

Mono Lake

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Second Topic

It almost seems to me as though there is not a single Mono Lake, but many. On some days the water may be a deep blue, similar to the ocean, on others, seaweed green. On most it is a light blue, almost crystal, like the skies above it. And yet a single gust of wind seems to make the liquid mirror become an entirely different beauty. Despite the lake's age and history, it is an ever-changing being, and looking at its shore may produce a sight never before seen, or the same one viewed over a hundred years ago.

It is remarkable, then, how so many of my generation can scorn that sacred water. I have often heard statements like, 'I was at the lake just yesterday, and it was disgusting, flies everywhere and there was a dead animal,' or 'I hate this place, there's nothing to do.' And I can only respond in my head, "If only you would take a look around." The truth is that we, as teenagers, do not choose to live here, and can too easily take for granted the gray clouds, those God-carved out mountains, that deep, lusting blue sky, and yes, even that lake. Despite only attending a Lee Vining school for three years, I have ridden passed Mono Lake almost eight hundred times, four hundred south, and four hundred north. I would be lying if I didn't say that there have been times, during my great stress, I looked at Mono Lake not in awe, but with distaste. And yet, that same view of that same lake can sweep all those bad thoughts and emotions away, making me forget why I was distressed in the first

place. But this can happen only when I allow it, only when I really open up my eyes and take in what is around me.

The lake is an ever-changing being that has the power to equally change the people around it. But in many cases, this change can only happen when people allow it change them. For me, this change happened, not in a single, snapping moment, but slowly, like the day-to-day process the lake itself goes through. The lesson I learned from it is simple: that blue jewel is a constant reminder of no matter how horrible things get, there is still the natural beauty of the world to look up to, look down on, look around to, and take in. I can only wish that more of my peers recognized it, because even though there is natural beauty everywhere, there is only one Mono Lake.