

**THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED ON BEHALF OF THE ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM OF THE CENTURY HIGHSCHOOL, THE INTERVIEWEE NAMES ARE Tien Le, Jordi Frances, Kristy Spencer, Behnia Behnouch. THE INTERVIEWERS ARE SARAH MERRICK AND NICK KNUDSON, THE INTERVIEW TOOK PLACE AT CENTURY ON MAY 16<sup>TH</sup> AT 3:15.**

(Tien Le is from Vietnam, Jordi Frances is from Spain, Behnia Behnouch is from Germany, and Kristy Spencer is from Australia.)

**N: What attracted you to America?**

Jordi Frances: basically the idea of language and secondly the experience you have in an other country like, I don't know people have different ideas than home, before I didn't take the time to leave home and understand the culture. You're not learning the same stuff about what happened in the world, you have an experience you don't get to have any other time.

Behnia Behnouch: that experience like he said, and America land of the dreams and whatever, and to just see it because you hear about, and see if all the stereotypes are true, which they are.

Kristy Spencer: mine wasn't for the English part naturally because I already speak English, seeing a different view of English speaking country, how the school works, whether it's the same in the movies. Also I needed to get away and see something, experience something for myself, and see a little bit of the world, which I have, Germany, Canada.

Tien Le: I think it's the same for me, go out when you're 17/18 and go to a different country, it's cool to do, everyone should do it. Experience a new culture.

**N: did you enjoy you're time here?**

K: yeah, people ask to I want to changes something, and of all the things I've done I wouldn't change a thing. Not even to have better host parents, did I make the right choices of friends, I feel like I made the right choice I wouldn't change anything.

**S: is there any major changes from home?**

J: differentiations between poor people and rich people, to us it's a social economy so we have bigger families. we have more control, like we can drink at 16, but we can't drive until 18. we have freedoms, but more responsibility. the big change, in the economics, and the way the school is done.

T: I think it's different about what we think of America. Before I came here I saw a TV program about America, it's a lot of skyscrapers, and big city, that type of thing. It's a lot different from what I think America is.

K: you see movies of New York or LA then you come to Hillsboro, don't get me wrong it's a beautiful state.

J: when I first came I thought maybe I came at the wrong time because they have been cutting the days of the school.

(unintelligible)

**S: how would you describe the morale among the students here, like the general way they conduct themselves?**

T: I don't know about other years but, it seems to me that students are like yeah, we have 17 days off!

K: well because of the cut days, there is a lot more homework. Trying to put 6 weeks or whatever it is into these last few days, it's a lot of work, and lack of sleep is one major result. Like I've noticed people walking around w/ black under they're eyes. I don't know about the teachers, I guess they're stressed too, trying to get all the grading done.

T: yeah, the teachers have more stress, the students not as much. I think they think more about graduating and college, and not getting what they need, which is hard w/ cut days off.

**N: we kind of touched on this, but how does this school year compare to others?**

K: well in Australia we have school all year, we "begin" in January and end in December. And I've just noticed lately that I feel like I shouldn't be ending school yet, I should be just starting. I personally I think if we mixed the Australian education with the American education we would be great. In Australia we have a lot more school days.

B: it's the homework. Like in the first couple of weeks I had so much homework I was staying up late in the night, in Germany we don't grade upon homework, like if you don't do it you still do good. we only have like three tests, and we get graded on that, and the oral, participation.

K: it's harder in Australia, but it depends on your classes, like I've got AP English, but then I go to other classes and I'm like what am I doing here. At home we get homework every night, but it's limited, but you get more gradually, like from a freshman to a senior.

J: at home it's like, if you do good in school you are good leader or if your not good at school then you go fight.

T: school is way more harder in my country, a lot of exams, and you have to pass an exam to go to college.

**S: so there have been a lot of budget crisis, and other issues this year that have affected everybody, is there anything else beside a lot of homework that this has affected you directly?**

**N: and to add to that, have you ever experienced anything like this at home?**

(all): no.

K: I go to a catholic school, so we have to pay, and that takes care of the budget problems. And it's really small, like three hundred students. There's advantages and disadvantages, one advantage is with less students you have more time with the teacher so you get help with the stuff that you need help with. A disadvantage is you don't have a wide variety of subjects to chose from.

J: (unintelligible)

**N: what have been high points of your school year?**

B: like the whole variety of classes, like at home we don't have the fun classes like drama.

K: I liked being involved, like I play volleyball. And I'm taking track now. I've enjoyed that, and I think if I hadn't been involved I would have been sitting at home watching TV getting fat. That's one good thing at this school.

**S: so one of the controversies of the year has been what time to start the school day, and next year it's going to be 8:30, so after school activities would have been affected, would that have changed your time here do you think?**

K: well at home we start at 9 and end at 3:20, we have 6 periods, so I don't know.

T: I think that here students care more about activities, if you ask the students do you want more school days or activities you'd get that answer.

**S: in your opinion, what was the worst problem this year?**

T: I did experience, I don't know about you guys, but I'm Asian, so I got a lot of people joke about origin, country or your skin that kind of thing, it really annoyed me.

K: the one thing that annoyed me the most was people asking if I rode a kangaroo to school, that was embarrassing. That makes America look very bright. I wasn't too bad w/ the discrimination, I got mocked more than anything. The hardest thing was coming from a small school and coming to a large one, and trying to fit in. I know when I first got on the school bus I got nervous so bad, I felt like my stomach was going to jump out.

T: I found the fire alarms annoying, staying outside for sometimes 25 minutes just because some stupid guy wanted to show off, we would never do that at home.

**S: how would you describe school spirit here?**

**N: and how would you compare it to spirit at home?**

B: we don't even have school colors, at home, I was like amazed I was like what's that? I hear some people say Century doesn't have school spirit but compared to home it's amazing.

K: well we have a uniform, so that's kind of like school colors. I've noticed that Century does have spirit, and are into the colors and things, I'm sure there is room for improvement but it could be way worse.

T: I can't really say, I do think we need to improve the spirit. But Century is a new school compared to others and it takes time to build an identity.

(unintelligible)

J: again I felt like I was coming at the wrong time, like at home hanging flags everywhere means fascism and I saw them everywhere. Here everyone is taught to have pride in their country.

K: yeah I noticed that too, when I came here I saw flags everywhere and I was like whoa what's the occasion. But then everyone was like no that's normal, and everyone has them in every classroom. And I'm sure September 11<sup>th</sup> has to do with that.

**N: yeah but even before that, they were up. and say the pledge of allegiance.**

T: that, I'm not going to comment about that.

**N: no go ahead we want to hear that.**

T: it's like tradition, to dignify the country, I don't know, everyone does it, and they make it a big deal to dignify the country.

(unintelligible)

B: here everyone criticizes the president, I think that's a good thing, it's not like you're not patriotic if you say one bad thing about the president.

**S: how do you guys fell about the Iraqi war how has it affected your year?**

K: I don't think it's affected me too drastically, it hasn't hurt my school year at all. I'm sure for some people it should have been done. I don't really have an opinion on whether we should have gone or not. I'd be sad if it stopped me from coming here, but nothing happened so it didn't affect me really. I stopped watching the news after awhile because it was really boring.

B: the things here were really one sided. Biased, so I had to read other sources to get different views of it. \

K: yeah when I was in Canada I watched the news and got a different aspect of it.

J: I'm not against the war. (unintelligible). It's ok to go to war but if you do you do it right.  
(unintelligible)

T: I don't really think the war here affected people that much, it just seems like they don't really care much about it. A few days afterwards no one talked about it. But I think it doesn't affect the school much.

**N: what do you think has impacted the students the most this year?**

(all): budget cuts

T: I remember when we were supposed to have a strike. And students tried to walk out.

K: I also think block scheduling.

T: some people are really serious about it.

**N: who do you feel will leave a lasting impression on this school, I know it's kind of moot for you guys, but what do you think?**

K: Morton, he's retiring right.

B: Joel Whieler

J: (unintelligible)

T: I think Mr. Schmertzler and Mrs. Duyckinck, because he consulted the union, and Mrs. Duyckinck talked a lot about the measures.

**N: you mentioned Jag TV, is there anything like that at your home?**

(all): no

T: we had something like Jag TV, we had radio because we don't have money to buy TV's. we had a speaker that announced like birthdays.

K: it was like a shock, I was like what is this? We just get a newsletter every few weeks.

T: the student government here isn't as good as the one in my school, they don't really appear a lot and you mostly hear about them on Jag TV.

(end of tape)