

Into the Wild

By Jon Krakauer

AP Lang and Comp: Snell





The Media

“Death of an Innocent”

9,000-word article by Jon Krakauer appeared in *Outside*, Jan. 1993

Into the Wild novel by Jon Krakauer
published 1996

“The Cult of Chris McCandless”

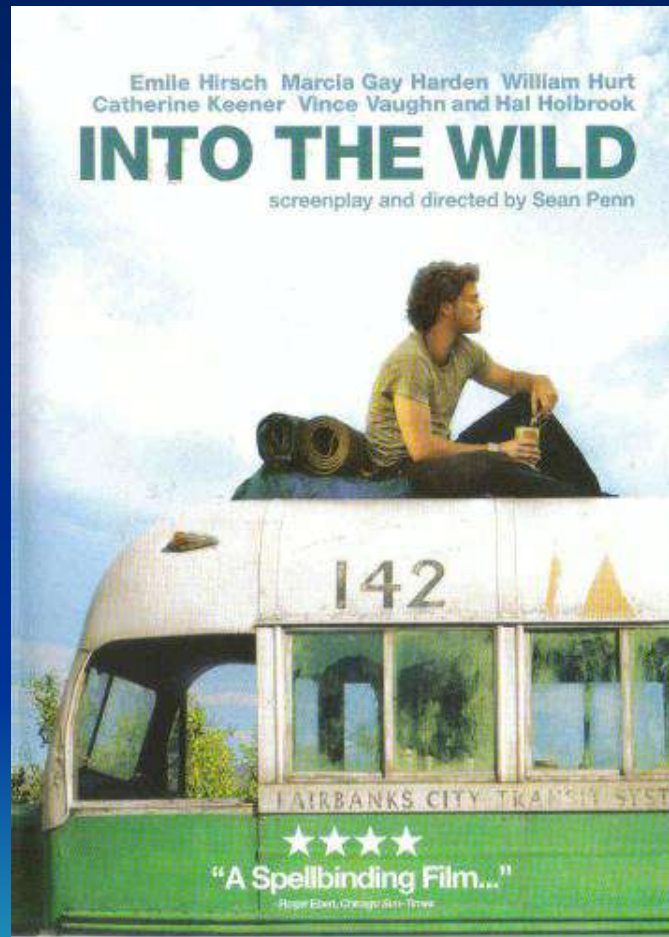
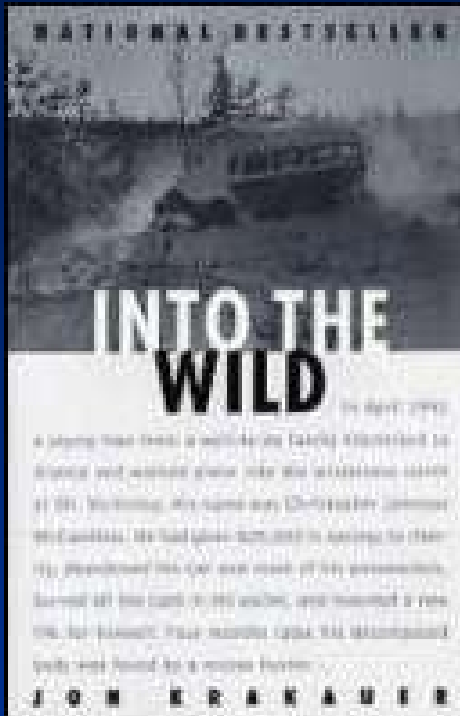
article by Matthew Power appeared in *Men’s Journal*, Sept. 2007

Into the Wild film produced 2007

Note: various other articles have been written in addition to television interviews and coverage.



The Media



Jon Krakauer

“Adventure” Enthusiast

Experienced hiker, climber, and writer

Mode of Discourse = Exposition

Detailed Account (About McCandless and Himself)



Chris McCandless

“Alexander Supertramp”

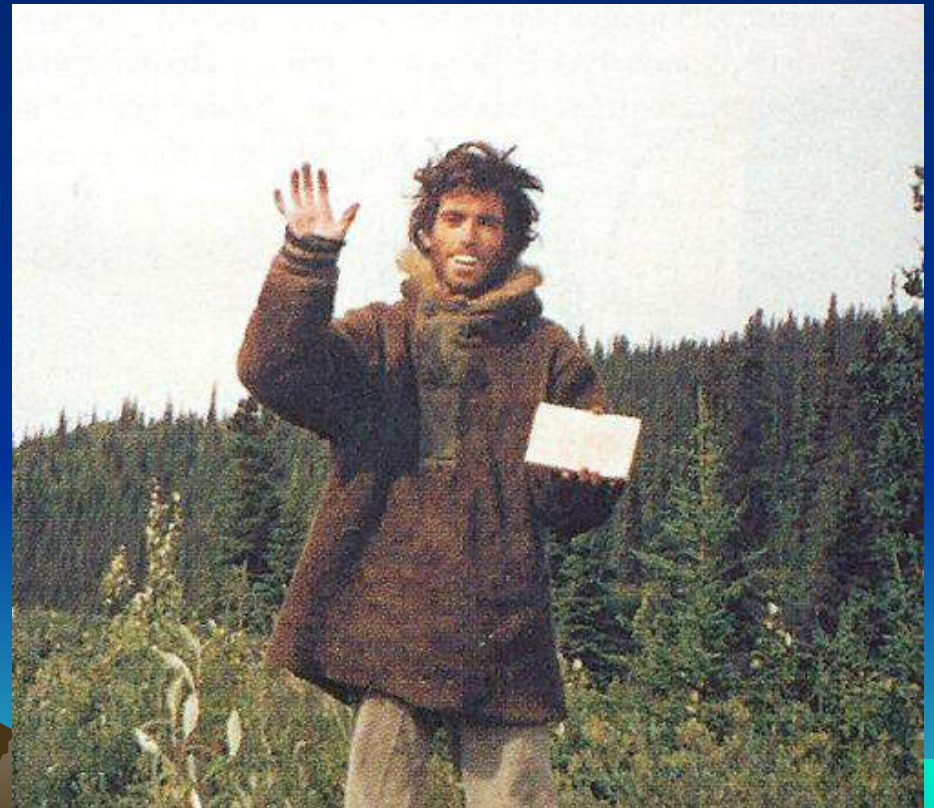
Decomposed body found in bus (Alaska) in
September 1992

From affluent East Coast family

Emory University alumni (1990)

Two-year “odyssey” from 1990-1992





Quick Write #1: Future Plans

Think about some alternative plans you might have instead of beginning college immediately after high school or getting a job right out of college. What might you do, why would you do it, and how long do you see yourself in this activity?



Read the Author's Note

1. What do you think Krakauer means when he states "*I won't claim to be an impartial biographer*"?
2. What reason does Krakauer offer for writing this book?



Influences of and Allusions to
famous men...

Who are they?



Jack London (1876-1916)

Born in San Francisco to a poor family

Attended HS for one year, passed the entrance exams for UC Berkeley, but quit halfway through freshman year (did some writing)



Jack London continued

1897—took off to prospect for gold in the Klondike (part of Yukon Territory in NW Canada), got sick, and returned in less than a year

Klondike experience convinced him that “life is a struggle in which the strong survive and the weak do not”

Short stories and novels dramatize his belief that “civilized” beings are either destroyed or re-created in savage environments

Call of the Wild & White Fang

Millionaire, but an alcoholic, London suffered from kidney disease and depression

Pain was unendurable, so he committed suicide (drugs) and died at age 40



Leo Tolstoy: 1828-1910

Russian

Studied law and

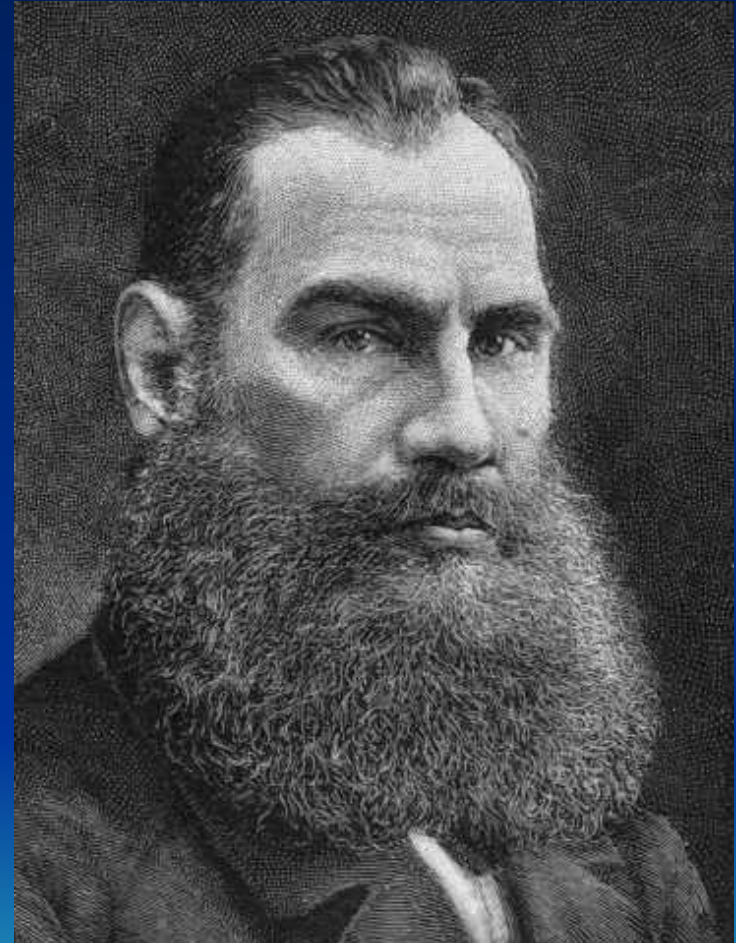
Oriental languages
at Kazan University

teachers said he was

“unwilling and unable
to learn”

diaries reveal his

“insatiable thirst for a
rational and moral
justification of life”



Tolstoy continued

Military experience, but later a pacifist and
considered a “moral” philosopher

Influenced Gandhi and MLK, Jr.

Drifted towards a more oriental worldview
with Buddhist overtones,

learned to feel himself in other living creatures

Realist fiction, realistic depiction of 19th-
century Russian life

War and Peace & Anna Karenina



Henry David Thoreau: 1817-1862

Transcendentalist

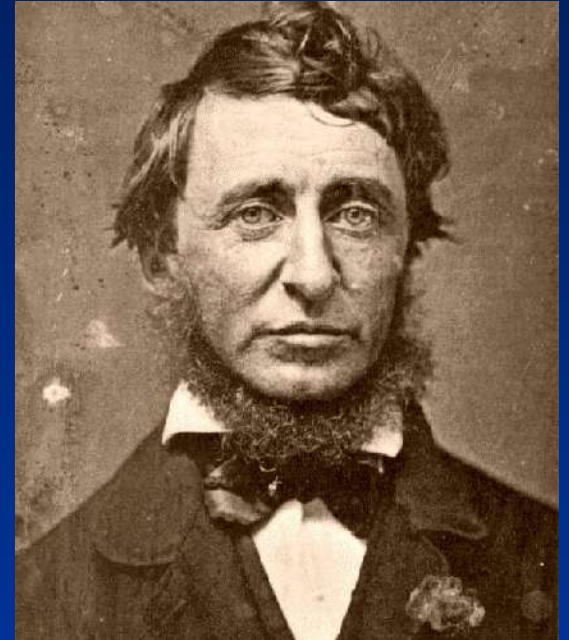
“He seemed born for great enterprise and for command.” – Emerson (about Thoreau)

Abandons life in society and moves to Walden Pond. Writes *Walden*.

“The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.” -- Thoreau

“I wish to meet the facts of life.” – Thoreau

His essay, *Civil Disobedience*, inspired the idea of passive resistance used by Gandhi and MLK Jr.



Transcendentalist Philosophy

In order to understand the reality of God, the universe, the self, one must transcend (or go beyond) human experience in the physical world

Anti-materialistic, Anti-civilization, Anti-conformist

Optimistic outlook on life (only you have the power to change your own life)



Transcendentalists Continued...

“I unsettle all things. No facts are to me sacred; none are profane; I simply experiment, an endless seeker, with no past at my back.” (Henry David Thoreau)

Through intuition, people know that God is good, and God works through nature. Therefore, even the most tragic natural disasters can be explained on a spiritual level.
(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

“Bad” results from a disconnect with God and nature



Boris Pasternak: 1890-1960

Russian poet and novelist born in Moscow to a cultured Jewish family

Best known for his novel, *Dr. Zhivago* (1957)

Won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1958

Presented Zhivago's inability to influence his own fate not as a fault, but as a sign that he was destined to become an artistic witness to the tragedy of his age. (War and revolution).

“I don't like people who have never fallen or stumbled. Their virtue is lifeless and it isn't of much value. Life hasn't revealed its beauty to them.” – Boris Pasternak



The Naturalists' Philosophy

- A group of scientists/writers who presented a new way of thinking at the turn of the 20th Century.

Beliefs

- Everyone is born with the history and knowledge of his/her ancestors
- The knowledge lies dormant until factors bring it out
- The Naturalists focused on the excess of “Human Nature”
- Blamed lust, greed, evil, murder, crime on society and civilization



The Naturalists' Philosophy

The Naturalists posed as scientists

- Foundation was based on Charles Darwin's Philosophy
 - Everyone is an animal
 - Man has evolved, but he has retained certain animalistic qualities.
- Survival of the Fittest
 - Man possesses this instinct
- True self is revealed once a person is taken away from society.
 - Society = Laws and Reason
 - Society governs our behavior



The Naturalists' Philosophy

Heredity + Chance + Environment
= Fate

Look at yourself – how has this
philosophy affected you?



from

Education of a Wondering Man

- “We are finally, all wonderers, in search of knowledge. Most of us hold the dream of becoming something better than we are, something larger, richer in some way more important to the world and ourselves. Too often, the way taken is the wrong way, with too much emphasis on what we want to have, rather than what we wish to become.” Louis L’Amour

