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SC-101

Barbara Ehrenreich is a researcher that emerged herself into her own study by being a participant, this type of study is known as a participant observation. In this study, Ehrenreich emerged herself into the working class. She started her study by questioning how working class members live off of solely minimum wage and even began living in working class conditions. She applied for many working class jobs and quickly came to realize that the minimum wage can not support a human being.

Ehrenreich and her coworkers stumbled upon the idea while eating lunch. I thought it was crazy that this issue was brought up over something so casual as lunch, when the issue is a very relevant topic in many communities around the world. Many people who work minimum wage jobs, not only have to support themselves but they have families to support as well. They can not get by without state assistance. Ehrenreich found out for herself that she could not even support herself with a minimum wage job and while living in lower class conditions. She witnessed that many of her coworkers had to work multiple jobs simply to make ends meet. Oftentimes, these employees could not get proper healthcare, pay for rent, and even moved into homeless shelters.

Not only were they living off of unlivable wages, they were living in poor conditions/homeless shelters and often they did not receive respect from higher class citizens. Ehrenreich experienced this first hand as a participant in her own study. The participant observation study gave Ehrenreich a greater understanding of the issue at hand. If this study has been done in a survey method, or as an observation study, it is easy to overlook the hardships the minimum wage community face. Experiencing these hardships is the only way to gain this deeper understanding. Hopefully this study will open the eyes of others and will make a difference on minimum wage so that cost of living can be met.