

Intro to American Studies

Fall 2008

L - Lucas McNabb (Interviewer)

Anonymous (Interviewee)

L: Will you please state your name, your job title, and the name of the organization you work for?

Anonymous: \_\_\_\_\_, driver, Virginia Tech PD, Safe Ride.

L: Alright. Where are you originally from and what did your parents do for a living?

Anonymous: I'm from Hampton, Virginia. My dad is a Newport News Sheriff's Deputy, and my mom is a marketing director for a home health agency.

L: How long have you worked at your current job?

Anonymous: About 3 months.

L: Describe a typical day at your job.

Anonymous: Well, I have to go to the PD and get the keys and the other essentials for the job, walkie talkies, magnets, that sort of thing. Then I go to "the shack" by "the cage", and transfer the phones and wait for a phone call, and when we get a phone call, we have to go pick that person up on campus and drop them off somewhere on campus.

L: Alright. What is the best and worst part about your job?

Anonymous: The best part is definitely the atmosphere that the supervisors and my co-workers have created. It's, you know, a really friendly atmosphere, it's, everybody's really easy to get along with. The worst part though is probably those Saturday nights when you get 20 calls in a half hour. It just gets hectic.

L: Can you give me like, specific instances or anything you've heard?

Anonymous: When there's a party at Oak Lane, you're probably going to be taking a lot of people from dorms to Oak Lane, or from Squires to Oak Lane, and back and forth, and that can get...(sighs)it can wear on you.

L: Did you have any expectations about this job, and what were they, and were they met?

Anonymous: Because of my last job, I definitely had low expectations for this job. Just, nobody at the other job was treated with very much respect. It was just...it wasn't a good atmosphere there, and when I got here, I expected the same thing, but you know it just turned out really nice.

L: Where did you work at previously?

Anonymous: The BJ's wholesale club at Hampton.

L: Can you give me any particulars about that job?

Anonymous: The management didn't seem to know what they were doing, and when things didn't go right, they took it out on the employees. They never seemed to know where to put somebody permanently, so you got moved around a lot and your hours were never consistent.

L: What kind of job did you have?

Anonymous: I've done maintenance, produce, overnight stocking, front door, cashier, and even a couple supervisor positions.

L: It sounds like a pain in the ass.

Anonymous: It is, it is very much so a pain in the ass. I hated that job.

L: Like, any of the people who worked their full time, do you think they resented working there?

Anonymous: Most of the people who work there for 40 hours, a lot of the managers hated working for that particular store, not with the company, but at that particular store, and a lot of them just wound up working for other stores, or just quitting altogether.

L: What about the employees, the low wage workers?

Anonymous: There was, I mean, the average span of employment was about 3 months.

L: Just because the conditions were so bad, basically?

Anonymous: Because people wouldn't want to work there anymore, so they would quit, or they would start getting angry and mess up.

L: Angry at, like mess up intentionally?

Anonymous: Yeah.

L: Okay. Well, enough about BJ's, would you consider doing what you do now full time? Why or why not?

Anonymous: No, and it's not because of the actual work, but because I'm doing this as a job to help me pay for school, and in addition to school, it's a lot to work a full time job.

L: Yeah. Have you gained any newfound respect for the people who do these kinds of jobs?

Anonymous: Very much so. Designated drivers, whether or not they're paid, I have gained respect for. They catch a lot of crap from drunk people, sober people because you're doing them a favor and they just don't realize it.

L: Can you give any particulars on that? Anything that has happened to you or your co-workers?

Anonymous: Yeah, I mean you have 15 calls to do in an hour, and it's really hard to get to all of them, and when you pick somebody up, they just get in your face about being 5 minutes later than you said you were. No matter how much you explain to them that it's only 5 minutes and you are really busy, they don't care, it's all about them.

L: Is it hard to deal with the drunks?

Anonymous: It can be, most of the time it's more amusing (laughs). It can be difficult to deal with them, but we have had some instances, like one of the guys that works there, this drunk female said she had called for a ride and she didn't, so she started yelling at him for not giving her a ride.

L: Did he give her a ride?

Anonymous: He told her to call, and that he'd be back as soon as he could.

L: She still gave him shit for it?

Anonymous: Oh, yeah (laughs). Like I said, people just think it's all about them.

L: What's your relationship like with your co-workers and your boss?

Anonymous: Oh, everybody who works there is pretty close friends, and you know when we have down time, we talk and you know just have the best time we can in "the shack." (Laughs) We play little pranks on each other, but you know nothing major, just making phony phone calls (laughs). You know, telling somebody to go to one dorm that's right next to another dorm and seeing if they will do it. And the supervisors are really nice. They're very understanding about, you know school, and breaks and that kind of stuff.

L: So it's pretty much polar opposites compared with your last job supervisors.

Anonymous: Very much so.

L: Like, they'll cut you some slack, and the people at BJ's, they won't cut them any slack at all.

Anonymous: Right.

L: And you were saying something earlier about like the benefits for people who work at BJ's too.

Anonymous: The benefits (laughs). Unless you were fulltime, and there were only 3 people in the whole store that were full time that weren't managers. The only benefit you got was a free membership, and that's not really you know, worth it, especially for a lot of people who were trying to work to support a family, or to support themselves.

L: If he/she wasn't your boss, what would you say to them? Although, you sound like you have been pretty favorable to your boss. You sound like you really like him.

Anonymous: He's a really nice guy. If I still knew him without working here, I'd probably ask him if he wanted to play some pool or something like that.

L: Just whatever.

Anonymous: Yeah

L: You could see being a friend to him outside the workplace?

Anonymous: Yeah

L: Is there anything about your job that you think people should know about? If so, what?

Anonymous: It's a free service, and we work hard to help the students at Virginia Tech out, and I really appreciate some, not necessarily a thank you, but just don't give us crap.

L: That's it?

Anonymous: Yeah, I mean most of the people are pretty nice, but you can just get those 1 or 2 that just ruin your night.

L: Do you ever get a "thank you"? Maybe every now and then?

Anonymous: Every now and then, yeah, we do get a "thank you", and it does make a difference in how you feel.

L: Last question. Do you have anything else that you would like to say about your job?

Anonymous: Nothing really particular about the job. There's always some funny stories. Especially being on the job and the drunk people are pretty amusing. We've had one person take a ride and claim that we should take her to jail because she was a bitch (laughs), and she said this several times over the course of a 5 minute ride (laughs).

L: And how'd that turn out (laughs)?

Anonymous: Well, we got her back to her dorm, and we got her in safely.

L: (Laughs) Okay.

Anonymous: She was a little stumbly.

L: Anymore funny stories, or do you have to get back to class?

Anonymous: I definitely have to go somewhere right now.

L: Alright, I'll let you go, thanks dude.