

incomplete

## Fabi Pemble-Belkin, Class of 2001- Student Interview

FPB: Okay, TESTING! Okay, see, look...

CR: This interview was conducted on behalf of the oral history program of the Century High School. The interviewee is Fabi Pemble- Belkin. The interviewer is Caroline Ruff. The Interview took place on May 17, 2002.

CR: Okay, Fabi.

FPB: So I can cuss?

CR: Yep.

FPB: Just, like, swear, like, for no reason?

CR: Yep.

FPB: Kind of like, wholly [expletive deleted] [expletive deleted]?

CR: Yep. What year did you first come to Century and from what school?

FPB: Oh, I came from J.B. Thomas in... '97... when was the school built?

CR: Umm, '97-'98 was the first year.

FPB: I was... I came when the school was built, whenever that was.

CR: First year?

FPB: Yeah, first year, baby. First graduating class.. 2001! Oh yeah!

CR: (laughs) What do you remember about your first impressions of the school, like the students, and the building, and the teachers... and...

FPB: Like when I first got here?

CR: Yeah...

FPB: Like Freshman year? Oh, it was like, freakin', like a hospital, everything was like really clean and sanitary, but it was really cool because I went to J.B. Thomas, and, uh, um, uh, junior high is really [expletive deleted] up, and uh, we had, uh, um, a lot of gangs, and, well, junior-high-13-year-old gangs, and like, there were fights every day, and like, I had just come out of, like, my hand thing really bad and [expletive deleted] yeah.

CR: Would you care going into a little bit more about your hands? Or is that not something you want to share?

FPB: Oh, I can.

CR: Okay. First, why don't you tell me about your hands, and then we'll talk about how your hands affected your educational experience.

FPB: Is that actually on there?

CR: No, I'm just making it up.

FPB: Oh, I was like, how good is that? These are great! Okay, so what do you want me to do?

CR: Um, what's... what's happened... what's wrong with you hands?

FPB: Oh, I have an exaggerated benign genetic tremor, but I was at the doctor yesterday, or two days ago, and I got a whole bunch of other [expletive deleted] too, that I can tack onto it, so it's like, "Oh, what's wrong with you?" Articknologic, and metalgologic, which mean absolutely nothing, it's just a term, and I can use "specify".

CR: Oh, wow.

FPB: Oooh! Score one for team Fabi.

CR: Wow. Okay, so, when did this really start affecting your hands?

FPB: Uh, I was born with it, but in, uh, seventh grade I lost the ability to write, and I was out of school for about a four-month pause, but um... yeah.

CR: It started in the seventh grade really bad?

FPB: Yeah.

CR: Okay. And, so, when you got to high school, how did this affect your high school experience?

FPB: Oh, it does. Just like, everybody, like, they're all like, you're really smart, not to toot my own horn, but, like, you know, like, you know everything that they're teaching you, and the whole class thinks you're smarter than they are, but you can't write it down so therefore you get D's and F's because everybody's like "duuuuhhh..." you know, like, "well he knows everything but he's not writing down  $2 + 2 = 4$ , he just told me this, but he's not writing it down, so therefore I can't give him a grade." You know, like that stuff.

CR: So, do you think that... how do you think the staff at Century handled that?

FPB: Uh, some people handled it well, but it wasn't like the administration thing actually handled it well, but, uh, uh, curriculums that are set up for disabled students really kind of drop the ball, really

bad, and they were, like, on the border of lawsuit for the majority of the time, but they were supposed to give me, uh, a voice activated computer, which never did until, like, senior year because they went on sale, and uh...

CR: Yeah. (noise in background)

FPB: (noise dwindles) Aaand start. And, um, like, uh, what is it... yeah. It was just, like, a teacher thing, like, uh, Mr. Morton, I never had to do any assignments for him, he always gave me a grade, but he was like "yeah, you know what you're talking about", you know, I read the book, I'd always pick up on everything before anyone else, but like, you know, like...

CR: What are specific teachers you think that handled it really well, like Mr. Morton...

FPB: Ternus... Even though everybody hates her, and thinks that she's not nice, I love Mrs. Ternus, she's cool! Because, she's, like, freaky about her thing, and I respect people when they're, really, like, into something, and, um, well, she's freaky Nazi about math, but she likes it, so therefore...

CR: Did she help you learn?

FPB: Yeah! She helped me learn, because she was, like, really, wouldn't let me get away with [expletive deleted], she'd be like "you can't go to state because you didn't turn in your homework!" And I'd be like, yeah...

CR: Yeah, so she inspired you to get better.

FPB: A teacher would be Stu Cabe, definitely Stu. Bill, Mr. Morton, um, (pause). Nobody else really stands out that I can think of... I can think of, I can tell you teachers who suck...

CR: Who's that?

FPB: OK, so, Mr. Earl... Oh, wait, his name's not Earl.

CR: Porter?

FPB: Porter... turkey neck.. and uh, Kastberg, and um... see, I had, like, teachers sophomore year that I don't even remember their names because they sucked so bad, like, they didn't even like their job, and I, like, I was like, "why the [expletive deleted] are you even teaching if you don't like your job?" And I thought, so...when you do this for class, it will be like "expletive deleted"... you know...

CR: "Expletive delete"... it's okay, it doesn't matter, I just have to transcribe it and then I can choose what I want to take out! (laughs)

FPB: But see, there, there, there was a difference between teachers who actually made an effort, and that were good... Kyle! Shut the [expletive deleted] door!

CR: Duyckinck interview.

FPB: (laugh) um, and, so there were teachers that were, like, good, like, really good, like, like, um, Morton, and really focused and really wanted to help me, then there were teachers who kind of wanted to help me, and were okay, and then there were teachers who just didn't care, they just gave me D's to pass me along, actually, that kind of pissed me off, too, because I wanted to get good grades, and then, there were teachers that intentionally wanted to make my life [expletive deleted], like Kastberg and Porter, like, Porter, the first day I met him I was supposed to introduce myself and say who I am, what my disability is so they know, legally, and I go, I go, "Hi, My name's Fabi Pemble-Belkin, I can't write, you should have gotten a letter about me" and he's like "Well, we'll see about that"...

CR: Oh my goodness!

FPB: I know! I was like, "Okay, buddy"...and so, like, he really hated me, and he made me do every assignment, and then by that point I couldn't write, and uh, my hands got so bad at that point I couldn't even type, and, so, um, he goes, "Well, you can turn in your assignments, all of them, at the end of the week" so I could work on them over the weekend, and they have to be...uh, this is what's funny... and he's like, okay, so, they have to be, uh, what was it, oh, tape recorded! He came up with this genius idea, that I had a tape recorder. So, I will demonstrate. Question one... and he didn't like the fact that I just gave him answers, so he wanted me to read the entire thing, here I go: Jan has 2 apples. Bill has 2 oranges. If you put Jan's apples with Bill's...uh... Oh, I lost my place, with Bill's oranges, Jan and Bill have how many apples and oranges? Answer: 4! Like that, and then, like, I'd be, like, "Number 2"...and so, he'd get like, freaking, like, six hours of tape at the end of the week, and he was pissed, so he