

COMPLETE INTERVIEWS

Interview of _____

An interview was conducted on April 9th, 1999 with _____ at the offices of attorney _____ Present at the interview was _____ Michael Armitage and Ron Guess of Armitage & Associates, and attorney _____ _____ was informed as to the nature of the interview and that Armitage & Associates was conducting an investigation on behalf of the City Attorney of Milwaukee regarding formal and informal complaints and allegations of harassment and discrimination violations within the Milwaukee Water Department.

_____ began the interview by explaining how she gets easily angry and has a short fuse because of the situation at the Water Works. She acknowledged that she at times even scared herself with the amount of anger she had, like when she listened to _____

_____ recount all the problems she had experienced. _____ said this interview was very difficult for her and it was hard for her to talk due to her emotional state and the process that has taken place to address her harassment complaints.

SUSPICION

_____ is apparently understood that _____ She described the water plants as a different kind of place to work because the locations were separate and "out by themselves". When she started she was told by managers "What happens in the plants, stays in the plants".

She was asked to recount her employment history, complaints and other problems in as chronological order as possible.

In the early 1980's _____ was divorced from her husband with whom she had two (2) children and she needed to become self supportive. She went to Pius High School and later took classes at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC). She said she had a knack for math and science, which was revealed during career testing when she wanted to become a forest ranger. She eventually studied environmental science and received an associates degree and became a water and waste water technician. She first became interested in working for the City when she toured the Linnwood plant and thought a position in the Water Department would be a worthwhile occupation and a service to the people of Milwaukee. She applied and was hired as a trainee in March, 1984.

_____ explained that right from the start "bizarre" behavior was exhibited by her fellow employees, such as occurred at her initial interview. She was interviewed by _____

42, 43, 44 and 45 (all ph). She was completely confused by the way they would ask her extremely simple questions and when she

answered they laughed and were very animated. They nudged each other as if there were some kind of inside joke and she could not figure out why they acted like this. Only 15 did not act this way, but was instead "crabby and grumpy". After this went on for several more questions, 15 asked a question about a pump and everyone laughed even more uproariously. She was baffled by their bizarre behavior, but she figured the interview went okay because she was hired. (SUSPICION)

1 then described the "unique" trainee program she underwent. She said that most of the people training her had not been properly trained themselves, and some had no education and could not even read. They could push buttons, check levels, but knew nothing else about the overall process or what pushing the buttons actually did or what the significance was of the levels they checked. *

When she started at Linnwood after her training, she was placed with two women in the lab, and 29. They immediately told her "you're not going to like it here" and asked her if she had children. When she said she did, they said "wooooh", which she did not understand. They explained to her that there had never been women working in specific areas of the Water Works before and the males were going to "hit on her". 1 said she was not too concerned and felt she could handle it.

She was told to go to the Building & Grounds lunchroom where she met her boss, 25 (ph), and her crew to include 49, 50, 46 and 47. She was concerned because she had been on the job for some time and no one had yet really explained to her what she was supposed to do. Her memory of these early days include 45's unique mannerism of rolling his cigarettes in his fingers and speaking in an overly dramatic way. Her crew also spent long periods of time "sitting around and doing nothing". 1 said they "argued and argued in ebonics" and she could not understand hardly any of it, and most of what they spoke about had absolutely nothing to do with work. She said after long periods of doing nothing, they would take long breaks.

On her very first day with this group, it became obvious that they were heavily into pornography. There were numerous magazines such as Hustler, Oui and Playboy. There were also sex related phone numbers as well as posters in the lunchroom. (

SUSPICION) She found it curious that 45 was for some reason holding some of the employees paychecks. 1 said 45 was overbearing and would make comments such as "hey little girl", "women don't belong here", "this is not a good place for women", "downtown put you here", "you're not going to like it" and "you won't stay here".

In the following days, 1 said this crew continued to spend nearly entire days sitting around and arguing about trivial matters. She said she had looked forward to working when she started the position, but her crew did very little. She noted that 46 was quiet and hard to understand. (SUSPICION) He had a strange, perverted routine that he performed the same way every day, at every break. This routine consisted of 46 opening the same pornographic magazine to the same centerfold page and placing it on a table. He would then open his double door locker so he could view "huge pictures of vaginas", but what was extremely disturbing to 1 were school pictures of his kid's between these pictures. 1 said she was "blown away", "horrified", "sick" and got chills from witnessing 46's routine. She also said that the other employees paid no attention to this behavior.

At this point in the interview, attorney 18 had a concern (SUSPICION)

1 seemed frustrated and then spoke out that she could not be more fearful of the situation than she was already. She said the City would "use" this interview in bits and pieces "in any damn way they wanted". She said she did not trust the City, could not take "this shit" anymore, and that nothing she had done changed anything and, furthermore, this interview would not change anything.

1 then continued and suggested that 48, a consultant hired from Atlanta, would be a good person to talk to. She said he was hired after the "crypto" incident to report on needed changes at the Water Department. (SUSPICION) She said she only stayed on the job because of her kids and the need for money. She said she just walked around the first week in shock because of the way her co-workers acted. Her fellow employees would just sit around and "gawk" at her. (SUSPICION) Some of these workers were 49, 50, 45, 46 and others.

A "low point" of her initial experience at the Water Works was when she had gear that did not fit and she was "up to my hips in this cold crap" when flushing sludge. 1 was handling the front of a 3 1/2 inch brass nozzle hose "when 46 pulled the slack in". She tried to pull but had no slack. When she turned around, 46 was masturbating inside his rain suit. The other guys started laughing and she could not believe what she saw. She was totally humiliated and could only stand there until the hose was turned off. She did not see his penis but she could tell by his actions what he was doing. 50 and 49 said to 45, "46's jacking off to the little girl". She began to shake and the hose was difficult to handle under pressure. The guys continued to laugh making her more upset and so she "ripped" her gear off. When she went to 45, he told her "This is not the place for a little girl" and "I told you it was like this". 45 made 46 apologize and when he tried to put his hand on her to apologize, she told 46 to get his "fucking hand off of me". This made 45 mad and he told her she needed to get

along with people and that he had warned her she would not get along. He said nobody wanted her working there and "you can have an accident" which scared her. This occurred during her first couple weeks on the job.

She felt humiliated, frightened and scared and hoped she would somehow be transferred somewhere else. She did not report the masturbation incident involving 46 because she knew of no other course of action except to go to 45, who was her boss. She spoke to 43, who gave the impression he knew she would have problems.

After she had been on the job for about 6-8 weeks, she was told 45 was not coming in and she was in charge. She was not sure why she was in charge and felt she knew nothing of what was going on, but since she needed this job, she said "let's go to work". The guys said "Hey, little girl is the boss", then all of her crew disappeared and she could not find them. She did not completely know the facility because she had not been given a full tour, and she had no idea where the crew was. She then had to flush the pipe galley with hoses by herself. 43 showed up and questioned her about using the hose by herself and why she was not controlling these guys. She was not happy when 43 reprimanded her and she explained that she did not know the tasks because it had never been fully explained to her. These incidents strongly affected her reaction to this work.

1 was then told to interview at Howard, a move she was looking forward to because "what could be worse than this", but her crew told her she would not like Howard.

51 (ph) offered her the position at Howard and told her it was more technical, which was okay with her, so she accepted it mostly to get away from the people at Linnwood. No one was friendly to her on her first day at Howard. A guy, whose name she could not remember, said "You must be the new girl" and showed her the "makeshift" ladies room. When she opened the door, a guy was sitting on the toilet reading a magazine and everybody started laughing. Within the first few days at Howard, she received this comment from 52 "Are you cold? Your nipples are sticking out". A worker said repeatedly "they" did not want her there, especially 15 and that "downtown" made them hire her. After a few weeks 15 called her into his office and said "I didn't want to hire you. For every woman hired there is a Vietnam Vet that I couldn't hire" and that she was displacing men who needed jobs. She was surprised to hear this from "an official", though she had heard from workers on many occasions how she was not wanted there.

During her training period at the Howard plant, some people attempted to train her, but most did not. She said heavy drinking was common and employees showed up "smashed" regularly, and pornography was watched in the lunchroom routinely. She did not feel welcome at all and people said inappropriate things to her, such as asking her for dates, making remarks about her body, etc. Howard ended up to be "more of the same" and when she expressed displeasure with the constant pornography, she was told "this is

our world" and not to think about changing things. She told the men she was offended but they said "you came into our world - get used to it". Some crews did not drink as much as others. (SUSPICION

S3 : (ph) was notorious for being a "by the book" guy and she was glad she got him as a supervisor hoping he would control the situation better. It was not unusual for co-workers to tell her she had a "nice ass". SUSPICION

S3 did make them turn the pornography off, but only while she was around, and they let her know they were not pleased with her by making constant comments about her being in "their world". She complained to whoever was in charge, including 13 who said "You don't like it, don't watch it" and "go somewhere else". She felt they were only trying to drive her out of the place. She was warned that "what happens in the plant stays in the plant" and that she would be fired for complaining.

After a couple weeks of training, she was told she was ready. She did not feel as though she had learned much, but was happy to get out of the training situation and work for

S3 She described him as a gentle man who was nice to her and explained everything about the job. She told him about how much the drinking and the pornography bothered her and he said she needed to have a thick skin and advised her not to go to the "big guys" such as 15 and others. The situation improved slightly

SUSPICION S3 helped her learn the place and she was happy working with him.

Then one day "out of the blue", while fixing a chemical leak, S3 put his arms on either side of her and asked her "When are we going to bed together?" She was shocked and exclaimed "What? How about never!" He made strange comments about how they had been seeing each other all this time and it was time for them to have sex. She strongly rebuffed him, but S3 "went nuts" and started telling everyone they were lovers. He was exercising at work saying he was preparing to "make it" with her, and he continued to come on to her "like gangbusters" and kept invading her personal space. He said a fortune teller told him they were meant to be together and he would speak openly with others as if they were together. On one occasion she heard him making these type of remarks and said openly and loudly to him, "Are you fucking crazy?" But he continued with this type of behavior such as when he slipped \$100 bills to her, sometimes in books, and she would tell him she did not want him or his money. S3 and other employees would just laugh at her and the situation got worse. She tried to explain to him her total lack of interest but he said she would eventually be interested in him and they would be married. She was "livid" that she trusted S3 because he was the only guy who seemed to be acting normal, and now he was coming on to her. She was mad at herself for not seeing it coming. He also bought her jewelry, but she never accepted any of it.

1 went to 13 for help even though he was a supervisor of another crew. She at first trusted 13 but changed her opinion when she found out he occasionally brought in pornographic movies. 13 said he did not know what he could do about her situation and said "What happens in the plant, stays in the plant". He seemed to want to help and eventually spoke to 53 about her concerns, who told him it was none of his business. 13 then told her to go to 14 (ph) who possibly could help. When she told 14 about 53 not acting right, he just grinned the whole time she explained it. 14 later transferred 1 to another crew but they also drank a lot and watched pornography. 13 did not drink but his crew did and was usually "out of line" including heavy involvement in pornography.

1 described an incident while she was on 53's crew during Christmas 1984 when she came in on the morning shift. She saw pornography playing on the TV and since no one was around, she turned it off. As she walked through the room, she noticed beer cans laying everywhere, and then saw 22 laying on the floor apparently passed out from drinking. She asked 53 about what should be done and he said the guy (22) was drunk and since he did not hire him, he did not want to do anything.

1 had brought in a small instant camera because she wanted to take some Christmas pictures, so she took a picture of 22 on the floor. 53 finally went over to 22 and "kicked and nudged" at him. 22 pulled himself up from the floor and immediately went to the refrigerator and opened another beer, then turned the pornography back on. 53 knew she had a photograph of 22 passed out drunk at work, but said there was nothing he could do about it. Later on, 22's wife called and 1 heard him call her a "fucking bitch". He hung up, drank some more beer and kept the pornography going on the TV. 1 was concerned that nobody would do anything about it, so she again turned off the pornography on the TV.

She explained how ridiculously possessive the guys were of specific chairs, magazines, etc., and how 22 got mad at her for turning off his pornography on the television. He continued to drink and began to "dance and pant" on a lunch table to the music from the pornographic movie. He then dropped his pants around his ankles and she took another photo of him in his briefs. She then left the room. 1 said it did not seem to phase him that she took pictures of his antics. 22's wife called again and apparently asked him to come home. 53 ignored all this activity and did nothing to stop this behavior. Later in the day, 1 said she attempted to take a Christmas photograph of the work crew, but 22 jumped into the picture "holding his dick" with a beer in his hand.

Investigator's note: 1 became quite upset at this point in the interview and broke down crying. A 15 minute break was then taken.

1 continued, mentioning that on St. Patrick's Day, 22 became so drunk that someone felt it necessary to call the paramedics. She thought maybe this was why 53 felt he could do nothing for 22 on Christmas when he was passed out. 1 said she had filed away her photographs of this incident at home and forgot about them. She later found them as she was organizing her pictures several years later, and attorney 18 now has them.

Early on at Howard, 1 was introduced to 54 who was watching the filter bed. He said "excuse me", then exposed himself and urinated in the filter bed. She was shocked by his behavior and noted that on another occasion she saw 22 urinate in a filter bed also. These type of incidents had a "cumulative effect" on 1 who said in those early days she was amazed at how unprofessional these guys were, their lack of knowledge of basic duties, and how little they knew of the "big picture" of how the water plant worked.

1 was able to become a Water Operator II, skipping Operator 4. She found out that the other employees either did not want the job or could not pass the test, and employee's skill levels dated back to "coal shovelers" and had not improved much since then.) She noted that some

55 (ph), who often smelled of hard liquor, told her directly that if she was going to be on his crew, she had to drink. She said it was hard to believe that the plant managers would not have known he drank on the job because his breath gave it away. All the shift supervisors knew drinking was going on throughout the plants but did nothing.

1 came to the conclusion that the only way she was going to be able to handle this job was to be put in charge of her own shift. She said she became an operator in charge (OIC) around 1986 or 1987.

After some time as an OIC, 54 who was a known alcoholic, hated 1 and called her a "cunt". He refused to do what she said, threatened to kill her and was very abusive toward her. 1 insisted that 54, as well as the rest of her crew, needed to get serious about performing their duties and to stop drinking on the job and watching pornography. She said the crew hated her for this and there was definite tension. Normally, 54 would drive the vehicle when she would do rounds and he would take samples and return to Howard. During her first week as OIC, while she was riding with 54 he saw an old lady watering her lawn in a neighborhood and he stopped and started yelling at her and gave her the finger. 1 was stunned and asked "what

the hell he was doing" to which he responded "Fuck you bitch". She finally figured out that this guy was so crazy that when he saw the lady using her hose, he became mad because she was using city water which caused him to work.

On another occasion, S4 turned off their normal route and went to his cousin's house where he parked and entered. When he stopped I said "no" to him going inside, but he went inside the house anyway. She was very uncomfortable and "a bunch of Indian guys" were drinking and acting obnoxious near her vehicle. They then surrounded her truck and started reaching in the window in a very threatening way.

S4 took the keys inside with him so she was unable to drive away. She said it seemed like a very long time until he finally came out of the house and back to the truck.

On still another occasion, S4 was supposed to start at 10 a.m., but was late and did not show up until about 12:30 p.m. 22 who had stayed until S4 showed up, then left. S4 stayed at work for only a short while then took off. I reported him and he eventually got a thirty (30) day suspension. After the suspension ended he returned to work in a drunken state and "arguments ensued". S4 told 14 (), "I know where you live, I'll burn your house down". 14 told I not to let S4 on the plant property in the state he was in (drunk) and to call the police if he came back. As S4 left, he yelled at I "remember the post office, you red hair bitch". I then went on rounds and when she got back, S4 was in the control room. She told him he was not supposed to be there and S4 told her that if she called the police "I'll break your fucking arm". I said she walked over to a telephone and picked up the receiver like she was going to call the police. He left, but as he walked away he said "fucking cunt" and made a motion like he had a pistol in his pocket. She said this incident made her very scared that he would come after her. When S4 eventually returned to work, he was quiet and would not speak to her which did not bother I. She added that he had not spoken to her for a long time when all of a sudden he blurted out, "My wife is gonna divorce me and I don't want to pay support". She told him "If you quit your job, you won't have to pay support". He apparently quit the next day, but came back later.

SUSPICION

I became an Operator III and met (her husband) at the Howard plant who was on 13 crew. She asked him for coffee and they ended up going to her house, drinking beer and talking all night. He was very nice and explained the Water Works to

her and eventually in October of 1987, they were married. She was given a "horrible crew" which was eventually replaced by better people.

1 became involved in union politics because she thought it would help her make changes. She was appointed to be a steward, chief steward, and then vice-president of her local union by winning grievances, a lack of challengers and her attitude. She said "Who ever thought they would let broads in the union". She had a lot of interaction with management (43, 17, 12, 13), but had no respect for 12 and was not sure how she got the job. She said 13 was okay, but 27 was known as "stick your head in the sand" and "boob".

As union V.P., 1 said employees would come to her hoping she could help them with their problems.

HEARSAY, SUSPICION

1 She said "27 knew about this behavior. When 1 told 12 about 40 being drunk and obnoxious, 12 said "I know nothing about it". 1 told her right back, "Well now you do...shouldn't something be done?" 12 said there was nothing anyone could do.

HEARSAY

HEARSAY

1 explained that putting complaints in writing was quite different than just telling management about something, because when something becomes a written complaint, there was much more of a chance for threats and retaliation. Management's attitude seemed to be that nothing bad was happening unless there were written complaints. This approach caused unnecessary fear and helped keep people from reporting problems. Knowing management's criteria for written complaints, she went to 58 and talked him

into putting his complaint in writing, even though 58 did not want to do it. I found it interesting that when she took the complaint to 13 (he was shocked that 58 had actually written a complaint, and in the end, nothing ever happened regarding the complaint.

I said she was so concerned about the dangerous conditions around the plant, she finally called OSHA to get something done. She told 59 of OSHA about her fear of equipment, the lousy training, etc., and 59 said he would do an inspection. During his inspection, he asked some very simple questions of 12, but she had no clue on how to answer them. I said 12 always had given the most excuses about the plants and never seemed to think any problem was bad enough to do anything about. OSHA found numerous out-of-date items and other problems, but what caused a big uproar was the requirement that all men had to be clean shaven for masks. The guys blamed her for initiating the call to OSHA and then tried to discredit her. She was told by union members that the union stewards were for "handling trouble, not causing problems" and she was supposed to do "mop up" for other people's problems and not to make any decisions. She was told not to think that she was there to specifically defend workers when they were in trouble.

I then discussed 3, noting the many disciplinary problems he has had over the years. She said 3 and 39 were close friends, even off the job, and were always together.

SUSPICION

I said several other people in maintenance also had problems with these two individuals, and when 3 got a job in operations, maintenance was glad to get rid of him. She said the most irritating thing about 3 was his continuous talking, mostly about himself. She further described him as "a little smart and clever" and that he would brag about things no one else would even admit, much less talk about.

HEARSAY

I said that she did not really want to hear all these things and was bothered by it. She said that (6) had turned him in to 12 for stealing a case of toilet paper. He got caught became so angry that he smeared heavy grease on some walls leaving his hand print. It was behavior like this that made many employees fear him, and he was well known to "go nuts" and "have a tirade" when anyone attempted to confront him.

HEARSAY, SUSPICION

I said there should be a police report regarding the fight 11

had with 3 SUSPICION

He would take keys without permission, open offices he should not be in, obtain supplies he should not have, get on other people's computers, and would not hesitate to show people his "master key". When 1 told 12 about 3 and his "master key", 12 said, SUSPICION, HEARSAY

1 explained that many incidents were never written up or filed in the Water Works and that several "bad workers" had clean personnel files because of management's habit of only accepting written complaints. She said it was the City's way to ignore a problem and hope it went away, or to shuffle the people around, or to make the process such a hassle that it was usually dropped. It would also be an attempt to make it appear that all was okay in the department.

1 then detailed the events regarding the bathroom wall writings. She went into the lunch room for coffee and 24 told her what was on the men's room wall and said 3 was "really fucking scaring me". He also asked 1 if she knew 3 had explosives at the plant and that a few weeks earlier he was messing around with explosives at work. 24 added that 3 told him about his involvement with "chemical explosives" and "blasts", and even told 24 about having blown part of the roof off at Howard.

1 was hesitant to report this to management because of their lack of effectiveness on past issues, so she told 3 that any type of explosives pose a major danger to chemicals, tanks, etc. She said he laughed and said they (the explosives) could take out three (3) city blocks. 5 said "I'm no snitch, but I'm scared."

HEARSAY, SUSPICION

1 noted she heard there had been a "drive by" shooting earlier, but she was not working during that time. 1 said that when the police came, 3 had stayed after his shift to check out what was going on. The police said the window was not broken by a bullet and that something had happened within the fence line of the plant. The officer said that it would have taken a good hit to break the window. 3 later came out of the area flipping a bullet in his hand and said "Fucking stupid cops...I found the fucking bullet".

Investigator's note: This sequence of events tends to show 3 attempting to cover his detonation of some sort of pipe bomb and the resulting broken window by offering a bullet as evidence of a drive by.

24 told 1 that the writing on the wall said "1 is a cunt" and that if 3 wrote it, "I'd watch my back". 1 said she was afraid of 3 and what he may do next, considering the guy makes bombs, shoots guns, and now he was singling her out (via bathroom wall). Now it seemed things were getting out of hand. When she told 12 about the bathroom writings, 12 said there was no proof who wrote it and that 1 could not be certain the writing was about her. 12 did nothing about the situation so 1 spoke with 13 about the writings, who told her, "I would instigate action, but he might kill me".

SUSPICION

She felt that something had to be done, so she went home and brought back a camera and took photos of the writings as proof of harassment. When she came back a couple days later, there were two (2) additional writings on the wall and she took another picture. At this point she said in frustration "I've been taking this for 15 years". 12 told her "you can't prove who did this" and 1 who was very upset, said this was sexual harassment and it was 12's job to find out who did it. 12 immediately went to the bathroom and erased the writings. 1 said there was no way at this time 12 knew she had taken photos of the writing. She told 12 "I wanted an investigation and you just destroyed my evidence", and when 12 learned of the photos she was surprised. 1 said that if 12 claimed she erased the evidence because she knew photos had been taken, then she was not being truthful.

1 said the pressure and fear of 3 was increasing, and she was hearing comments such as "You should pay someone \$25 to start your car", meaning 3 was dangerous enough to sabotage her car. She was angry with management because they showed no concern for her safety.

SUSPICION, HEARSAY

1 called 61 and explained the situation, and 61 told her to go home and she would call the police. She also told 1 to fill out an EEOC complaint form. 9 called 1 at home to see if she was okay, which was the first person in management to show any real concern for her. She told 9 what a problem 3 was and her fear of retaliation. When 1 filed her complaint, she named the City of Milwaukee as part of the harassment.

The police arrested 3 when they came to check on the explosives matter. A couple days later, 12 told 1 in the lunchroom "he's been released" and 1 said "I feel threatened, I feel scared". 12 showed absolutely no concern and turned and walked away. 1 called after her and said she would go to the EEOC and 12 said "go then".

SUSPICION

asked 8 to let her know when 3 left work so she could come in. 8 began "badgering" her and demanded to know what this was all about. She told 8 to talk to 13 if he was so concerned and he should go home immediately or she would call the cops.

1 said these constant and dangerous problems were affecting her concentration on the job. 9 "changed her tone" and said "I've interviewed 8 people and nobody knows anything". 1 was not surprised that employees told 9 they knew nothing because of the obvious fear of "getting on 3's bad side". She was annoyed that 9 could not see through the stonewalling. 9 said that if she fired 3, ironically 1 would probably get the grievance as union V.P. 1 was asked what she wanted done about it, and 1 said she was not sure, and that it was hardly her job to come up with the Water Works solution to a sexual harassment matter. 9 told her, "See, you don't even know what should be done". 1 suggested a sexual harassment class of some sort so employees would have rules to work by. Swank asked her the same thing (what should be done?) and 1 asked for an outside investigation. When Swank learned that the city had been named in her complaint, she said "I (Swank) work for the City, I can't talk to you". 9 and 61 also showed discomfort in talking with 1 because the City was part of the complaint.

In conclusion, 1 mentioned that in February, 9 told her that she was expecting too much and maybe she should not come back to work. 9 also said "Don't flip out now" and that there would always be "crazies" in the department. 1 said the Water Department failed miserably in handling her harassment complaints.