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American Studies

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Dr. Satterwhite

**Narrative**  
**Jared Stowers, Lowes employee**

Questions

1. Will you please state your name, your job title, and the name of the organization you work for?
2. Where are you originally from and what did your parents do for a living?
3. How long have you worked at your current job, and how long do you plan to work there.
4. How much money do you make an hour? Do you feel this is a good wage for what you do?
5. Do you feel that you are treated fairly at your job? If no why?
6. Where do you live? What are the costs involved for you in getting to work?
7. Would you describe in detail a typical day at your job?
8. What do you like best about your job?
9. What do you like least about your job?
10. How does being located near a major university affect your business?
11. Could you describe a time where you were tempted to walk away from your job?
12. Have any of your fellow employees been fired while you were working? If so, for what, and how did u feel about this?
13. Do you have anything else you would like to share?

My name is Jared Stowers I work with uh Lowes home improvement and im a customer service associate, CSA

I was originally born in Florida, lived there for a year for my parents moved up here off my grandparents farm out of their trailer, and they both work in nursing

Let's see, it'll be 3 years coming up end of this month, not really sure what, how long I'll be there, hopin to move up in the company a little bit, maybe get up to the department manager at some point, I don't know when that's going to be though.

right now I'm making 9.25, I feel like I deserve a little more, work a little harder than everyone else, but for what I do, naw, absolutely not enough

Fairly? um, no, I really don't think we get treated fairly, upper management, they really have this superiority complex over all of us, they, they feel like we're not good for anything, they kind of talk down to us all day, it's kind of demeaning, but we put up with it.

I live in Blacksburg, I have to drive to Christiansburg every day to get to work, uh, it's about a 15 minute drive there and back, uh, I'm paying for gas, I mean we have too, we pay for all our clothes that we have to wear there and they just get destroyed at work and they get trashed, torn, dirty, really can't really wear them for anything other than to work, um, just odds and ends expenses.

A typical day, I work a nine hour shift usually, we get an hour lunch break, unpaid, we're supposed to get two fifteen minute breaks though out the day, but, we rarely get to take em, and when we're back in the break room, managements all, if they see us back there, they're always asking us like, "Why are we back there?" and they grill us about why we're not on the floor, even though we're supposed to be getting breaks. Um, usually uh, if I get there on time I,

come up through the main entrance so we can walk by the front desk, see what managers are there, see who we have to deal with throughout the day. Um, if I'm running a couple minutes late I'll come in through the lumber entrance um, so I can avoid them, they usually don't come that far down. and just throughout the day I mean we're helping various customers with whatever they need, um, and when we're not with customers, drive a lot of power equipment, forklifts, and other things, we have a couple different pieces of equipment. One's an order picker, one's a nar-aarr, narrower isle reach lift, we call it star wars, don't know why, but yeah, I'm down stocking a lot of lumber, helping people out in the yard, really try to avoid people as much as possible while I'm there.

What do I like best about my job? well right now I'm just a csa, we really don't have a lot of responsibility and they don't expect a whole lot out of us, I kinda get away with a lot of stuff, no one's really looking to me to have to deal with big issues, big problems, that's kinda one of the perks I like that upper management they have to deal with, you know, people are getting mad, customer complaints, all that stuff, really, if we have a problem we just send them to them, so it's kinda nice not having that responsibility.

What do I like least about my job? oh, wow, definitely, just upper management, they think they know everything that's best for us, they think they know how to run everything, when really they're lazy, they don't want to do any of the work, I've gotten paged by the store manager to come pick up a bag of trash one time, he walked passed the bag of trash to get to a phone to call me, to have me walk across the store to pick up this bag of trash. this was something that

took about twenty minutes and could have been done in about 30 seconds if they would just you know, step up and do something themselves. So, upper management really gets to me, like I said before, they look down at us, they just have absolutely no respect for the people who are actually doing the work at the store.

Well, we do get a lot of college kids comin in, with various projects, some of them are, school oriented, a lot of them really aren't, they come in to get things for their own little personal games, beer pong tables are a big, big thing, especially when the kids are coming back from school, we're always having to cut pieces of plywood down to size to help people do that, they're always asking us for advice on what we would do if we we're building a beer pong table, so um, usually when they come in, they're buying this plywood, a lot of times going over getting funnels and tubing as well for beer bong, we always get a kick out of that. Other than that, like on game days, we never have people in the store, it's always dead, no one ever comes, other than that, really not a whole lot of influence that I see on my level about having a college campus around, sometimes, even once or twice a year, we'll get an order from Virginia Tech, they'll need a bunch of lumber cut down for various projects, or things like that but, that's pretty much the extent that we get.

Yeah, I've been tempted to walk out of my job multiple times, a lot of times it just comes down to decisions that people above me are making, and trying to force us to do things that just don't make sense, they're always having us do jobs that aren't in our job description, they're always having us I don't know, it's hard to explain, really it's just the way they treat us a lot, I've been

tempted to just walk away from the store manager, and just walk right out the door, tell em I was done, I wasn't putting up with it anymore, but, think twice because I really can't afford to be doing that.

We did have one manager, I really don't know if I should be telling you this, he got fired for sexual harassment, he was making inappropriate advances, I think it's what they said, towards one of the cashiers, one of the younger cashiers, yeah that that was an interesting, interesting day we had, we had company come in by company I mean like district managers, regional managers, we had a couple of em there, they actually walked him, escorted him out of the building, out the door, and told him that he wasn't allowed to come back, I don't know, that was interesting cuz I mean I'd known the guy for a little bit of time, and he always seemed like a nice guy, I can definitely see him doing something like that, it was interesting, a lot of gossip going on.

Yeah, my day off, I think I just got off a seven day streak of working, haha, of course they give it to me on a random Tuesday, but I'm not going to complain too much, I need the hours, need the money.