

**Willie Fuller, an African American, discusses his career as a production worker  
and UAW member at the Fisher Body plant in Lansing, MI**

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5 Cheryl McQuaid: [recorder clicking] This is Cheryl McQuaid. I'm with the Lansing Fisher  
6 Body Historical Project. We're at Local 602 Union Hall. It's December  
7 14, 2005, approximately 12 noon. We're preparing to interview Willie  
8 Fuller. First, we'll have everybody else in the room state their names.  
9  
10 Michael Fleming: Mike Fleming.  
11  
12 Doreen Howard: Doreen Howard.  
13  
14 John Fedewa: John Fedewa.  
15  
16 Doug Rademacher: Doug Rademacher.  
17  
18 Jerri Smith: Jerri Smith.  
19  
20 Cheryl McQuaid: [0:32] Willie, will you state your name and spell your last name for us,  
21 please.  
22  
23 Willie Fuller: Uh, Willie Fuller. Last name F-u-l-l-e-r.  
24  
25 Cheryl McQuaid: [0:40] And what is your address, Willie?  
26  
27 Willie Fuller: Uh, 829 ½ West Saginaw Street, Lansing, Michigan 48915.  
28  
29 Cheryl McQuaid: [0:49] And are you married? Do you have children?  
30  
31 Willie Fuller: Yes, I'm married. I have two kids, four grandkids, and six great-  
32 grandkids.  
33  
34 Cheryl McQuaid: [0:59] And could you give us a little bit about your educational  
35 background?  
36  
37 Willie Fuller: I graduated from high school in 1968 in Monroe, Louisiana. The high  
38 school name was Richwood High School. I went one year of college at  
39 Northeast Louisiana University. I participa-, I went to LCC for one  
40 semester. I went through the Michigan State Police Academy and  
41 graduated with a certificate in security.  
42  
43 Cheryl McQuaid: [1:25] And did you do any military service?  
44  
45 Willie Fuller: I only participated in ROTC at Northeast Louisiana, Louisiana University.  
46

1 Cheryl McQuaid: [1:34] Um, why did you hire in to Fisher Body?  
2  
3 Willie Fuller: Uh, when I graduated there was no work in Louisiana per se. Uh, menial  
4 jobs and stuff like that. We heard they was hiring up north. A couple of  
5 my friends lived up here, so I caught a ride back with them. Uh, they said  
6 there's, need a lotta people to work, so I came here to work.  
7  
8 Cheryl McQuaid: [1:56] And when did you hire in here?  
9  
10 Willie Fuller: I hired in Fisher Body in 1969, August the 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
11  
12 Cheryl McQuaid: [2:05] Do you remember the first day walking into this plant?  
13  
14 Willie Fuller: Uh, first day I walked in was around 4:00 p.m. I had a interview at the  
15 front desk. Uh, the guy looked at my résumé, the application and realized  
16 I was from down south and said "Hey, uh, when can you go to work?" I  
17 said "I can go to work now." He said "Well, how about 5:00 in the  
18 morning time?" I said "No problem." So I came on the day shift on B  
19 Hardware at 5:00 in the morning time and it was a rude awakening.  
20  
21 Cheryl McQuaid: [2:36] It was a rude awakening, why?  
22  
23 Willie Fuller: Because, uh, it was so big and, and so many people and, uh, majority of  
24 people here was, uh, Caucasian, so I wasn't – that was a different  
25 surrounding for me because I came from an all-black high school, all-  
26 black neighborhood, so it was a, quite a shock.  
27  
28 Cheryl McQuaid: [2:57] Do you remember the first job that they put you on?  
29  
30 Willie Fuller: First job they put me on was, uh, installing regulators for the windows.  
31 Uh, it goes to hold the window up, roll them up and down.  
32  
33 Cheryl McQuaid: [3:11] And what did you think of that job?  
34  
35 Willie Fuller: Uh, I thought it was a great job for a while and then I realized everybody  
36 else had a much easier job than I did. I had – I was doing a three-person  
37 job and this one guy kept telling me, he said "Hey, the job will get better  
38 after changeover." And, uh, third day on the job because I – it was so hard  
39 that I really couldn't eat at lunchtime, I just would rest. And third day I  
40 really quit. I went up to the supervisor and told him "I quit." And he  
41 didn't say anything, so I just walked out af-, after, uh, the day was over.  
42 The next morning I woke up and walked, walked back in. I said "I'll try it  
43 one more day." And, uh, I've been there for 33 years after that.  
44  
45 Cheryl McQuaid: [3:50] And how long did you do that job?  
46

1Willie Fuller: I did regulators for two years before I realized I could transfer off it.  
2

3Cheryl McQuaid: [3:59] And what job did you go to next?  
4

5Willie Fuller: Uh, right after that I went to Utility and that's where I can do each job in a  
6 department.  
7

8Cheryl McQuaid: [4:10] What did you, what did you think of the supervisors?  
9

10Willie Fuller: Uh, the first supervisor I had was very quiet and laid back and not very  
11 talkative but, uh, when I first hired in, a supervisor really wasn't a  
12 supervisor. He was just [inaudible 4:23] a yes man. We had general  
13 supervisors that was running the whole department so whatever they want  
14 to do done, then the supervisor had to do what they told them to do.  
15

16Cheryl McQuaid: [4:35] Were you active in the union as soon as you came into the plant?  
17 How did – how was the union addressed to you?  
18

19Willie Fuller: Uh, the union was not really addressed totally. That was there but I had to  
20 get my time in on the job, 90 days. At the end, uh, at that particular time, I  
21 could be represented by the union but other than that, I stay on my P's and  
22 Q's, coming in on time, uh, check out, uh, make sure to come off of break  
23 on time. Uh, later on once I got my 90 days in, then I got some  
24 representation.  
25

26Cheryl McQuaid: [5:08] And did you need representation at that time?  
27

28Willie Fuller: No but I called them anyway to figure out who it was and what it was all  
29 about.  
30

31Cheryl McQuaid: Michael Fleming.  
32

33Michael Fleming: Willie, when you came in, uh, you mentioned that you came from an all-  
34 black environment and it was mainly predominantly Caucasians when you  
35 walked in. [5:27] How many, uh, minorities did you see when you came  
36 in to, uh, B Hardware?  
37

38Willie Fuller: Uh, when I hired in, I was – three blacks hired in the same day I was and  
39 later on I found out my wife was hired on the same day I was but she was  
40 on the second shift but, uh, about three blacks were hired that particular  
41 day but most all the blacks were put in the body shop. If they wasn't in  
42 the body shop, they was put about 25 people down the line from you so  
43 you had to walk a good piece in order to talk to another black. Uh, at that  
44 time, there wasn't that many blacks hired in Fisher Body.  
45

46Michael Fleming: [5:59] How about Hispanics, were there many?

1  
2Willie Fuller: Uh, uh, quite a few Hispanics but again they was all [inaudible 6:07] all  
3 over the plant too that way I think they were just trying to keep the blacks  
4 and Hispanics from knowing each other or whatever, so they was always  
5 spaced out real good.  
6  
7Michael Fleming: [6:18] Women, were there very many women?  
8  
9Willie Fuller: Not that many womens, um, very few womens. Um, they later come in,  
10 came in in '70s but again my wife I met, like she was working up in Paint  
11 and, uh, up in, uh, Soft Trim [inaudible 6:34] where you put door  
12 [inaudible 6:36] and seats and things of that [coughing] nature. Uh, but  
13 not that many womens.  
14  
15Michael Fleming: [6:40] Was there a difference in the way the pay was administered in  
16 hours for men to women and people in the plant [inaudible 6:49]?  
17  
18Willie Fuller: That I really can't know. At, at that time, uh, no one really showed,  
19 showed you their paycheck, how much they was actually getting paid.  
20 Uh, you really didn't care really 'cause I came from a very menial job so I  
21 really didn't care what nobody else was gettin' paid as long as I was  
22 gettin' paid what they told me I was gettin' paid, so that was my biggest  
23 concern. Uh, I've been alone all my life and I really didn't try to interact  
24 with different people, so I really wouldn't know how much you got paid or  
25 whatever but later on I found out there is a different pay scale because of  
26 the job operation itself but other than that I really didn't care that much.  
27  
28Michael Fleming: [7:23] So when you left, uh, two years in Hard Trim, where did you go  
29 from there?  
30  
31Willie Fuller: Uh, two years in Hard Trim I went to, I stayed in Hard Trim but I went to  
32 a different operation. I went to, um, uh, uh, tail lights installation, uh,  
33 where we, uh, had four-man teams. The job was much easier. Every  
34 fourth car you did. Uh, it was a very great job. A lot, I met a lot of  
35 different people on that. Um, it was very, uh, uh, laid back like.  
36  
37Michael Fleming: [7:56] What did you do after that?  
38  
39Willie Fuller: Uh, after that I went back on Utility. Uh, moved around the plot – moved  
40 around in the plant and did different operations.  
41  
42Michael Fleming: [8:08] Um, were you ever a manager or supervisor?  
43  
44Willie Fuller: That was later on in, uh, later on arounds 1975 I became a general, I  
45 became a supervisor for material control. Uh, that was a big awakening  
46 for me but, um, I put in for it. I got tired of seeing what was going on on

1 the floor because the supervisors really wasn't supervisors. When I  
2 graduated from my supervisor class, I asked my general supervisor  
3 whether or not he was going to run my department or I was going to run  
4 my department. At that time he said "You will run your department." I  
5 said "Okay, so I'll make all my decisions and you won't make my  
6 decisions for me." He said "No problem. We can do that. Only one thing  
7 I want from you." I said "What was that?" He said "Hey, do not shut my  
8 line down." I said "I can make that happen"  
9

10Michael Fleming: [9:01] So were you ever in the Material Department prior to becoming a  
11 supervisor as an employee or you just went straight into management?  
12

13Willie Fuller: I went straight in from the line to material management position.  
14

15Michael Fleming: [9:17] Um, do you want to talk about, um, some of the, uh, trials and  
16 tribulations you had in Material as a supervisor?  
17

18Willie Fuller: Well, I realized, uh, there were two kinds of standards, one for the blacks  
19 and one for the whites. Um, a black guy couldn't do the same things that a  
20 white guy could do in terms of making a mistake because there was  
21 consequences for it. Uh, example, one day the line shut down because we  
22 was out of carpets. Uh, the carpet was unloaded but I couldn't find them.  
23 The supervisor told me, my head supervisor, "Hey, next time you find that  
24 [coughing] particular situation, I want you to phone, uh, phone it in  
25 [coughing] and get some carpet delivered." I said "Okay, no problem. I  
26 can do that." So sure enough, two months later, same thing happened  
27 again. I called it in, phoned the carpet in, got the carpet in. Later on that  
28 night before I'm checking out, he calls me up, said "Hey, we found those  
29 carpets. Why you order that?" "Because the last time I didn't I got  
30 chewed out and this time I did, I got chewed out. I'll be damned if I do,  
31 damned if I don't." End of conversation.  
32

33Michael Fleming: Uh, back then there was a, a very big issue with stock throughout the plant  
34 and safety. [10:31] Um, so talk about some of the safety issues that  
35 evolved from then and how much stock was just around and the, the  
36 difference in the way drivers drove back then.  
37

38Willie Fuller: Uh, when I was in management position, we really didn't care that much  
39 about safety at that particular time. Safety was no big issue because we  
40 didn't have that many, uh, safety problems per se. Uh, well, safety  
41 representative as for the union never rode down on management at that  
42 point. For some reason, we never had that problem. Later on as I became,  
43 became [coughing] **inaudible** 11:06] management, um, we had a problem  
44 with rotating the stock. We have a tendency to bury a lot of stock and  
45 once we bury it we can't find it. So like if stock come in today and some

1 more stock come in, we have a tendency to bury the stock that came in  
2 when we should be rotating it around. Later on we figured that out.  
3

4 Also, we re-, back then when I came in I was trying to tell upper  
5 management that the fact is we should work with our employees because  
6 they know their job better than we do and they said "No way. It's our way  
7 or the highway." I said "But that's the, that's not a good way to do it."  
8 They said, they told me I was too young to really understand what it's all  
9 about. I was new on the job. Five years later, we got to work with the  
10 employees. I said "Ain't that the same thing I told you five years ago?"  
11 [laughter] But nobody gave me credit for that, so I said "No problem. I  
12 understand how it is."  
13

14 Michael Fleming: Typical General Motors. [12:00] Uh, when, when you were a supervisor,  
15 um, discharging, talk about some discharges. I'm sure you had to  
16 discharge someone. Did you, did, did you ever have to discharge a  
17 Caucasian as well as discharging a black individual? Can you talk about  
18 that?  
19

20 Michael Fleming: Uh, discharging, no. I was fortunate not to discharge anybody but the –  
21 and management we are told different people are good and bad. This is a  
22 bad worker, this is a good worker, so watch out for them. Uh, this guy for  
23 some time they got it all written out, what you up for and things like that,  
24 so one night I had a particular situation, I'm down three people on a  
25 Friday night and one guy been off for two days. He was off for three days,  
26 so I [inaudible 12:49] on a Thursday night. I said "Hey, you know  
27 [inaudible 12:51] some time." He said "Okay, what's your problem?" I  
28 said "Hey, where's your doctor excuse?" "I don't have a doctor's excuse.  
29 My kid went to the doctor, not me." I said "Okay. No problem." He said  
30 "What you gonna do?" I said "I'll get back with you." Night passed over,  
31 Friday comes in, I'm down four people. He comes in, he said "What you  
32 [inaudible 13:10]." I said "Hey, you said you didn't have one, it's good  
33 for me but I'm down four people." I said "Hey, if I had to discipline you  
34 and give you three days off, I would have been down five people." He  
35 said "Don't worry about it. I got you covered on this side."  
36

37 They sent me three guys, mostly black, said "These three black guys you's  
38 got to watch out for because they're lazy and they won't do their job." I  
39 went to each black guy and said "Hey, I don't care what you do, how you  
40 do it, but do not shut this line down." No problem. Best time all night.  
41 No calls in the whole department and they couldn't figure out how it  
42 worked. It's all by giving employees enough room to do their job because  
43 if you don't do your job, I'm gonna do my job and my job is give you  
44 some time off or whatever you got comin' for yourself.  
45

1 Another point, a lot of people say “Hey, I want to get off because I got a  
2 doctor’s excuse.” “I’m sorry, we’re short of help.” I said “Nobody want  
3 to live outside of the box in management, especially Material.” [throat  
4 clearing] So I says okay, everybody in Ma-, in Material was older than I  
5 was, got kids older than I am. I said “Let me tell you all something. I  
6 can’t tell you how to do your job because you know the job better than I  
7 do but I can tell you one thing, I will do my job and you have to do your  
8 job.” “I got to get off tomorrow. We’re going to be short of manpower.”  
9 “I have no problem with it. Talk to your partner opposite you, set him up.  
10 If he can help you out, then you can go home.” He said “For real?” He  
11 said “But you got – don’t you got to ask somebody?” I said “Excuse me,  
12 who you talkin’ to? I’m your supervisor, nobody else. You don’t take  
13 [inaudible 14:54] from nobody, no hardware. [banging] If it don’t come  
14 from me, you don’t get nothin’ done.” There’s no problem, they did their  
15 job, guy go home, [banging] do five hours’ work for eight-hour job, bam.  
16 [banging]  
17  
18 Michael Fleming: [15:07] Willie, how long did you stay a supervisor?  
19  
20 Willie Fuller: I stayed a supervisor for eight months because after eight months they  
21 started taking time from me. When I was, when I went on [banging] for  
22 each amount of time they take, uh, a week or so from you or two days  
23 from your, uh, hourly?  
24  
25 Michael Fleming: [15:24] Were you a per diem?  
26  
27 Willie Fuller: Exactly.  
28  
29 Michael Fleming: [15:25] Would you explain what a per diem is?  
30  
31 Willie Fuller: Per, per diem is, uh, someone who’s on-call, more like the utility person,  
32 somebody sick, need to go on vacation, then you replace that person  
33 whether it be in Hardware, Trim, Body Shop, uh, some other area of the  
34 plant, you take that job. Uh, they don’t expect you to do a great job. They  
35 do expect you to keep the line goin’. Uh, sometimes they don’t try to have  
36 you do discipline but if it boils down that way, then you do it. A lot of  
37 people like to, a lot of supervisors had, had this thing where they did what  
38 the general told them but I was one of those I was also [questioning 16:02]  
39 the general and for some reason I got lucky and I got blessed with a good  
40 general.  
41  
42 Michael Fleming: [16:08] Also when you talk about per diem, it, it is one that, um, is still an  
43 hourly employee and not yet paid a salary, is that correct?  
44

1 Willie Fuller: Uh, no. Uh, a per diem get hourly – get salary pay but at a higher pay than  
2 hourly does. Uh, management frown on per diems showing each other  
3 their checks because you find out there's a, a difference in pay scales.  
4

5 Michael Fleming: [16:38] So they negotiated something, uh, more for themselves than  
6 another per diem had so they didn't want them to know what they had  
7 negotiated for themselves?  
8

9 Willie Fuller: Exactly. So they, they frown on you showin', showin' paychecks. If you  
10 did 40 hours and I did 40 hours but your, your pay is, your pay is better  
11 than mine, how did it happen? So to try to eliminate a lot of problem, they  
12 frown on, uh, salary showing each other their checks.  
13

14 Michael Fleming: [17:02] After the eight months, what did you do?  
15

16 Willie Fuller: Uh, I went back to the line, uh, went to A Hardware Side Doors, build up  
17 side glass.  
18

19 Michael Fleming: [17:13] Um, when, when did you begin to have an interest in working with  
20 the union?  
21

22 Willie Fuller: Uh, that was later on down the years, uh, I talked to several different union  
23 guys workin', stuff like that and, uh, um, one of my union reps said "Hey,  
24 you'd make a good supervisor 'cause you is a radical. You don't go  
25 along with the norm. You always got to question why." So I, uh, decided  
26 [inaudible 17:42] the union back in '95 in Material 'cause I saw so, so  
27 much injustice being done in the whole plant but I figured if I get on the  
28 inside maybe I can help out a little bit. To save one is, is a start, so I went  
29 in thinking I could save one by representing to the best of my ability.  
30

31 Michael Fleming: Cheryl McQuaid. [banging]  
32

33 Cheryl McQuaid: Willie, you said your wife worked there. [18:08] Did you meet your wife  
34 in the plant?  
35

36 Willie Fuller: Yes. I did.  
37

38 Cheryl McQuaid: [18:11] And how did you meet your wife?  
39

40 Willie Fuller: Uh, I was walking down the line in B Hardware and she was workin' in B  
41 Hardware. She had just transferred from Soft Trim to Hard Trim and I  
42 saw her workin' and I thought about walkin' up and talkin' to her and we  
43 got started communicating and found out we had a lot in common and  
44 about three months later we got married. [recorder clicking]  
45



1 Cheryl McQuaid: [18:35] So Willie, you were married three months after you met her, how  
2 hard was it to have a courtship and having a wife in the plant?  
3

4 Willie Fuller: Uh, it wasn't very hard because we was, we was, uh, so much alike. We,  
5 we talked about it, different situations, different scenarios that happened in  
6 the plant and things like that and we agreed upon a couple terms. "If you  
7 didn't see me doin' somethin', I wasn't doin' it. Same here. A lot of  
8 people will come to you about gossip here and there. Do not believe it. If  
9 you don't see me doin' it, don't believe it." I've seen a lot of people come  
10 in, get married, then after a while a lot of divorce come into the plant, so  
11 we got an understandin' from the start "Hey, do not believe nothin' you  
12 hear. Unless you see me doin' it, it's not true."  
13

14 Cheryl McQuaid: Um, also [sneezing] you mentioned [coughing] that you, you started on  
15 the line and then you did, um, eight months of salary.  
16

17 Willie Fuller: Right.  
18

19 Cheryl McQuaid: [19:32] What did you think about the people that went out for lunch? Um,  
20 what did you do for lunch as an hourly or as a salary? Was there a  
21 difference in what you could do?  
22

23 Willie Fuller: Depends. Uh, when I first started in, I was too tired to go out for lunch so  
24 I had to sleep and try to recuperate but the good part about when I hired in  
25 we had something called a wagon. That's where somebody brings, brings  
26 down doughnuts and coffee and things like that and that was the highlight  
27 of the whole day because you get energized and you start all over again.  
28 So between lunch and breaks you had the wagon come through, so that  
29 really helped a lot. It broke the monotony plus you get your energy  
30 because the sweets and treats of that nature. As for salary and hourly, um,  
31 I didn't see that much difference in terms of, uh, lunch breaks and stuff  
32 like that. Um, everybody did the same thing more or less. Uh, uh, salary  
33 got a little more leeway in terms of reportin' back to the line because the  
34 line was not movin' and plus they had, uh, pagers so they really wasn't  
35 actually gone, they was just eating. As for an hour, you had to be back at  
36 a certain time and stuff like that but, uh, a lot of people went out, had a  
37 hamburger, had a drink and come back.  
38

39 Cheryl McQuaid: Doug Rademacher.  
40

41 Doug Rademacher: [20:50] Did you have an opportunity as a, as a per diem to eat in the  
42 salary, uh, cafeteria? They had a separate cafeteria for, for, uh,  
43 supervisors and management. Did you, uh, were you a, a supervisor at  
44 that time when that was still active?  
45

1Willie Fuller: Uh, when I first went on graduation you had a chance to eat in the salary  
2 cafeteria. Uh, the food was different. Uh, they had prime rib and some of  
3 the things that you didn't have as an hourly. As I went on per diem I, I  
4 found myself not alienating myself from my hourly people because I'm  
5 trying to get to know these people and these people are the ones that will  
6 keep me out of trouble, so I ate in the salary cafeteria. I brought my lunch  
7 and ate at my desk.  
8

9Cheryl McQuaid: Marilyn Coulter.

10

11Doug Rademacher: Marilyn Coulter.

12

13Marilyn Coulter: [21:37] What about, um, the salary parking? Were you...?

14

15Willie Fuller: Uh, salary parking, uh, when I was on it wasn't a big issue. We'd park  
16 anywhere [inaudible 21:48] designation, so I, I still park in hourly parking.  
17

18Cheryl McQuaid: Cheryl McQuaid. [22:00] Other than your wife working here, did any  
19 other of your family members work here?  
20

21Willie Fuller: No. I came over here by myself. I'm still up here by myself.

22

23Cheryl McQuaid: [22:10] What did you feel made – what did you feel makes a good or bad  
24 supervisor?  
25

26Willie Fuller: Uh, a good supervisor I feel like ran his department the way he felt like he  
27 wanted to run it but as long as it was run fairly and equally among all his  
28 employees, uh, being able to live outside of the box, uh, do things to get  
29 the job done, uh, supplying the right material, the quality of mach-,  
30 material for them to do the job right. A bad supervisor is somebody that's  
31 a yes man, whatever the boss has him do, he do it but [inaudible 22:44]  
32 good employee or bad employee 'cause he know what person he's dealing  
33 with but yet he still has to do what his supervisor tell him to do.  
34

35 Uh, uh, a bad employer, employer, was, uh, someone that say "it's my  
36 way or the highway," bullyin' employees, especially Hispanic and  
37 minority. We had a lot of that back in '69 where supervisors felt like they  
38 was god. I ran across one, uh, I told him "no." I said "I came here  
39 looking for a job. I can walk out and look for a job. You cannot talk to  
40 me any way." At that point in time, he kicked me out of his department,  
41 sent me to another department. The guy said "You're a new hire." I said  
42 "No, I'm not a new hire. I just got kicked out of the department." He said  
43 "He can't do that." "Well, you better go back and tell him that 'cause  
44 that's where I'm at." So the union came back and said "Okay, let's talk,  
45 guys. Uh, let's see what's going on here, like it's all a misinterpretation or  
46 misunderstanding." I said "How [inaudible 23:35] misunderstanding? He

1 kicked me out of the department.” “Let’s shake hands.” I said “No, for  
2 what? I ain’t did nothin’” Again, they’d say “Well hey, let’s shake  
3 hands.” I said “No, I’ll tell you what,” I said “we don’t have to shake  
4 hands. We just get an understanding [tapping] you can’t talk to me any  
5 way. I’ll do what you tell me but you just can’t talk to me any way.” Uh,  
6 after that in-, incident, me and the supervisor became, um, very close. He  
7 spoke to me every day from then on.  
8  
9 Cheryl McQuaid: Marilyn Coulter.  
10  
11 Marilyn Coulter: Marilyn Coulter. [24:07] Uh, Willie, did I understand you correctly to say  
12 that it was Hispanic supervisors or supervisors treating...?  
13  
14 Willie Fuller: Supervisors treating Hispanics...  
15  
16 Marilyn Coulter: Treating.  
17  
18 Willie Fuller: ...mostly minorities...  
19  
20 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.  
21  
22 Willie Fuller: ...differently.  
23  
24 Marilyn Coulter: Okay.  
25  
26 Willie Fuller: But you got to understand the [throat clearing] format and the people that  
27 work in the plant are farmers [sneezing] from up north. They have no idea  
28 what black people are or Hispanics are. The only thing they get is  
29 information from the television, so when they see us, they say wow, like  
30 you’re a black guy or you’re a Hispanic or you do this. “Excuse me?  
31 That’s a television version. I’m totally different from this.” So we had to  
32 deal with that everyday ‘cause I know I became close friends with a guy  
33 from up north but he had never seen a black person until he came down  
34 here, so it was a whole new awakenin’. The things he had seen on the TV  
35 and he figured everybody played basketball. I said “No. [banging] I’m  
36 too short to play basketball.” [banging]  
37  
38 Marilyn Coulter: So, um, working here you were able to help educate people and, and  
39 briden – and broaden their horizons on some, on some level [inaudible  
40 25:10].  
41  
42 Willie Fuller: I would, I would, I would like to think I did because when I first came  
43 here, you go to the bathroom and you see nigger written on the wall and  
44 you say well, okay, things just [banging] don’t look like the same, things  
45 are still, still the same no matter where I go at I still got to deal with this  
46 nigger thing. Um, so, um, they had a different perception. Even my

1 partners walking side by side with me perceive me as lazy and [inaudible]  
2 25:39] and things like that [inaudible 25:40] although he always saw me  
3 readin' a book. And then, and one day he called me out. He said "You  
4 must be a queer 'cause you don't talk to nobody. You're always reading a  
5 book" "I'm saying how would you like somebody" – and I'm 5' 8", 125  
6 pounds and he's 6' 1" and 230 pounds – "how would you like somebody  
7 to beat your butt and send you home and tell them hey a 5' 8" 125 pound  
8 beat your butt?" No longer a problem. No more problem. It was all a  
9 miscommunication. It's always what they perceive, what they heard about  
10 blacks and then they think blacks like that.  
11  
12Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.  
13  
14Willie Fuller: Not knowin' my background, not knowin' who I am.  
15  
16Marilyn Coulter: [throat clearing] [26:22] Um, how long, um, during the time that you  
17 worked here, did you find that amongst coworkers changing to where it  
18 wasn't as prevalent to have those types of perceptions?  
19  
20Willie Fuller: Um, somewhat as, as, as the years passed by, uh, the perception of blacks  
21 began to change a little bit but it was still there because I see a lot of  
22 blacks, uh, brought into the stereotype of always laughin' and things like  
23 that, so I changed my mode. I went into a mode of don't laugh, straight  
24 face, and show'm a different perspective. Uh, that helped me out but it  
25 alienated me too and to the point where they called me a radical. And  
26 back then was Black Power back in '68, Vietnam War was going on, so  
27 they really didn't know how to deal with me...  
28  
29Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.  
30  
31Willie Fuller: And the one that came before me was always laid back and didn't say  
32 anything. I was totally different. I said things. I spoke my mind and was  
33 ready to go to war if I had to.  
34  
35Marilyn Coulter: [27:30] Okay, 1970 then fast forward to, uh, the late '90s, 2000, the  
36 climate now?  
37  
38Willie Fuller: Nineties, um, much better now but yet we still got different things going  
39 on in the plant. Uh, we got hanging nooses on walls and management  
40 offices and you're wonderin' what's goin' on. Uh, you still got different  
41 words on the bathroom but they're still paintin' over and stuff like that but  
42 it's gettin' better. Uh, union representation is better now than it was when  
43 I first came in, um.  
44  
45Marilyn Coulter: [28:14] So, um, the work environment is still reflective of the country.  
46

1Willie Fuller: Yes.  
2

3Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [28:22] And, um, during your time here, what would you say  
4 would your best, uh, accomplishment that you felt, the biggest changes  
5 that you gave to the environment because you were, um, being on  
6 committee and being on salary and being a worker here. What was, what  
7 do figure are some of the best things that you feel good about the changes  
8 that you made here? [banging]  
9

10Willie Fuller: Uh, I feel like, um, blacks contribute because of things was goin' on, you  
11 begin to get black history from the union recognizin' some of the things  
12 that the blacks have done, uh, Hispanic history, some of the things  
13 Hispanics have done and people gettin' aware of these people that I work  
14 with every day is not the same people that the TV portrays. Uh, find out  
15 that, hey, a lot of'm didn't know blacks owned businesses, a lot of'm  
16 didn't know blacks went to college, had [banging] degrees, could carry  
17 [banging] on a conversation because they [inaudible 29:23] position.  
18 They felt like hey, you don't know, you're not smart enough and  
19 sometimes you have, have – they realize hey, you are smart. I'll,  
20 [banging] I'll point to, I convinced two people since I was at General  
21 [banging] Motors to buy a house and not because I was smart but I told'm  
22 to do the math, put it in black and white, look at it, 40 hours, [banging]  
23 you can do this. They did it. [banging] I'm glad for them. [banging]  
24

25Marilyn Coulter: Jerri Smith.  
26

27Jerri Smith: Yes. [30:00] And you say you've had the union position, you've worked  
28 the line plus you've been a supervisor, which position did you prefer?  
29

30Willie Fuller: [laughter] That is a very good question. Uh, I eventually went back to  
31 Material. I was a line worker more or less but off the line. Uh, it was less  
32 hectic, uh, no headaches, no repercussions. [banging] My frus-, my most  
33 frustrating position was union because I was gettin' pulled from the right  
34 and the left and in the middle, things I knew was right. I was gettin'  
35 pulled from the top, from my union top, so I – it was, it was a no-win  
36 situation for me and my people that I was representin'. [Inaudible 30:52]  
37 is the fact that our, our handicapped people I kept tellin' my higher up,  
38 which my zone and my shop committee, that hey, we were discriminating  
39 against the handicapped people and they told me I didn't know what I was  
40 talkin' about. They go to Detroit, Detroit tell'm they are han-, they are  
41 discriminatin' against the handicapped. They come back and says – and  
42 you think they come and tell me "Hey, you was right all the time?" Nope.  
43 Never happened. So I was gettin' pulled both ways, so.  
44

45Cheryl McQuaid: Doreen Howard. [pause] I'm sorry. [coughing] [Inaudible 31:28].  
46 [throat clearing]

1  
2Doreen Howard: I was just, um, moving, um.  
3  
4Marilyn Coulter: Did they ask about [inaudible 31:34]?  
5  
6Doug Rademacher: [Inaudible 31:35].  
7  
8Female: Oh.  
9  
10Doug Rademacher: It's early on.  
11  
12Female: Okay.  
13  
14Doug Rademacher: [Inaudible 31:37]. [papers rustling]  
15  
16Female: Okay. [throat clearing]  
17  
18Doreen Howard: I – yes, I do got – Doreen Howard. I do have a question. [31:44] Um,  
19 what was your reaction to the name changes that occurred from the time  
20 that you hired in until you retired? How did you feel about going from  
21 Fisher Body to BOC to LCA and what do you call the plant?  
22  
23Willie Fuller: I still call it Fisher Body. I felt like Fisher Body stood for something  
24 because we was sort of like separate from GM and the fact that they had  
25 integrity built into the car when you put that nameplate on the bottom, Fi-  
26 made by Fisher, Body by Fisher it meant something, it had integrity there.  
27 As you transform, LCA, Lansing Car Assembly or whatever, I, I, I think it  
28 took away from it because a lot of your s-, your, uh, senior citizens still  
29 locked in the mindset of Fisher Body, so we still had Fisher Body. They  
30 knew back when this meant it was a good quality car. They have no idea  
31 what BOC, LCA any [inaudible 32:40] thing they came up with, uh, they  
32 had no, uh, brand recognition. But you bring Fisher Body back, you bring  
33 back the older generation, the 70 to 80-year-old, they know Fisher Body,  
34 the real McCoy.  
35  
36Female: [Inaudible 32:56].  
37  
38Doreen Howard: On – uh, Doreen Howard. On that same topic, uh, Fisher Body was  
39 always called the Capital of Quality. [33:06] Uh, what do you think  
40 contributes to that statement? [papers rustling]  
41  
42Willie Fuller: Uh, [throat clearing] the people have pride in what, what they was, what  
43 they was producing. We had some good quality cars. Management finally  
44 recognized that hey, you know, we could build a quality car if we gave  
45 them the right tools, right material, that we could create a world class car  
46 also. But they dropped the ball because we was, uh, building 98 and

1 Oldsmo-, and the 88 and were sellin' like hotcakes, we couldn't keep up  
2 with demand but yet they went to a small car and after, thereafter  
3 everything began to tumble down.  
4

5Cheryl McQuaid: Marilyn Coulter.  
6

7Marilyn Coulter: Um, you met your wife here. [33:51] Did you have any, um, other lasting  
8 friendships that went outside the walls of Fisher Body that you started  
9 here?  
10

11Willie Fuller: Uh, yes. I met quite a few people here that was more or less like I'm a  
12 very straightforward, straightforward person and I met quite a few people  
13 that were very straightforward. They told you up from what you say, what  
14 you had comin' and what you didn't [banging] have comin'. They go,  
15 they go this way or they go that way. So it was very interestin' for me to  
16 meet different people like that, uh, [banging] quite a few people, uh, left  
17 an experience on me, uh, helped me [banging] grow. Uh, uh, uh,  
18 somethin' I could bounce off the wall if I ran across a problem, I could  
19 bounce it off of them knowing they were going to tell me the truth.  
20

21Marilyn Coulter: Uh, Marilyn Coulter. So I know that, um, you said initially that you used  
22 to read a lot and you still do I'm sure. [34:43] Are there any other types of  
23 things that you used to do for lunch?  
24

25Willie Fuller: Uh, we started back in the early 70s martial arts was really high,  
26

27Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.  
28

29Willie Fuller: Bruce Lee and all that, so we started doin' martial arts at lunchtime, at  
30 break time, about seven guys we did martial arts, karate stuff. And then  
31 later on in the Material we started workin' out because [inaudible 35:05]  
32 too big [banging] so we started doin' exercise, tryin' to get back in shape  
33 and stuff like that. Did pushups, sit-ups, um, [banging] isometrics,  
34 walkin' around the buildin', uh, so it was, it was a good experience tryin'  
35 to get back in shape.  
36

37Marilyn Coulter: [35:20] I personally remember you walking. There became to be not only  
38 as truckers and material people [in the world 35:25] but even some of the  
39 hourly workers, the line workers also started walking a lot at every  
40 lunchtime, did you not?  
41

42Willie Fuller: Yes. It was.  
43

44Marilyn Coulter: Uh.  
45

46Cheryl McQuaid: Doreen Howard.

1  
2Doreen Howard: [35:38] Um, what's your best or [banging] most famous memory that you  
3 can think of that happened in the plant while you were there?  
4  
5Willie Fuller: Famous memory that happened in the plant.  
6  
7Doreen Howard: [35:54] Anything a be-, a best memory or somethin' that really stands out  
8 in your mind that happened?  
9  
10Willie Fuller: Uh, best memory, um, when I was a union steward and a supervisor came  
11 up to me and told me "I heard a lot about you from Oldsmobile, the Fisher  
12 Body and I like – between me and this goalpost over here, I think you're  
13 doin' a really good job but I sure would, I sure would, if I was back on  
14 hourly [inaudible] I sure would like you to represent me."  
15  
16Female: Hm.  
17  
18Doreen Howard: [Inaudible 36:26].  
19  
20Cheryl McQuaid: Quite the compliment.  
21  
22Marilyn Coulter: Quite the compliment. What would you say – Marilyn Coulter. [36:32]  
23 What would you say would be your funniest moment?  
24  
25Willie Fuller: Whoa, funniest moment. I have to go back. I'm not a funny person. I  
26 don't laugh that much, so it would have to be really, really funny. Uh, um,  
27 that's a hard one. Funniest moment, [pause] oh, funny, uh, funniest  
28 moment. [sigh] Can you give me an example of a funniest moment?  
29  
30Marilyn Coulter: Well, it could be something that maybe there was a prank pulled on  
31 somebody and you just thought it was, even thought it might have not  
32 been you, it might have been something you found as funny or just might  
33 have been something that was very humorous. It might be a surprise  
34 birthday party where somebody got surprised.  
35  
36Willie Fuller: That's a hard one.  
37  
38Marilyn Coulter: That's a hard one? We can move on.  
39  
40Willie Fuller: I, I can't, I can't really – I'm not that type of person.  
41  
42Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.  
43  
44Willie Fuller: I don't believe in people pullin' pranks on people, so they can't be funny  
45 to me and...  
46



1Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.  
2  
3Willie Fuller: ...so.  
4  
5Marilyn Coulter: So there wasn't one. Okay. That's fine.  
6  
7Willie Fuller: Yeah.  
8  
9Marilyn Coulter: [37:44] Um, did you participate in any of the departmental dinners be it  
10 from the [inaudible 37:48]?  
11  
12Willie Fuller: Yes, I did.  
13  
14Marilyn Coulter: [37:49] So what types of things would you guys have dinners for?  
15  
16Willie Fuller: Uh, Friday, Friday, Friday [inaudible 37:56] [throat clearing] and bringing  
17 different foods, stuff like that just because the weekend is here. Uh, um,  
18 uh, graduation celebrations, uh, birthday parties, uh, uh, birthday  
19 celebrations, uh, people [banging] retiring. Uh, we had one event though I  
20 thought was very good, um, a young lady off the line decided to give back  
21 to charity and every, and we ante up whatever, every person put in \$10 or  
22 \$15 and picked out a person that they knew needed some help and we give  
23 the money to'm. So [inaudible 38:34] five people put \$10 in, so each,  
24 each, each, uh, pay period we rotate to find the next person and they pick  
25 out a person to give the money to, so I thought that was really good.  
26  
27Marilyn Coulter: That's good. [38:50] Um, I know that, um, you're also an entrepreneur  
28 and, um, were you involved in any of the vending that was done inside the  
29 plant?  
30  
31Willie Fuller: Uh, yes. Matter of fact, um, I – we started off workin' about four jobs me  
32 and my wife. Uh, whereas I used to barbecue and I barbecued in the  
33 daytime, she was on the day shift and she would [banging] phone in orders  
34 and I would deliver to her [banging] at lunchtime and vice versa at night  
35 she would deliver the orders on the night shift. Eventually [banging] we  
36 do DJ'ing also. We, uh, did different, uh, [banging] bars and parties and  
37 weddings and I was the setup person. Uh, then eventually we opened up a  
38 beauty and barber supply and, uh, we started, [banging] uh, doin' different  
39 things for the community and stuff like through the company itself.  
40  
41Marilyn Coulter: [39:43] Um, did you, um, participate in any of the, um, functions at the  
42 hall with, at the union hall with your business?  
43  
44Willie Fuller: Uh, yes. Uh, when the first African American, um, celebration, uh, get to  
45 know what African Americans done, uh, we participated in the first five or  
46 six of'm and then we started also participatin' a little bit in the Mexican

1 Heritage [banging] thing but we did participate at the beginnin'. We still  
2 do participation because they still every now and then comes around and  
3 ask for a donation for a golf outing or help with Katrina and things of that  
4 nature, so we've been [banging] blessed to be able to give back to the  
5 community that way.  
6

7Marilyn Coulter: [40:28] How do you, as your business is within the area of General  
8 Motors, how do you being a business owner feel about the closing of  
9 Fisher Body? Do you feel it will affect your business at all?  
10

11Willie Fuller: Uh, to be honest, no because majority of the people that shoppin' was  
12 your, uh, low income people, the walk-in people, the people that have to  
13 walk, [banging] uh, General Motors somewhat. If I had to, to rely on  
14 General Motors employees to shop at my store then I'd be outta business.  
15

16Doreen Howard: Doreen Howard. [41:05] Um, you said that you and your wife both  
17 worked here and I'm interested in how did that affect your family life?  
18 You said you had several children. Um, how did you guys work that out?  
19 Did you work opposite shifts? I mean with both of you working here,  
20 what, what effect did that have on your family? [beeping] [background  
21 noises]  
22

23Willie Fuller: We, uh, we worked opposite shifts. She works the days, I work nights,  
24 that way one is always at the house. We did that until they became  
25 teenagers and eventually moved out but it was kinda hard but something  
26 you got [banging] to do because you got two girls [banging] so you have  
27 to be there with them. So it wasn't an easy job. I, I wouldn't wish it on  
28 nobody. Um, after my wife, uh, got 20 years in she, uh, took the buyout  
29 and then, um, it was much easier.  
30

31Doreen Howard: [42:00] In the event that there was a reason, uh, that someone [beeping]  
32 was sick [beeping] or something like that, how, how did you tend to work  
33 those type of family issues if, if someone, if, if one of the kids got sick  
34 would the wife stay home maybe a day or so to, to take care of'm or did  
35 you guys, uh, one would take care of one one time, the next time the other  
36 one would take time off to take care of'm?  
37

38Willie Fuller: That's amazing [laughter] but believe it or not, we never had a situation  
39 where one was really that sick. Uh, generally, I had a knowledge of  
40 medicine and things you could do in order to keep a healthy life, so we  
41 really didn't have that big a problem. Uh, mostly we tried to eat properly  
42 and stuff like that. If not, then I make sure we had Nyquil and stuff like  
43 that, something to knock it out right away but we really didn't have a  
44 major sickness problem in the house.  
45

1Doreen Howard: [42:56] Um, also in that, uh, [clicking] same line, uh, was any of your  
2 family members ever able to take advantage of any of the benefits such as  
3 the TAP, uh, the Tuition Assistance Program, in order to further their  
4 education later?  
5

6Willie Fuller: Um, no one in my family was able to take advantage of that, um, although  
7 I did but, uh, no one in my family.  
8

9Cheryl McQuaid: Marilyn Coulter.  
10

11Marilyn Coulter: [43:21] Um, given the factor that both you and your wife work here, did  
12 [clicking] you guys at any time both have to go through strikes or anything  
13 like that at the same time where both members of the household went out  
14 on strike?  
15

16Willie Fuller: Yes, uh, we went through, uh, a strike. Prior to 30 and Out we was on  
17 strike. We both was laid off and stuff like that and we went to, uh, try to  
18 get some food stamps from the United Way and they told us that “hey, we  
19 cannot help you” although they’re takin’ money out of my check  
20 maximum and outta her check, “we can’t help you unless you sell all the  
21 things that you have accumulated over the years.” And I told them “If you  
22 can’t help me now, believe me, if I get back on my feet, I will not help you  
23 later. I will not sell my stuff.” So [background conversation] [background  
24 clapping] until this day now, I do not give to the United Way. [background  
25 conversation] [pause]  
26

27Cheryl McQuaid: Jerri Smith.  
28

29Jerri Smith: Yes. I have a question. [44:25] Back to your business that you and your  
30 wife are both doing, exactly what is the business?  
31

32Willie Fuller: Uh, name of company is Shanora’s Beauty and Barber Supply, Inc. and  
33 what we do is sell beauty products for the stylists and the barbers, like  
34 clippers, hair rollers, everything you need to do to upkeep the hair, to cut  
35 the hair, to style the hair. We also sell, uh, clothing, uh, lipstick, makeup,  
36 um, dominoes, uh, checkers, things to make a dollar.  
37

38Jerri Smith: [45:02] And that’s what you do now and...?  
39

40Willie Fuller: Yes.  
41

42Jerri Smith: ...that you’re retired?  
43

44Willie Fuller: Uh, yes. I had the business since 1981.  
45

1Jerri Smith: [45:09] So you were [clicking] doin' j-, working at Fisher and doing the  
2 business beside?  
3  
4Willie Fuller: Yes. We had three jobs.  
5  
6Jerri Smith: Phew.  
7  
8Willie Fuller: While working at Fisher, running the, I had three employees so that was  
9 hard. It was hard for me to come in here and take orders all day when I've  
10 been givin' orders all day, [laughter] so it was very hard but I, I, I learned  
11 to adjust. So we had the business since '81 and it's been goin' on 20-  
12 somethin' years now and then we had Fisher Body and then I got rental  
13 property also, so I had 13 rental properties. So all these things kept us  
14 busy, so I don't know how I done'm, since I retired now I still don't find  
15 time to do a lot of things. I'm goin' how did I ever do this? But we did it,  
16 so.  
17  
18Marilyn Coulter: Plus you raised your kids. [laughter]  
19  
20Female: Um.  
21  
22Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 45:58].  
23  
24Doreen Howard: Um.  
25  
26Jerri Smith: [Inaudible 46:02].  
27  
28Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 46:03]. [recorder clicking]  
29  
30Jerri Smith: Go.  
31  
32Marilyn Coulter: [46:07] Um, Willie, is there anything that we haven't touched on that  
33 you'd like to say that [inaudible 46:13]?  
34  
35Willie Fuller: Uh, yes, I would. They always told me in order to know where you're  
36 going, you must know where you came from. First of all, I'd like to give,  
37 um, praise to my parents, which was [inaudible 46:22] and [Leslie Payne  
38 46:23] Fuller who brought me up to, to, to be true to myself, fear no man  
39 and tell the truth. As the old saying go, do the crime, do the time, so I felt  
40 like I stayed out of, out of trouble because I knew what the repercussion  
41 was.  
42  
43 Uh, I graduated from a black high school with a 3.2 GPA. I came up north  
44 because one neighbor was here and I stopped in Pontiac, Michigan and I  
45 realized Pontiac was too black for me. I just left a black neighborhood, so  
46 I eventually came to Lansing and where the population was more white

1 than black. Uh, that was a rude awakening for me. Uh, most of the  
2 people told me that Fisher Body was a racist place, said they won't hire  
3 blacks so your best shot was go to Oldsmobile. I went to Olds. I never  
4 got a call from Olds. I went to Fisher Body. They hired me the same day.  
5  
6 Uh, I lived five miles from the plant. I had to walk [inaudible 47:29] a  
7 brand new day for me and then [inaudible 47:31] I had to walk five miles  
8 in the morning time. I prayed for two weeks "Lord, you got to do  
9 somethin' for me." I finally got a car. The guy saw me, "Hey man, you  
10 sure look like Frosty the Snowman." "No problem. I need a car." He  
11 said "I got a car for you, \$200. It's sittin' on blocks. It'll run." I said  
12 "Praise the Lord." So I got the car. I never looked back. Since then, I got  
13 a car every three years. And that's all I have to say.  
14  
15 Marilyn Coulter: [48:06] Um, [inaudible 48:08] being retired now, what is it that you miss,  
16 is there anything that you miss about being at Fisher Body?  
17  
18 Willie Fuller: A lot of people say that hey, they miss the camaraderie but bein' a loner I  
19 can't say I miss the camaraderie 'cause I never let people get into my  
20 space. And people always said you thought you was somethin' else or  
21 you're weird, you're a radical but it's not that. Because I feel like the only  
22 person that can hurt you [coughing] is somebody close to you, so I felt like  
23 I didn't need to get too close to nobody that way I wouldn't feel hurt. I've  
24 seen a lot of things happen in the plant. The plant changes a lot of people.  
25 I've seen friends commit suicide. I've seen supervisors commit suicide.  
26 I've seen people die in the plant where they try to cover it up, so I felt by  
27 bein' by myself, alienatin' people if that be, then I can be best served  
28 myself.  
29  
30 As for missin' Fisher body, it was a good place to work. It was a good  
31 learnin' experience. It was good pay but in my life I have no time to look  
32 back in the past. I, uh, I learned from what Fisher Body taught me and I  
33 have too many things to do to think about Fisher Body. [throat clearing]  
34 And I see people and I'm glad to see them but I really can't say I – it's not  
35 there. I didn't attach to it, uh, uh, because when I walked in I, I, I locked  
36 in a mindset saying hey, I came here to work, nothin' else, get paid and go  
37 home.  
38  
39 Marilyn Coulter: So, um, last question, um, from me. Uh, now that you're retired and you  
40 locked in and you locked out but being a resident of this community, a  
41 past worker here, the Fisher Body as we know it now is going to be  
42 completely gone. The building is going to be, you know, [throat clearing]  
43 demolished and we're moving to another place. [50:12] How do you as a  
44 resident of Lansing, past worker, feel about that?  
45

1Willie Fuller: Well, it's sad that a lot of people won't get a chance to work at Fisher  
2 Body to find out exactly because inside the city itself, walking distance  
3 from your different high schools and stuff like that, you really don't feel  
4 the, the closeness. By moving to Delta, it's farther out, you're in a  
5 isolated country-like, so you really don't get a chance to see the people  
6 and the headaches and the noise and the bars and the hamburgers close by,  
7 so it's gonna make a big difference.  
8  
9 Um, I hate this, I just hate to see it go because it did so much for the  
10 community in terms of money and pay and stuff like that and you didn't  
11 really need that much education to do it as long as you did a good job and  
12 you caught on real well, so by leaving, it leaves a void but a lot of things  
13 in your life you get over it. And it's, it might not affect me today. I might  
14 say hey, Fisher Body is not there right now but maybe later on in life I'll  
15 look back and say hey, man, I sure miss Fisher Body but right now I can't  
16 say I really miss Fisher Body because it did what it's supposed to have  
17 done. It took care of me and I really appreciate that and it made a good  
18 living for me and I, I can't knock that, you know. And they, they had  
19 rules and regulations just like in the military, you don't fall, you got to go  
20 by the wayside but, uh, right now I really can't say it's not attached to me.  
21 Now maybe tomorrow I might fall down and say oh man, you know, but I  
22 really, it's not there now. [sniffing]  
23  
24Cheryl McQuaid: Doreen Howard.  
25  
26Doreen Howard: Uh, I had one last question. Uh, you touched earlier about getting your  
27 first vehicle when you came here. [52:09] Um, did you ever purchase a  
28 vehicle that you built over the years that you worked for General Motors?  
29  
30Willie Fuller: Uh, my wife purchased a, a, a yeah, good one, she purchased an  
31 Oldsmobile, uh, Cutlass brand new. Matter of fact, that was the only car  
32 that ever went up in vale when we bought it and, uh, it had swivel seats  
33 and everything and, and it was amazing. Uh, we had three cars in the  
34 family and we had to sell one, so I decided to sell her car because her car  
35 had a higher retail value than it was when she bought it and that was  
36 amazing, so we got rid of that one first but that was the only one I bought  
37 from here. Um, I bought the rest was GM but it was from not this plant  
38 itself.  
39  
40Doreen Howard: [52:57] Did, did you actually, did either one of you have the experience to  
41 be able to go through the plant with the car because I, I've heard other  
42 people talk of, uh, being able to follow the vehicle through the plant and  
43 have extra goodies put on their car so that when at the end they would  
44 have a better quality vehicle. Were you able to, to do that [inaudible  
45 53:21]?  
46

1Willie Fuller: Uh, no. We were, uh, it was a spur of the moment so we wasn't able to  
2 actually put in our order and walk it the through the plant itself but, uh, I  
3 saw a lot of people that did that and it was, it was, it was just great to see  
4 them do it, you know. You know, they'd order a regular speaker and they  
5 get a super-premium speaker, [laughter] so.  
6  
7Cheryl McQuaid: Willie, thank you so much for comin' and talkin' to us.  
8  
9Willie Fuller: All right. Thank you for the interview.  
10  
11John Fedewa: Thank you.  
12  
13Male: Thank you.  
14  
15Female: [Inaudible 53:50]. [background noises]  
16  
17  
18/mlc