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Interview no. 1612

Frank Ratti

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Frank Ratti

Interviewer: Cesar Villarreal

Project: Farah Oral History Project

Location: n/a

Date of Interview: May 21, 2010

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Transcript No.: 1612

Transcriber / Summary: Alejandra Garcia

Frank Ratti, born in New Jersey on November 1942, worked for Farah from 1968 to 2008. After his career in United States Air Force, Ratti became a salesman selling shirts, headscarves, and other head ware for an apparel company in North Dakota. In 1968, a friend and a Farah employee asked Ratti if he would be interested in working for Farah, and he began working as a Salesman in that same year. Through out his career at Farah, Ratti's job positions changed periodically from Salesman to Regional Manager, and he mainly worked in the Upper Midwestern region, which included Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Ratti recalled many of the benefits that he had working for Farah before the strike such as receiving free doctor's visits and eyeglasses. Ratti also described how his work as salesman was affected during the strike, for example there was an incident that involved the Minnesota Vikings, a NFL team, picketing in front of one of his largest customer's store. Additionally, as a Catholic he was morally conflicted because remembered when he heard a bishop yell from his pulpit to boycott Farah products. While still in North Dakota, Ratti explained how the unionization of Farah was his biggest challenge that he experienced, and mentioned the motives of the union supporters had to target Farah in El Paso, Texas. From the point of view as a salesman in North Dakota, the public perception of Farah did not change from what it was before, especially with Ratti's clients and customers in Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota because they continued to believe that buying Farah meant they would receive the highest standard of value. To conclude, Ratti discussed Farah's transitions until Perry Ellis bought it; he also explained how the employee treatment dramatically changed through the years. He stopped working for Farah in 2008, but continued working in the apparel industry as a salesman for smaller companies. He continues to believe that Farah was a good company that is an example to how companies should be run.

Length of interview 58 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a