one point in time, actually we made it an issue because when we
28 were on, uh – we were doing, uh, uh, trunk rubbers, uh, and some of the
29 s-, the sealant and we wanted information about it and this was before the,
30 the union or management really got into it and, uh, we made it, eh, eh, an
31 issue and we had a difficult time trying to get information [tapping] about,
32 you know, what we were actually working with. And you know 'cause
33 you, you taught the class about, uh, you know, the [coughing] s-, the
34 safety in the w-, in the workplace. Uh, but that information wasn't
35 available and, and then when they did come with the information, they
36 would just, uh, give you, you just a general description. Like they might
37 say well [background noises] it's aromatic carbohydra-, car-, carbo-
38 [knocking] carbohydra-, [laughter] I can't even pronounce the word right
39 now. Anyway, which really means that it smells but they didn't tell you
40 what compounds and stuff you were actually working with.
41

42Marilyn Coulter: [Mm-hm 17:23].
43

44Milton Vann: And, uh, I'm glad that was a big change, so you – at least you know
45 exactly the chemicals you were working with. And one time when we're
46 building, uh, [tsk] door glass, they came with a process where they would

1 bake the – at least the rear glass into – in this polyvinyl, uh – well the stuff
2 was really basically polyvinylchloride, which is a known carcinogen, and
3 they would actually blow that out into a – into the shop and we raised holy
4 hell about that and, and finally they were forced to, uh, vent the, uh, the
5 stuff in-, into the atmosphere. They had to go to the city and get a
6 [thumping] – get permission but, you know, we forced them. And this is
7 all before, you know, these issues w-, eh, eh, I mean became an issue
8 about health and, and safety that we were pushing this stuff ourselves.
9

10Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. That's [excellent 18:12]. So, um...

11

12Milton Vann: Because some of us – look, what people gotta understand is that when I,
13 when I mention diversity, you, you had a diversity of [background noises]
14 education. You had [throat clearing] a diversity of skills. And that – when
15 these issues came up, there was always somebody in the plant who had
16 some expertise. I mean I've had chemistry before, uh, you know, whether
17 a guy could read or write, he might be a mechanical genius. You had
18 [knocking] all these, these people with all these skills and they could
19 always step forward [thumping] and, and, and complete the stuff.
20

21Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. Well that's good. [18:47] Um, so you all were a tightknit group
22 also, I take it, if you were able to come together like that? [papers rustling]
23 [18:54] Were you a tightknit group?
24

25Milton Vann: Oh, yeah, but we had our own s-, you know, like in, in glass, you know,
26 there was a special group in and of itself and, and, uh, I actually became –
27 people became your family in there. I mean you saw them more than you
28 saw your own spouse.
29

30Marilyn Coulter: [19:10] You saw them more and you said they became your family?
31

32Milton Vann: They became your family, your de facto family. They were your family
33 while you spend 8, 9, 10 hours [background noises] a night in, in the shop.
34

35Marilyn Coulter: [19:19] So back then, that was like the longest you would have to work
36 was 10 hours?
37

38Milton Vann: Yeah. Well actually when I first hired in there, we were doing [engine
39 humming] 10.3 hours every – not right away but later on, we would do
40 10.3 hours every night. [papers rustling]
41

42Marilyn Coulter: [19:31] Now was this just 5 days [clanking] a week or...
43

44Milton Vann: Um...

45

46Marilyn Coulter: ...how many days?

1
2Milton Vann: ...5 days and then if we worked Saturday, [tapping] we'd probably work 6
3 hours on Saturday and it was pretty hard, you know, 'cause you can
4 imagine [background noises] working 5 hours and then work another 5
5 and then, then 3/10th more. That was, eh – that got – really got outta hand.
6 And at one point, it got so bad that people in the Body Shop were just
7 about ready to revolt. [engine humming]
8
9Marilyn Coulter: [19:54] Really?
10
11Milton Vann: Because it was extremely hard.
12
13Marilyn Coulter: [19:55] 'Cause you were working a lot of t-, now, um, you said that the –
14 what made the Glass Department special? You said that they were really a
15 tightknit group. [20:03] What makes the [thumping] Glass Department
16 such a tightknit group? [20:05] What do you think about that? [clanking]
17
18Milton Vann: Because I guess we had, you know, unique jobs and, and, and the genius
19 of the people [squeaking] is that we were always able to organize our
20 work. You know, whatever the task was, you know, we would get
21 together. [background noises] You know, they, you know, they talk about
22 this stuff now but, [squeaking] uh, I mean we could always figure out
23 how, how to do our job and do it efficiently and squeeze some time off for
24 ourselves.
25
26Marilyn Coulter: Oh. [20:29] So how much time would you be able to squeeze out for
27 yourself?
28
29Milton Vann: Uh, [sighing] I don't know. We'd probably spend, uh, maybe a extra 40 or
30 maybe an hour a night just f-, just for ourselves because we organize the
31 work. We would have 1 person, uh, with, with like, when we – at one
32 point, we had 4 people on both sides. Uh, we had 3 people build – let's say
33 2 people building glass, front door glass, 1 building rear door glass and the
34 one on the line just installing and we would build so much glass up
35 towards the end of the night, we just [engine humming] – we had so much
36 glass [laughter] on the floor, we just installed it and everybody could
37 relax.
38
39Marilyn Coulter: [21:06] So what did you have to do when you say you built glass? [21:08]
40 What did you have to do to build glass? [21:10] [What do you 21:10]...
41
42Milton Vann: To build glass is to – especially when we built – had the Cutlass, uh, you
43 have to put fasteners and, and, uh – I can't really describe it – uh, where
44 you could actually slide down what they call the door channels. You had
45 to build – you just couldn't put the glass in and s-, you have to have
46 fasteners where the glass could fix-, fixate itself inside so you can roll it

1 up and down. And sometime that was really, uh, you know, an extensive
2 process but they, as time went on, they made it simpler and simpler and
3 used less and less people. But w-, when we were building the Cutlass, that
4 was, uh, a big buildup. That's a big job.
5

6Marilyn Coulter: [21:45] So where you were in the door glass area where you did the side
7 glass, not the windshield or back glass?
8

9Milton Vann: Right.
10

11Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
12

13Milton Vann: No, I never did windshield or back glass, just d-, sliding glass.
14

15Marilyn Coulter: [21:54] So that was easy to install? [21:56] Did you get cut or anything
16 like that messing with glass?
17

18Milton Vann: Oh, yeah. It was – [laughter] every once in a while o-, one would explode
19 on you but just like everything else in there and I don't care how difficult
20 the jobs were, you do this stuff every day and you really [thumping] got
21 good at it. You could do it in your sleep. I mean the most complex jobs
22 became easy. [background noises]
23

24Marilyn Coulter: Oh. S-...
25

26Earl Nicholson: Earl Nicholson. [22:17] Why don't you, [tapping] uh, take a moment and
27 explain, explain what Glass Group is? I think a lotta people, uh, you know
28 – what are [clanking] groups?
29

30Milton Vann: Well we had specialized groups at the time and later on they, you know,
31 they changed that but, of course, [thumping] we actually got paid a little
32 bit more, maybe 7 cents more an hour but Glass Group, I think, really
33 consist of side glass, back glass, and, [tapping] uh, and, and, and win-,
34 windshield. And like I said there were specialized [throat clearing] groups
35 and, uh, uh, they required a little bit more skills. I, I remember before we
36 had robots, the guys used to run the beads on the back glass and the
37 windshield. They did that by h-, hand and that took a lotta skill 'cause they
38 had to be right. Right now they do it with robots but people actually did it
39 by hand and even after one time it installed a – they had an \$80,000
40 machine to do that, uh, and, uh, and it, it really, it really [failed 23:16].
41 That was a lotta money back then for them. But, you know, we always end
42 up, uh, out working on machines and peop-, people are really good, really
43 skillful. [tapping]
44

45Marilyn Coulter: [23:29] Um, how long did you work in the Glass Department?
46

1Milton Vann: [tsk] I think I spent about – that’s the longest area I ever worked in and I
2 think I spent about, uh, [engine humming] I think at least 11 years just...
3
4Marilyn Coulter: [Oh].
5
6Milton Vann: ...building door glass. It was a good job. It was one of the better jobs.
7 [engine humming]
8
9Marilyn Coulter: Did you, [background noises] um, h-, I know you said you had – you were
10 like a family. [23:45] Did any of those [inaudible 23:46] family, family
11 friendships extend outside the plant?
12
13Milton Vann: Oh, yeah. We would, you know – guys who I met up f-, up in – from
14 [Vesterberg 23:53] and St. Louis area. You know, we would, [background
15 noises] we would go up there. [throat clearing] And it was a totally
16 different world. You know, I never even know [thumping] those places
17 existed 'cause I was from Detroit, you know, [laughter] and Detroit, no-,
18 nothing really exist outside Detroit. But they had little towns, like St.
19 Louis, you know, I never even heard of before. Uh, and, and you really got
20 to, um, you know, learn about other people’s lives, especially for those
21 workers who worked in rural areas who had small farms or who were f-,
22 fulltime farmers. It was eye-, you know, [background noises] eye-opening.
23
24Marilyn Coulter: [24:23] What would you say was probably one of the most surprising or
25 interesting things you learned about a coworker?
26
27Milton Vann: I don’t know so much as – I was just amazed by the people’s abilities to,
28 to do so many different things. I remember I had one friend of mine and I
29 didn’t – I was shocked that he could-, I didn’t even know he couldn’t read
30 or read very little and, uh, I would go over to his house and he would have
31 a steering collum out around 3:00 and about around 6:00, he’s driving the
32 car. Uh, [laughter] the guy was really a mechanical genius. You know, he,
33 he couldn’t read but you had, you had these people with all these abilities,
34 which [tapping] would totally amaze me, you know, that, you know, that
35 don’t fit the public’s eye of, you know, factory workers. They get this
36 monolithic [tapping] view of what a factory worker is but really the
37 diversity of skills, uh, eh, would just amaze me. [clicking] And I’ll give
38 you another example. Uh, this other friend of mine, uh – and you know
39 Jim [Denike 25:25], uh...
40
41Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
42
43Milton Vann: ...you know, computer genius and, and like I, I mentioned once before
44 that he had – was checking his – checking our paychecks and he wrote,
45 wrote these programs and, and found out there was an error in the program
46 from whoever processed our paychecks. Here’s a guy on the line, who’s

1 writing computer program and then – and that resulted in about \$17,000
2 and one week, we got like 4 or 5 [throat clearing] extra bucks. It was just
3 in pennies but over a period of time but the point...
4

5 Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 25:53].
6

7 Milton Vann: ...is that you have somebody working on the assembly line who could
8 write in machine language programs. I mean that's the amazing part to me,
9 was that all the skills that, that, that people brought to the plant.
10

11 Marilyn Coulter: [Hm 26:09]. Earl?
12

13 Earl Nicholson: Uh, Earl Nicholson. You said, uh – you made a comment of, uh, people's
14 monolithic views of factory workers. [26:17] Could you elaborate on that
15 just a little bit?
16

17 Milton Vann: Well, you know, the general public think that, uh, for one thing, they, they
18 think factory workers are uneducated and I think at one point we had like
19 over 60 people had college degrees. Uh, [phew] I'm sure if you – even just
20 the, you know, the academic level but, but the skill level of, you know,
21 guys who would build they own homes, uh, lay their own concrete. Um, I
22 mean people in the university couldn't possibly even do those kind of d-,
23 do [those things or even 26:48] [background noises] have those skills. So
24 the, the idea that, uh, [background noises] factory workers were
25 uneducated or unskillful was just, was just totally incorrect because you
26 had people with tremendous skills, uh, and they refined those skills and
27 then they came to the shop.
28

29 You know, there was always somebody there to, uh, you know, execute.
30 Just for, for example, when we first started using computers in the plant,
31 nobody taught – most of us, we learned on our own. So when the time
32 came and they need people with computer skills, [throat clearing] they
33 were out there. They were right on assembly line and, uh, you know, and
34 they were, you know, learning how to do [draft 27:28]. They, they were
35 doing word processing [knocking] way beyond, you know, [tapping]
36 anything that we're supposed to know as, you know, as typical factory
37 workers. You know, that's supposed to have been out of our realm but
38 people made a hobby. It was, it was a hobby for me, computers.
39

40 Marilyn Coulter: [27:42] So did these hobbies and these different talents that your
41 coworkers have, were you able – ever able to utilize those outside the
42 plant?
43

44 Milton Vann: Oh my God. Anything I needed to do I didn't know how to do, I used'm as
45 a resource whether I'm installing a, a dishwasher or anything that I needed
46 to know – and I didn't have any skills. I didn't even know how to hold a

1 motor in my hand 'cause I never worked before in my life. I mean actually
2 real work. And, uh, you find out that, you know, just like, like men and
3 women who came from rural areas, they knew how to work. Eh, I didn't
4 know how to work. Even though I went to a university, it didn't prepare
5 me to do actually, eh, you know...

6

7Marilyn Coulter: Physical...

8

9Milton Vann: ...the physical work and not only [inaudible 28:23] define the work. It's
10 not just doing any repetitious thing. It's being able to organize work
11 efficiently so you, you could, you know – so it wouldn't really kill you.
12 You know, you had to organize this work yourself. But a lotta people
13 came in and they knew about machinery. They had all these – like I said,
14 they had all these skills that normally, uh, society wouldn't, you know,
15 attribute to factory workers but they had a tremendous amount of skills. I
16 mean they were repairing cars, building cars, eh, on their own, painting
17 cars. When they come in the plant, they had these skills.

18

19Marilyn Coulter: [28:57] And which by them coming in with those skills and with that
20 [background noises] certain work ethic, it sounds like it helped them do
21 what [background noises] they had to do...

22

23Milton Vann: Well I think...

24

25Marilyn Coulter: ...on a daily basis.

26

27Milton Vann: You know, I never worked in another plant before but I always thought
28 that was – with the uni-, especially with the university here and, you
29 know, and the people who worked in the rural areas, uh, uh, you just had
30 a, you, you had a tremendous pool of, of talent and, and I think that's what
31 made Fisher Body so successful. [engine humming]

32

33Marilyn Coulter: So you, you said that, um, we had a lot of talent; you were able to work
34 together and you were able to build up stock and work a way and work
35 together in such a way and do a te-, and become a team that you were able
36 to [thumping] get extra time. [29:40] What types of things did you guys do
37 in there, extra time to kind of pass that time and get you through your day?

38

39Milton Vann: Well because the – well, [sighing] you know, we would read or visit
40 people. Uh, but the, you know, the, the, the line was pretty – really pretty,
41 pretty hard, so, eh, you know, we just really used that time to relax, uh,
42 'cause it was – it's hard work, you know, and, and probably still – I think
43 it's even harder today than it was back there because we – when we were
44 working, we more or less took stock out of, uh, boxes and put'm on the car
45 but now you take s-, take, uh, stock and you gotta build the stock up and
46 then put it on the cars. It's, it's a lot harder today than it was then.

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: [30:20] Can you take us through a day, what a day was like for you back
3 then? [engine humming] [30:24] How would your day start?
4
5 Milton Vann: Well basically, you know, [laughter] of course we used, we, uh, used our
6 punch – we didn't have [inaudible 30:34]. Eh, [thumping] y-, you know,
7 we had to go a-, actually [clanking] to a, you know, the timeclock and
8 punch in and, eh, I don't know if I can in, in, in really in general terms, uh
9 – you know, we'd just start off, you know, doing our job, working,
10 organizing, figure out who's – like in door glass figuring out who's gonna
11 do what for the day. Normally we, we would rotate the jobs, so it made it
12 more easy for everybody.
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: [30:57] You did that on your own?
15
16 Milton Vann: Because we did a f-, you know, that was our way of working – doing it
17 efficiently, not necessarily – I mean we could've did it, you know, the way
18 it was designed but s-, you know, human beings don't work that way.
19 They, they always find easier ways to benefit themselves as well as the
20 company. And we, we worked hard.
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: [31:15] Your supervisor didn't care if you switched jobs around and stuff
23 like that? [background noises]
24
25 Milton Vann: No, not really. They, you know – as long as we were doing [tapping] our
26 jobs, uh – sometimes they would take advantage of it. You know, they
27 figure that, uh, [throat clearing] you know, these guys got extra time. But
28 see, that was the only tradeoff. If we [tapping] became more efficient and
29 we used our own heads that sometimes we were penalized by, you know,
30 with more work, so you had to be kinda cautious about that. And it was
31 difficult work but we figured – always figure out ways of doing it
32 efficiently that benefitted everybody, the company as well as – because we
33 were efficient.
34
35 Marilyn Coulter: [31:49] So you'd come in; you'd punch in and then you'd...
36
37 Milton Vann: Right. And then we...
38
39 Marilyn Coulter: ...figure out who's gonna do what?
40
41 Milton Vann: ...w-, we'd do our job and then lunchtime came and we, you know, we –
42 either, you know, you went upstairs [throat clearing] to the cafeteria and
43 stood in line. You know, people probably – some of you guys don't
44 remember standing in line in the cafeteria because at that point in time
45 people didn't go out, run down to McDonald's or all these other places.
46 We actually ate in the cafeteria, [laughter] so about – we actually had 42-

1 minute, uh, lunchbreaks too and some people [laughter] were able to go
2 home and come back. And then one year, they decided that, uh, why spend
3 an extra hour [thumping] [clanking] or extra 12 minutes, you know, which
4 would amount to an extra hour a week and supposedly the people voted,
5 uh, for [clanking] half-an-hour lunchbreaks instead of the 42-minute
6 lunchbreaks.
7

8Marilyn Coulter: [32:34] Now I understand that [tapping] they had a wagon and [clinking]
9 you – maybe you can [knocking] explain that for us? [clinking]
10

11Milton Vann: Yeah.
12

13Marilyn Coulter: [32:40] And, um, [clinking] [knocking] so you had your 42 minutes
14 [tapping] plus your extra breaks or can you [throat clearing] explain
15 [inaudible 32:45]?
16

17Milton Vann: Yeah. We had the wagon. I think the wagon was for 6 minutes and they
18 would actually [squeaking] stop the line, uh, and we were running
19 [clinking] what they called tag relief. Uh, we – you know, somebody
20 would come [clanking] and relieve you for your, for your 15 minutes or
21 whatever the time period was and then come back. But, uh, when the
22 wagon came th-, [clicking] they ax-, actually would stop the line where
23 you could buy, you know, cakes or cookie or coffee or, you know, all that,
24 that kinda stuff, which I always pre-, liked the wagon because it, it kind of
25 broke, broke up the day. You know, we had something to look forward to.
26 [tapping] And then one year, they decided that, uh – well they [offered the
27 33:21], [background noises] you know, that they would – I'm not sure if
28 they [would 33:24] give us extra time and they tried to put into these break
29 areas and then the people voted that down and went back to the wagon but
30 [thumping] eventually the wagon was – they eliminated the wagon
31 [laughter] but we actually voted that down [background noises] and kept
32 our wagon [background noises] as long as we could.
33

34Marilyn Coulter: So...
35

36Milton Vann: And the argument was always that we were always the only plant and
37 that's where most if it – we – everything that we did, we were always the
38 only plant that did this, uh, you know, we had to conform.
39

40Marilyn Coulter: [33:47] So was the wagon a little truck that came through with...
41

42Milton Vann: Yeah.
43

44Marilyn Coulter: ...[these snacks on it 33:50]?
45

1Milton Vann: It was like a little cart and people in the cafeteria, you know, ran the
2 wagons and we actually would buy this stuff, you know, coffee, doughnuts
3 and that kinda stuff.
4

5Marilyn Coulter: [33:58] And it came in the morning and the afternoon?
6

7Milton Vann: Yeah, in the morning and in the afternoon.
8

9Marilyn Coulter: [34:02] And do you r-, so you got the wagon break and 1, and 1 tag break
10 and then lunch?
11

12Milton Vann: I think we had 2 tag breaks during, during the, the day and then maybe 1
13 or 2 – all depends how long w-, we were going. If we went, you know, if
14 you went 10 hours, of course we're gonna get more breaks. I don't recall
15 exactly how that went.
16

17Marilyn Coulter: [34:20] Now was the cafeteria a centrally located place? [engine
18 humming] [34:23] Did you have a far way to go?
19

20Milton Vann: Yeah. It wasn't bad for Trim. I'm sure people in the Paint Department
21 probably did. I'm not sure. I would assume it was harder for them to get
22 there but in Trim, uh, it was pretty, uh, close [thumping] but the, the thing
23 is that back in those days, very few people actually went outside to eat
24 lunch. You know, they would stand in line and, and, and buy their, uh,
25 [thumping] lunch in the cafeteria.
26

27Marilyn Coulter: [34:45] So [papers rustling] did managers and employees all eat in the
28 same place?
29

30Milton Vann: Well everything was kind of – the, the cafeteria's actually segregated to –
31 it was, it was, you know, the workers had they own cafeteria. The
32 management had they own cafeteria. [laughter] And then when the, uh,
33 [background noises] the Japanese with the competition from Japan and th-,
34 th-, then management decided that we should all eat together, uh, the same
35 way with the parking lot. [clanking] Uh, the parking lot was segregated.
36 We had, we had the, uh, the managers on one side of the parking lot and
37 the workers on the other side of the parking lot.
38

39Marilyn Coulter: [35:17] Um, did you think that kept it a kind of us versus them type a deal
40 because you ate separately and you parked separately? [35:24] How'd you
41 feel about that...
42

43Milton Vann: Well...

44

45Marilyn Coulter: ...[inaudible 35:26]?
46

1Milton Vann: ...yeah, but that's the way things were, you know, and, you know, s-, we
2 can look in, in hindsight about that but you have to understand that that
3 was the lifestyle. That was the culture r-, and also remember that, uh, you
4 know, General Motors was very [laughter] successful at that point in time,
5 so nobody really argued that. And I guess that was one of the benefits of
6 being a supervisor, you had privilege, parking privileges and you ate in
7 your own special cafeteria. [laughter]
8

9Marilyn Coulter: [35:52] Well talking about supervisors, what about supervisors? [34:54]
10 Can you tell us what was a good supervisor and what was a bad supervisor
11 and how did supervision change while you were [inaudible 36:00] during
12 your time of employment?
13

14Milton Vann: Well, uh, as I mentioned before, [background noises] uh, uh, John Powers
15 was the, uh, [inaudible 36:09] for the hardnosed supervi-, [the 36:11]
16 supervisor or general foreman. And I think on the M System, they had
17 Marshall Dean, which I never really worked for him but I heard he was
18 kinda really hardnosed [thumping] too and just, just the way things were
19 done. But most of the supervisors, if you did your job, you didn't have any
20 problems with supervisors. I mean they would actually, if you were good
21 enough, they would actually tell you you were a good worker. They would
22 reward you in that kinda way. But if you did you're job, you didn't have
23 any problems with supervisors. I mean the only time, you know, later on is
24 the competition got more intense when we started putting work on people,
25 [background noises] then the conflicts kind of started with supervisors but,
26 you know, in the beginning, uh, you know, you did your job, you didn't
27 have any problems.
28

29Marilyn Coulter: [36:51] So what type of conflicts would...? [tapping]
30

31Milton Vann: Well when they had to, [engine humming] uh, start organizing work and
32 adding work. You know, like in the last maybe 4 or 5 years, uh, I mean
33 there's tremendous job cutting and, and the people have to carry these
34 tremendous burdens of – I mean they were working harder than they ever
35 worked in their life and it was extremely hard in a s-, you know,
36 emotionally, uh, it was tough, you know and the – and then the supervisor,
37 you know, they're in the process of adding work and I'm sure a lot of them
38 didn't like to do it but, you know, it was, it was done but it w-, eh, you
39 know, that can create a lot of problems.
40

41Marilyn Coulter: [37:28] So we had different cars being built; you had 2 lines going side by
42 side...
43

44Milton Vann: Right.
45

1 Marilyn Coulter: ...and then they split and can you tell us about some of the environmental
2 changes and how they affected the employees during those times?
3

4 Milton Vann: Uh, well the biggest change, when they built the new part [thumping]
5 downstairs and they – that's certainly, uh – I mean we didn't even – we
6 weren't even aware that we were all [laughter] on top a each other until
7 they built, you know, eh, the, the new plant downstairs, uh, for the ASC,
8 for the ASC System, uh, but, uh, I guess the biggest, eh, the biggest thing I
9 thought was the, the, the health when they started [thumping] coming up
10 with the information about chemicals [engine humming] and stuff. I think
11 that helped a great deal. At least you knew exactly what [papers rustling]
12 what you were working with, the chemicals and s-, I mean that was a, that
13 was a big change because, you know, I was in there when, when – before
14 they even had electric trucks. And I used to be on the [tapping] [inaudible
15 38:25] when the trucks would – you had – actually had gasoline lift trucks
16 [engine humming] and they would turn around and they would spray you
17 with fumes, like [coughing] that's just the way it was and, [throat clearing]
18 and, um, uh, the UAW finally got them to, uh, start running electric trucks
19 inside and that was a huge, huge difference. [engine humming]
20

21 Marilyn Coulter: [38:44] Can you tell me what about the noise level? [38:47] Was, was it
22 noisy inside the plant?
23

24 Milton Vann: Yeah, it was noisy but you didn't, um, [throat clearing] [background
25 noises] [sighing] – that's just part of the, [thumping] you know, lifestyle in
26 there. But you know r-, the really funny thing is that, uh, when – like in
27 the summertime, eh, the thing that bothered me more was the heat.
28 [laughter] You know, I...
29

30 Marilyn Coulter: [39:04] The heat?
31

32 Milton Vann: ...I don't particularly like working with a lotta heat now. [background
33 noises] I mean I c-, I can't deal with heat. And it used to be, uh, in the –
34 [up 39:12] there on Verlinden th-, that – where M System was and they
35 used to have these, uh, windows and they had'm caged up and it used to
36 be so hot in there and you would walk over to the windows and you would
37 look out [thumping] and you feel like you're in prison somewhere
38 [background noises] 'cause you, you can look [throat clearing] outside
39 and, eh, the grass was always so much greener and people were strolling
40 around and it seemed like it was just a totally different world [thumping]
41 [laughter] outside 'cause you were so miserable with, you know, because
42 of the – to me it was the – more, more so the heat that was just bugging
43 me. [laughter]
44

45 Marilyn Coulter: [39:40] So if it was 70, 70 degrees outside, how hot did you think it would
46 be inside?

1
2Milton Vann: Uh, be probably 90 or 95 in-, inside. It was extremely hot. We didn't have
3 all the fans and stuff that we have now.
4
5Marilyn Coulter: [Mm-hm 39:55].
6
7Milton Vann: Of course, the place wasn't airconditioned. They couldn't air condition
8 that. The place would be too old. But, uh, we didn't have the fans. Uh, it's
9 been a lot of environmental changes. You know, y-, you really think about
10 it. Uh, it was, it was pretty tough in there.
11
12Marilyn Coulter: S-, [clinking] Gary Judy?
13
14Gary Judy: Uh, you talk about the changes that took place. [tapping] [40:14] Did you
15 ever, uh, participate in any [tapping] strikes to get any changes or
16
17Milton Vann: Well...
18
19Gary Judy: ...was that during your time or...?
20
21Milton Vann: Well the last strike that we actually ever had, real strike was in 1970, so –
22 and that was almost, uh – I don't know how many days. It was 59 days or
23 whatever it was, uh, so we actually, uh... [engine humming]
24
25Gary Judy: [40:31] Do you remember what they were striking for?
26
27Milton Vann: Uh, I'm not sure. It was [throat clearing] for the, uh – [clanking] I don't
28 know if it was so much for l-, for the local right, [clanking] you know,
29 changes in the – as far as the local was concerned but I think it was, you
30 know, the national strike. I don't know what the issues were in, in 1970.
31
32Gary Judy: [40:50] Was, was that 30 and out maybe or...? [clanking]
33
34Milton Vann: Yeah. Eh, it c-, could possibly be. It was...
35
36Gary Judy: [Inaudible 40:54].
37
38Milton Vann: ...major stuff. Uh, [papers rustling] uh, but I remember, uh, [engine
39 humming] you know, that was a long time and...
40
41Gary Judy: [41:01] Did, did you have to walk the picket line?
42
43Milton Vann: Oh, yeah and actually we'd sit in our cars and stuff and it got kind of cold
44 by November [laughter] and it was, [laughter] it w-, it was hard out there.
45 But we actually w-, walked the picket line and, and I would never – after
46 all those years, uh, I think we [would've 41:16] had more strikes but that

1 was the only real strike. And actually I got married [laughter] 2 days
2 before the strike, so [thumping]. [laughter]
3
4 Gary Judy: [41:25] Do you remember how much the strike pay was back then? Not
5 much...
6
7 Milton Vann: I think it was \$50. And actually, uh...
8
9 Gary Judy: [41:31] \$50 a week?
10
11 Milton Vann: Yeah. And actually at that time, eh, we could actually [rattling] go down
12 and – I think my wife and I, we went and got food stamps. They actually
13 would give you food stamps.
14
15 Gary Judy: Yeah.
16
17 Milton Vann: But the, you know, the, uh, I think the Republican party or somebody
18 decided that it was, [thumping] [clanking] you know, they were paying for
19 a strike against themselves and, of course, the politicians changed that one.
20 But [clanking] we actually [clanking] got food stamps that got us [tapping]
21 through.
22
23 Gary Judy: [Hm 41:54].
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: [41:54] [Oh 41:54], that, that had to have been interesting. You have the
26 brand new bride and [laughter] be...
27
28 Milton Vann: Yeah, I know. [laughter]
29
30 Marilyn Coulter: ...out of work.
31
32 Milton Vann: [Inaudible 41:59]. [laughter]
33
34 John Fedewa: [Go on 42:01] strike the next 2 days. [laughter]
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: [42:03] Speaking of pay, [throat clearing] can you – do you remember
37 [clanking] [thumping] what you hired in at?
38
39 Milton Vann: [I think so] [inaudible 42:08]. Pay?
40
41 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
42
43 Milton Vann: I think it was like – I think it was just a little over [background noises] \$3
44 an hour. I remember, eh, eh, at the time, uh, [thumping] bringing home
45 \$100, I thought I was rich. And, and, and it was so interesting, uh, about
46 [clanking] pay – it's funny you mentioned that. Uh, I used to get real

1 nervous every time I got a paycheck and I couldn't [clanking] figure out
2 why I was getting nervous [background noises] and it sort of dawned on
3 me. It was just like, you know, 'cause I was a student at state, it was so like
4 getting your exam or something. [laughter] And I would actually get
5 intensely nervous every time the paychecks were [laughter] given out and,
6 like I said, it was for the longest I could never figure out why I was getting
7 so nervous. But, uh, you know, bringing home \$100 or \$125 in, in '67
8 [tapping] that was a lotta money.
9

10Marilyn Coulter: [Mm-hm 42:54].

11

12Milton Vann: That was a lotta money [tapping] [I thought 42:57]. [papers rustling]
13

14Marilyn Coulter: Um, so, Earl – oh, I'm sorry. [tapping] [Inaudible 43:02]. [43:03] Can you
15 tell us, Milton, now you stayed on the line and you stayed in glass for a
16 long time and th-, now you, you came out as a quality control [inaudible
17 43:15]?
18

19Milton Vann: [tsk] Yeah. First, I went – after, uh, door glass, I transferred to, uh, water
20 test, which was really a-, another interesting group. [sighing]
21

22Marilyn Coulter: [43:22] What did you do in water test? [43:23] [What's inaudible 43:23]?
23

24Milton Vann: We would test, water test. We would actually – well we will test – we'll
25 check the cars for water leaks and actually they had an online water test
26 booth and the cars would actually go through, uh, a water, you know, and,
27 and we had, uh – there was dye in the water and we had this light, which
28 was a black light, which it actually would pick up the dye. I guess even
29 before I got there, people would actually ride the car all the way through
30 looking for leaks and that must've been like, you know, going through the
31 funhouse. But actually t-, then they changed to, you know – the technique
32 [throat clearing] with dye and then soon as the car would come out of the
33 water test booth, we would open the car and shine our lights looking for
34 leaks and if we saw a leak, we would actually repair that leak. And that
35 was, uh, that was a fun job too because we were f-, in a small group and
36 we had our own little world within a world back in the water test booth.
37 [laughter]
38

39Marilyn Coulter: [44:15] Was that considered just a regular line job or was that a specialty
40 job?
41

42Milton Vann: That was a specialty job. You know, it was, uh – it wasn't a part of
43 Quality even though it was in s-, kind of sort of like an inspection, it was
44 never really technically a part of Quality Control but, uh, it was, it was
45 controlled by Production. But, um, we were – checked for leaks and then
46 if we found a leak, we would repair'm. [engine humming]

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: How was it working – [clinking] I know you talked about the climate
3 before. [44:40] How was it working on [clanking] the water test job on a
4 hot, muggy day?
5
6 Milton Vann: Well it was, it was hot but still, you know, [sighing] [papers rustling] eh,
7 eh, the work was – [papers rustling] you know, we were doing like every
8 fourth job or something and, eh, it wasn't as intense as actually being on a
9 – on the line working every job. So it, it wasn't that hard but it just took,
10 took a different kind of skill. You would have to be able to analyze and
11 look and, and, and do that particular job and, you know, do it effectively.
12
13 Marilyn Coulter: Now I know you said that oftentimes they were small and they were close
14 groups. [45:14] What was it like to [engine humming] transfer or to go to
15 another area that was a tightknit group? [45:21] What was that like joining
16 that new group, being that new person in the [inaudible 45:26]?
17
18 Milton Vann: Well, [sighing] you know, [inaudible 45:27] sure if everybody [laughter]
19 is familiar with all the group dynamics and sometime it would – you
20 would [background noises] have to – it was difficult, you know, because
21 they didn't know you, you didn't know them a-, and it took a while for
22 you to adapt in a group. But eventually, um, you know, everybody became
23 friends and, you know, we worked together and we, [background noises]
24 like I said, we – the best part about working at Fisher Body is, is having
25 these little unique groups where to deal with the alienation of work, you
26 know, you had your own little world and [engine humming] you live
27 within that world within – in, in, in the, in the plant and, eh, and, uh, you
28 know, you socialize, you traded skills, knowledge and you debated the,
29 you debated the, the, the issues of the world. I mean we just weren't there
30 just building cars. We're human beings and, and we were, uh – we
31 interacted with one another. The big – we had this big – we were able to
32 interact on all levels that human beings interact.
33
34 Marilyn Coulter: [46:25] So out of your 30-plus years being there, what was your favorite
35 job?
36
37 Milton Vann: Well of course my last job was being a torque monitor, um, uh, 'cause that
38 was [background noises] as far as workload, that's, you know, considered
39 [rattling] an easy job or a preferred job. Uh, it took me 27 years to get this
40 job [laughter] but, uh, uh, [tsk] I – and I actually enjoyed that job because
41 it was challenging. Uh, first we used dial wrenches and this device that we
42 would actually measure the amount of torque on the – on all kinds of
43 fasteners, screws, nuts, bolts and, eh, and for safety reason, that
44 information had to, uh, be inputted, uh, eh, and, uh, it took a, a different
45 kind of skill. Uh, and you had to really – you were sort of like – almost
46 like a policeman. You know, you had to police your area. My Trim area

1 had to make sure all the nuts and bolts and fasteners, everything had
2 correct torque. [tapping]
3
4 And, uh, that was, uh, a really unique job. And then what's really made it
5 more challenging is that they went to what they call the DATAMYTE,
6 which was really a handheld computer. And actually, we ended up
7 teaching – or taught ourselves. You know, once th-, once they, the
8 management had programmed the tool but we – again, [tapping] we had to
9 go out there [background noises] and learn how to use this tool and, uh,
10 and not only did we learn how to use the tool, we, we got [laughter] good
11 at it, like everything else. You know, it's just the repetition and, and, and
12 everybody's ability to adapt and to, uh, take it even further. I mean we
13 really got good at that stuff.
14

15Marilyn Coulter: [48:09] So, um, you said you're a little bit like a police officer and you
16 [tapping] [sat there 48:14] and you had your skills that came in. I take it
17 [clanking] your computer skills came in [at that time 48:18]?
18

19Milton Vann: Yeah. You know, because you're not intimidated. A lotta people would be
20 intimidated by the new technology and, and I used to tell'm that, uh, bef-,
21 I know before I left, this one guy, he was really [sighing] hesitant about,
22 you know, the job and I kept telling him over and over again, this is a
23 good job [laughter] and, and, and if you give this job up, [throat clearing]
24 you're crazy and, and you – you'll learn these skills. [thumping] And the
25 biggest thing, uh, I think for new hires who coming in there with – who
26 haven't really had any kind of skill level of doing anything is not to be
27 intimidated by these jobs. And these jobs are complex. And the public a-,
28 if, if they only knew how difficult these jobs are. But if you stick it out and
29 you, you learn to do it, I mean, eh, it's like your, your own mind begins to
30 solve all these – I mean you just – you [don't even figure it out 'cause
31 49:05] your, your, your mind, your own intelligence will figure out how to
32 do all this stuff. [thumping]
33

34Marilyn Coulter: [49:11] Now with your 30-plus years and General Motors had a lotta
35 different products come – programs come through and, and after you
36 changed jobs while you were there and there were also different pro-,
37 programs that came through, did you ever get involved in anything,
38 employee processes that they had and how do you think that affected, um,
39 us a business?
40

41Milton Vann: [49:33] Employees' processes like?
42

43Marilyn Coulter: You know, where they had employee involvement, [beeping] where they
44 started giving employees more hands on, gave them more responsibility.
45 [49:42] How – did you play in, in part [clicking] with any of those...
46

1Milton Vann: No, not very...
2
3Marilyn Coulter: ...processes?
4
5Milton Vann: Very little. I didn't really get involved in that. But I knew the, the
6 people... [beeping] [squeaking] [clanking]
7
8Marilyn Coulter: Hm.
9
10Milton Vann: ...the people who did [squeaking] and [thumping] again, I was amazed,
11 uh, they were able to – I mean really, it's not the engineers who are really
12 building these cars. It's the people out there [clanking] on that assembly
13 line who are building these cars and they're the ones who have to look at
14 the PADs, the production, uh, uh – I forgot what [laughter] PADs stands
15 for but they would [clanking] give the description [clanking] of, of the job
16 and what, you know, what it took, you know, to do it but they would – and
17 supervisors didn't even want to deal with – they would hand it to the
18 workers. And people gotta understand that those people out there on the
19 line, they solve these problems. They actually got in and built these cars.
20 You know, it wasn't no engineers standing over here telling you what to
21 do. People did it themselves. You know, they figured it out themselves.
22 They look at all the data and stuff [clanking] and they analyze this stuff
23 and they built these cars. You know, of course, the, you know, the
24 engineers and all these other people are involved but the people
25 themselves really are the ones who end up building these cars. [tapping]
26
27Marilyn Coulter: [50:48] Now I know people they came together to build cars but [engine
28 humming] did they also come together for dinners, holidays, benefits?
29 [50:56] Can you tell us anything about that type of culture? [50:58] How
30 did they come together like that, [if there were 51:00] any benefits or
31 dinners that they have?
32
33Milton Vann: No. I didn't do that too much but, you know, within the plant, of course,
34 we always as, as time went on, uh, and, and people discover that, you
35 know, they could have a lotta fun by having these little dinners of – like on
36 Friday nights, uh – I mean at one point in time, people used to go run over
37 to the bar and socialize, uh, but, uh, as they began to crack down
38 [laughter] on that, uh, and it wasn't really a real problem but still, it
39 became easier for like people to come in on Fridays with, you know, just
40 bringing dinners and we had a, we had a good time. We had picnics and
41 we enjoyed, you know, [inaudible 51:34] we did our jobs and stuff and,
42 and at, uh, at lunchtime, we would actually socialize. Uh, you know, we
43 really had a good – that was, that was fun. I mean we actually had fun at
44 work [laughter] and I don't know if it offends management or not but w-,
45 you know, we, we made it, you know, tolerable in s-, an intolerable posit-,
46 condition sometimes but we enjoyed it when we could.

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Um, there's a, you know, people call Lansing the Capitol of Quality? They
3 call Lansing the Capitol of Quality. [52:14] What do you attribute that to?
4 [tapping]
5
6 Milton Vann: Hm. Again I have to go back to the diversity of the w-, the workforce.
7 Um, [engine humming] eh, people s-, took their jobs seriously. They, they,
8 they did their job once they understed-, understood, um, and the flexibility
9 to undergo the constant changes. Uh, I mean it takes a lot. Uh, when I first
10 hired in there, you know, they may change your job maybe once a year or
11 if they had to shut the line down, they may add a few things on you and
12 they would leave you alone but the ability to adapt, you know, when,
13 when I left outta there, I mean they were changing people's jobs about
14 once a month and s-, the ability to be able to adapt and, and to keep the
15 quality up, I mean that was, uh, to me that's – that w-, that's fantastic and
16 that's, uh, you know, attributed to the workforce.
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: Okay. Cheryl McQuaid?
19
20 Cheryl McQuaid: Milton, um, we've interviewed a few people and you'd mentioned that you
21 were just, you know, you're having fun. Um, some of the people
22 [thumping] we interviewed have said they have gotten put in the trunk and
23 sent through water tests. [53:20] Did you ever [background noises] see
24 anybody [throat clearing] or let anybody out of the trunks or did you know
25 that that happened be-...?
26
27 Milton Vann: The only time where everybo-, the only time I remember actually being
28 [inaudible 53:30] on offline water testing were put in the trunk with a
29 flashlight. I don't remember anybody actually in the trunk going through
30 the water test booth. But we at the end of the line had a, a end of the line
31 water test booth where we would – especially at the beginning of the
32 year, I mean you would get in the trunk and somebody'd run a, a hose and
33 you'd try to detect where the leak is coming from but, uh, I don't
34 remember anybody [laughter] actually going – was put in the trunk. No.
35 [laughter]
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: [53:54] Not as a prank?
38
39 Milton Vann: No. Yeah, [background noises] if it was a prank maybe but not – that
40 wasn't, [throat clearing] uh, f-, Fisher [tapping] policy.
41
42 Marilyn Coulter: And, and when you speak of Fisher policy, we know there's a lot of things
43 that are done that are Fisher policy [clicking] but we know that there are
44 some folks who, um, they did things to get through the work, [tapping]
45 whether it be a prank or maybe if it was a radio or read that got them

1 through. [54:17] Did you notice that? [54:17] Did you notice a lotta radios
2 [inaudible 54:19]?
3
4Milton Vann: [sighing] Yeah, because like I say, you know, we were – we're human
5 beings. You weren't robots and you had to have some kind of distraction.
6 Uh, those were long, [engine humming] long days doing repetitious jobs
7 and if you had a, if you had a radio or you had a, a, a book to read or you
8 can – like when I w-, was going to Michigan State, I actually would write,
9 write papers in between lines. You know, this is before computes and
10 stuff. You know, you'd actually have to do the, the, the writing but, you
11 know, you took your few seconds to glance and then you'd go to your job
12 and you would think. I mean it was, [yeah 54:49], the work itself became
13 automatic and then – which really, [clicking] you know, you know, you
14 didn't think about it. I mean you did it and – but your mind was
15 preoccupied with other things if y-, if not, you probably would go crazy.
16
17Marilyn Coulter: [55:03] So that kept you sane being able...
18
19Milton Vann: Yeah.
20
21Marilyn Coulter: ...to have that?
22
23Milton Vann: Eh, you always had something going. I mean people would come in there
24 with, um – guys would come in with, with, uh, manuals on transmissions
25 and – I mean I thought they were physics text. People just understand that,
26 uh – to, to me the most amazing thing [thumping] is – it's that the, the, the
27 level of understanding and the level of skill in this plant that, uh, you
28 know, with [knocking] the general public wouldn't normally associate. I
29 mean some of those, those manuals that these guys would bring in and, uh,
30 like I said, they looked like physics textbooks. I mean they were doing
31 some pretty, pretty intense stuff and they were doing this on their own
32 between [clanking] cars. I mean they would look at the stuff.
33
34Marilyn Coulter: Now I know some people had the skilled trades people do things like, they
35 called them government jobs. [55:49] Did you ever had anybody make
36 anything special for you that helped you do y-, any of your jobs?
37
38Milton Vann: Uh, I'm sure that they made tools and stuff for, you know, for us. Uh, uh,
39 you know, they – 'cause when we worked in door glass, you know, we
40 actually had fixtures and stuff and they had to be [clanking] maintained
41 and stuff but...
42
43Marilyn Coulter: [56:11] But no special toolboxes or anything like that for you?
44 [background noises]
45

1Milton Vann: Uh, [sighing] not really but I knew guys would – from skilled trades
2 would make people [tapping] [laughter] toolboxes. They would just about
3 do anything for – you know, [thumping] I've – I remember one time
4 bringing something in there and, and, uh, [tapping] and they were able to
5 [thumping] repair it, you know, because I didn't have the tools at home,
6 [thumping] uh, you know, one of the, uh, eh, eh, the toolmen. But like I
7 said, the, the big thing too was that it served as a resource for, you know,
8 if you didn't know anything or you, eh, if you wanna find out how things
9 work, you could always find somebody on that, uh, I-, that assembly line
10 or in that place that knew how.
11

12Marilyn Coulter: Well you've been in that plant. You've studied there. You've worked
13 there. You've learned things there and had things repaired there. [56:59]
14 Now after some 30-plus years, we've gone through a lot of name changes,
15 so what did you think about that and also what do you think about now
16 after you've given 30-plus years there that it's closing now? [thumping]
17 [57:12] What do you think about that? [clicking]
18

19Milton Vann: Well for what – as far as the name change, I always tell anybody, eh, you
20 know, the day I – when I die and when they put obituary in the, eh, in the
21 paper, I worked at Fisher Body. I didn't work at BOC or Lansing Car
22 Assembly. I worked at Fisher Body. And as far as the c-, closing and it's a,
23 [thumping] eh, it's, it's sad even though I know, you know, we all have to
24 move on but, uh, it was a u-, unique way of life and it's given me a, it's
25 given me a good life. It's given me an education. I've, uh, traveled the
26 world. I've been to Europe 4 different times. [thumping] Uh, you know,
27 I've been – it's been to f-, good for me, uh, you know, [clanking] when
28 things I needed, uh, you know to, to enhance my own life in my own
29 homelife, like I said I used it as resource. The people were always there
30 whether they came over to your house, which I had a friend, he was an
31 electrician, come over and do some work for me. I mean it, uh, you know,
32 other than the paycheck, it, it was a good life.
33

34Earl Nicholson: Uh, Earl Nicholson. [58:18] Um, is there, eh, eh – in 30 years in the
35 factory or 30-plus years in the factory and, uh, you're coming up on
36 retirement now, uh, [clanking] uh, did you – were you – did you, you put
37 an I-, [popping] you put a signed letter out on the floor, I believe?
38

39Milton Vann: Right.
40

41Earl Nicholson: [58:38] Could you, could you...
42

43Milton Vann: [58:38] [For] [inaudible] 58:38)?
44

45Earl Nicholson: Yeah. [58:39] Could you tell us what that's about? [tapping]
46

1Milton Vann: Well the first part of the letter I [clanking] [praised 58:42], you know, the
2 people I work with, um, [tapping] the people who went out of their way to
3 do things for me. And the, uh, the second part or the letter was a critique
4 against our Local 602 Union. And I've always been one who, um
5 [background noises] – I feel like when you live in a democracy, those –
6 the leadership of, eh – you know, you had to make sure that the leaders
7 serve the, the people and I think the way [thumping] our Local is
8 structured that it basically serves the interest of the leadership and, you
9 know, I can't describe it any better if I [background noises] – maybe I
10 should've brought a copy of it here but, uh, it [clicking] was my critique
11 against the, the Local 602.
12

13Earl Nicholson: [59:27] But, uh, all in all, [inaudible 59:28] do you, [background noises]
14 do you – would you say that you looked favorable upon the union and its,
15 its activities?
16

17Milton Vann: Uh, [sighing] probably maybe, uh, at the, the national level but I think
18 that, uh, the s-, these – the way the locals are structured around personality
19 types, uh, and as much as I praise the workers in the plant, there – we got
20 so many people who think that, uh, they shouldn't have to work and, like I
21 said [thumping] [in my paper 1:00:00], they do anything under the sun to
22 get out of work and that's the basis of work in the plant but, uh, somehow
23 thinking one is entitled because they belong to a local union or, or belong
24 to, to the leadership, uh, I think that's just, just – that's antiunion. [engine
25 humming]
26

27Marilyn Coulter: [1:00:22] Um, since we talked about unions, would you say that
28 [tapping]– you came in the '60s, in 1967 and when they had activity from
29 the, from the line from the [inaudible 1:00:40], [thumping] do you think
30 that some of that might have came because, because the union did so much
31 for'm some of them got separated and didn't stay as active in what was
32 going on in their local union politics, understanding that the membership
33 is the strongest body of the [local union 1:00:54]?
34

35Milton Vann: Now say that again.
36

37Marilyn Coulter: [1:00:57] Well [throat clearing] during times when times were lean and
38 needed the union to help us fight and struggle but then when people were
39 complacent and happy and they had a lotta benefits, good paychecks, they
40 didn't stay on top on – of or as active...
41

42Milton Vann: Hm.
43

44Marilyn Coulter: ...so certain things happened? [background noises] [1:01:19] I mean
45 certain people stayed in power [engine humming] because a lot of people
46 [not getting as active 1:01:22]?
47

1
2Milton Vann: I don't know because I don't think the union actually encouraged – the
3 local actually encouraged participation of every – even though they give
4 lip service to that but I, I don't think they actually encourage. I think you,
5 you get a small elite group that was more interested in maintaining their
6 power and privilege at, at the union hall and I think they could care less
7 whether people participated. As long as the, the, the elitist group, like I
8 said, a-, able to maintain they power and privilege.
9

10Marilyn Coulter: Okay. All right. Um, but now for whatever reason, they're getting ready to
11 start, um, going to a new plant, uh, into Delta. [1:01:02] What words of
12 wisdom would you like to give to those new people who are going to
13 break ground and start a new venture into a new place [of employment
14 1:02:09]?
15

16Milton Vann: [tsk] Well, [laughter] you know, the auto industry is in – at least the
17 American auto industry is in big trouble. Uh, uh, they have to just continue
18 what they're doing and, and, uh, [engine humming] I think the work is
19 gonna have to start, you know, really kinda t-, taking over, uh, and really
20 proving to the, the public that [wants them 1:02:40] for who they are and
21 that these are the real people who actually build these cars and, and that,
22 uh, somehow the public got to understand that, uh, you know, nothing is
23 given – you know, we're not given anything. People, when they make this
24 money, they're working hard for this money. This is hard work. This is no
25 game. Uh, this is no 15 minute coffee breaking every, you know, every
26 hour.
27

28 That, th-, these people are really s-, working and, and, and now they're
29 working for their own survival, not only their survival, my survival as a
30 retiree because, uh, General Motors and Ford, you know, they're gonna
31 have to survive and they gonna have to – they g-, and the company really
32 is gonna have to be the one that's gonna change the perception and, you
33 know, let Americans know that, uh, you know, that the auto industry is,
34 uh, is competitive, that we – we're gonna make good products and we do
35 make good products but, uh, the, the population somehow think that
36 everything that's made in Asia is some – for some reason, it's, it's, it's so
37 much superior, [engine humming] you know. But the people are gonna
38 have to – they're gonna have to take more and more control over the, the
39 workforce and th-, and they're gonna have to make these jobs like real
40 professional jobs. Y-, I don't care what – whether you're sweeping the
41 floor or whatever, you're gonna have to, you know – you're gonna be –
42 you're a professional. It's what you do. [engine humming]
43

44Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [1:04:09] Um, was there anything that we didn't touch on that you'd
45 like [clanking] to touch on? [papers rustling]
46

1Milton Vann: Like I said, uh, my ideal of having a diverse workforce, uh, one thing that
2 really bothered me was, was when they decided to start testing people to
3 get in the plant. In years past, anybody could come into the plant if they
4 were willing to work and I think by testing, you know, you're getting a, a
5 homogenous-type of worker. I think if they relied on, you know – 'cause
6 you're always gonna have people who are going to be able to meet the
7 skill level. I mean if a guy can't pass an exam doesn't mean that he can't
8 tear that transmission apart and to me that's – you know, I was just totally
9 opposed to that and, and, you know, eh, and you gotta have a diverse
10 workforce, which means if, if, if, you know, like, like you had people in
11 that place, like we had lawyers. You had people who never even finished
12 high school. Some even went to grade school.
13

14Marilyn Coulter: [Mm-hm 1:05:22].
15

16Milton Vann: But that didn't have anything to do with the, um, you know, the, the
17 abilities there...
18

19Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 1:05:27].
20

21Milton Vann: ...but when you start, you know, think you're get gonna a type or
22 particular worker who satisfies somebody's, uh, scheme of things, I, I
23 think that's wrong and I think it's gotta continue to stay open and s-,
24 continue to stay diverse.
25

26Marilyn Coulter: Oh. Well thank you for sharing.
27

28Milton Vann: Okay.
29

30Marilyn Coulter: And thank you for being a part of the project.
31

32Cheryl McQuaid: Thank you, Milton.
33

34Earl Nicholson: Thank you, Milton.
35

36John Fedewa: Thank you, Milton.
37

38Gary Judy: Appreciate it. [throat clearing]
39
40
41/lo