Serving in Florida

1. Ehrenreich opens the selection with “Picture a fat person’s hell…” (para.1). What is the intended effect? Does she want to shock or disgust the reader? Is she being humorous?
2. Ehrenreich describes the kitchen in terms of bodily organs and functions. What response is she trying to evoke? Is she successful? (See paras. 1 and 2).
3. Ehrenreich provides fairly extensive commentary in her footnotes. What is the effect of this strategy? In the footnotes, is the tone different from the one used in the body of the piece? Explain.
4. Ehrenreich uses lively emotionally charged language throughout. Identify one passage and analyze the diction, especially the connotations of the words. Suggestion (which means do it!): the paragraph beginning “Now, the Industrial Revolution is not an easy transition…” (para. 3) or “I make friends, over time, with the other girls who work my shift…” (para. 11).
5. Ehrenreich occasionally uses crude expressions. Are they appropriate? What is her intended effect in shifting the diction that is not only informal but, some would say, crass?
6. In this selection Ehrenreich is both an insider and an outsider; that is, she is the writer observing the environment in which she is playing a role. How does she make this narrative stance work? Does she shift abruptly between describing what is going on and commenting about it, or does she move smoothly between the two? Discuss by citing specific passages (Note the plural)
7. Discuss specific instances of humor in this selection. Is it primarily ironic humor? Aggressively sarcastic? Affectionately amusing? Cite specific passages, again, note the plural!
8. What elements of fiction does Ehrenreich employ? Consider such elements as figurative language, dialogue, narrative commentary, and description of people and settings.