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In the middle of ninth grade, my mom and I were hailed to Jen Ogilby's office. The dean explained to us both how my snooty side-comments and eye rolls had been terrorizing some of my classmates—mainly the girls. Jen informed us that throughout the year, multiple students had visited her, and gave their accounts of my cruelty. I did not fully understand how I was that intimidating seeing that everyone in the school, girls included, outweighed me by at least thirty pounds. And despite the fact that I would lose to everyone in a fistfight, my snickers and squints were still threatening. You see, it was not always intentional. Most of the things that I did or said were just reflexes.

This news made me confused and frustrated. I kept asking her how *specifically* I had been so callous. Jennifer busted out her notebook, full of direct quotes—evidence! And the hormonal girls' feelings, anonymously of course, were read aloud. I could not deny the accusations, and I was going to have to tone it down. After my meeting with Jen, tension between my victims and me was stronger than ever, and did not seem like it would fade...But look at us now Katie!!! Look how far we have come! CRMS fixed me!

Over the years, as everyone's individual interests developed and CRMS' busy schedule got more and more chaotic with active and academics, my assholery has either been weakened, or just ignored.

This school is liberal arts in the truest sense. It demands us to plow through the pages of Socrates as well as hike until 2 AM. We have grown to respect each other, and we have learned to connect through a broad spectrum of interests. During the drive to Canyonlands on our most recent spring trip, I was struck by just that.

Eight of us sat back in the fatboy, while Darryl drove. All of us donated our music to the front of the bus, so it could be heard and shared through the speakers. We listened to different types of music—constantly switching genres from punk to rap to jazz to bluegrass. We wanted to hear everything. Not to say that we are not specific and elitist with our musical taste.

When we hear songs, our minds jump ahead. You see similar patterns in the way you think about things in the music and the lyrics.

How is it that we not only like so many different kinds of music, but we find a way to relate to them all too? CRMS has nurtured the type of mind that can identify with all groups. And furthermore, it has made us curious and genuinely interested about the subcultures that surround each group. I can speak for many of us, when I say that I am never satisfied with my music collection. We constantly want to hear more, and discover more. I owe this mentality to our school.

This way of discovery and innovation can be applied to whatever we choose to do hereafter. It removes the focus from our just our egos to both our egos and something else that we become obsessed with.

Experimenting with the school's offerings creates individuals who cannot be labeled by one characteristic. Nobody is solely thought of as *the telemarker*. Rather, because of this curriculum, we are all scientists, artists, climbers, and writers. We are not exclusively attached to one type of interest, activity, or "scene". The curiosity that CRMS has cultivated inspires us to identify with multiple studies and genres. We all do everything. All of the time. We are extraordinary, I know.

Having forty or so close teenagers with similar freethinking mindsets together sparks great things; earlier in the year we traveled to the Hopi reservation and immersed ourselves in their culture while helping out in their community. However, this group mentality sometimes causes mishaps; a month ago in hopes of pulling off a senior prank, collectively, our group mindset, led us to hijack a fatboy which led us to accidentally crashing it in the middle of the night. We were a bit too curious, and we pushed our limits without thinking of the worst-case scenarios. But these types of experiences needed to happen. We can now recognize the power that we hold, and the affects it can have on a place negatively and positively.

So now we leave CRMS. Environmental and economic crises surround us. What do we do as people who have been fortunate, and have been given opportunities that most others have not had? We must not sleep. We have to keep up the same energy and momentum that CRMS thrives on. The constant work and interest that fuels our school must continue here after. The importance of simultaneously being an individual and a part of a group is essential. Curiosity drives our concentrations, and this desire for more and new information has to remain. Our ability to identify with others while carrying our own interests will serve the whole. We got a lot more work crews in front of us.