

Interview with Austin Turnbull

The following interview was conducted on behalf of the oral history program of Century High School. The interviewee is Austin Turnbull, and the interviewer is Tara Sprick, and the interview took place at about 12:50 on the 20th of May, 2003.

What is your background regarding Century, and what has been your involvement or your role during this school year?

Alrighty, well I came into Century High School as a freshman, and I, um, dedicated myself to the theatre department here first off, and just been involved with that mostly. Umm, my involvements otherwise, I am involved in National Honor Society and, umm, I'm involved with the Leadership program here and I've been involved in BRA- uh, Boys Rooting Association- for football games and basketball games alike, and this year, umm, this year I was an ASB Senator and I was on the Senior Court for Jagfest, which is the annual, kinda like the annual May Fate of Century High School, and I've just been keeping busy.

In general, how does this year compare with the other high school years that you've experienced?

Um, being a senior is different. You have more responsibility. I don't think you really have any more privileges, per say, but I think, like, a lot more responsibility is riding on you shoulders because you have to be responsible and getting into college if you want to go to a college, or, getting into , uh, like, if you want to go into a military branch or whatever, you have to be responsible and do that yourself, and you just have to be on top of things, but then again, you're always- it's like you're actually working towards something. You're finally working towards something, and it's a big relief once you get accepted to a college or a university or, finally, once the end of the year comes.

What, or how would you describe the morale among faculty, students, um, around the school in general during this past year, and what do you think has affected that?

Well, it's definitely lower than it has been, obviously, because of the cut days and all of the district, uh, district mishaps I guess you could say. Uh, I think teachers are trying to stay positive. It's been, it's been better in the past month because of Jagfest and because of , um, just nearing the end of the school year, but it's been rough for a couple, couple months here.

The end of the school year is coming really, really quickly. How do you think the, the full 17 day cut from the school year is affecting things around Century?

Uh, well, I know from my classes a lot of the assignments have been cutting, uh, have been cutted, and a lot of projects, like my humanities class, like, we're supposed to read a whole, another book, and we just decided to cut the book, and, um, my AP Biology class, we're not gonna be doing a lot of, um, like labs, like unique labs that we were gonna, like, that was just set aside for the AP class, but, um, I don't know. I think that it's a shame that we have to cut these days even though, like everybody- like the upside of it is that everybody gets out 17 days earlier, and they get a longer summer, but I think it's gonna affect them in the long run, because they're always gonna be thrown behind now,

and I think teachers, um, need an incentive to work. A lot of teachers say they come to school just for the kids, but there's also an incentive there to make money, and without making money, it's just kinda hard to maintain positive.

**How do you feel about Century continuing on the block schedule for another year?
How is, as a senior, how is that affecting you?**

Well, I thought we weren't doing the block scheduling next year, we're going back to eight period days.

From what I understand, it's going to be- they're holding the waiver for another year, basically, just do that they can decide next year how the schedule is going to be for the year after that.

I was not aware of that. Yeah, um, I think the block schedule is so much better than the eight period day because you get more work done. Classes are an hour and a half, so you have more time, you have more teacher-to-student time, which is also, like, which I think is the most valuable thing because without knowing your teacher and without, like, understanding what they're trying to teach. Like, you can't, you can't get a project in 45 minutes without the teacher telling you what they really, um, want and what quality, so, you get an- plus, you get a lot of quality time in class.

What do you think of- what will be the impact of the national coverage the Hillsboro schools have been receiving this year, including, um, whether it's newspaper coverage or the Doonesbury political cartoons?

Um, so far, haven't we gotten coverage in the New York Times? Um, yeah, I think people are gonna catch on, like districts have been watching the news and districts around the nation are starting to lose money, and it's just, it's weird because like right now, we want to put, Kulungoski wants to put in a major league baseball park, er, a major league baseball program here, and I just was like, when I saw the advertisements, I was like, "What- what the hell are they thinking?" Like, they can, like, pay for like a major league baseball program, but then again, we can't have, like, sufficient funds for the school, and I just really question like where our priorities are and where the money's going.

What do you think has been the effect of the war on Iraq, especially in these past few months?

Um, it's been interesting. This whole year has just been like a whirlwind of just different topics and just different events. Um, uh, at first I was disappointed, like, 'cause I'm for the war, so I support everything, and, but I was just disappointed when, like, the teachers and the administration- or like the administration or whatever- wouldn't let us watch the news and, because it was affecting people in different ways and, just, you know. Like, um, both my grandpas were in war, and war is a part of life, and you can't, you can't get out of it, and I actually conducted an interview with this, um, young man that came back from Iraq when I was coming home from San Diego on a plane ride, and I was talking to him, and he said war is a part of life, and people that protest it, they have the right to do so, but, you know there's just a lot of questions and a lot of, like, simulations that go along with it that, um, need to, need to be addressed and I wish those opinions and um, different students' opinions were addressed more so than they were. I felt like I wanted to say more than I actually could.

Alright, uh, on a slightly lighter note I guess, if you could change anything about this school year, then what would it be?

Hmmm... open campus. I wanna go to lunch. I don't like salad every day, but uh, open campus I guess, that's, I've always wanted that, but were you looking for something more, uh, more intellectual than open campus?

Just anything you'd like to change.

Hmmm... I don't know. Come back to me.

Alright, I also understand (getting away from the general topic), I also understand that you are a student representative on the site council? Uh, what has been your involvement with that, and, uh, what have you gained from doing that?

Wow, site council. Well, it's a really big honor to be on it, because it's a bunch of students- actually, it's just only two students, me and Lucas Snodgrass were representatives this year- and it's a bunch of teachers, um, administration, and faculty, that um, and different faculty, um, that are on this board and ,basically, they decide policies of the school. They decide, um, learning programs with, um, students that are in need of, um, more help with school. We look at statistics of the district and of Century High School, um, focusing on math and reading, um, and literature skills, and, um, what we need to do to improve those skills and just, um, basically good-of-the-order stuff that's not really talked about, um, in the public, but is needed to get done, and, um, takes a lot of effort to get done, and I was really fortunate, and it was, um, it was an honor to be on that.

Ok. I think we've pretty much covered all the bases. Is there anything else that you'd like to add that I haven't asked about?

Umm... Go Jags? I don't know. No, nope, that's good.