

And Freedom comes to . . . 25 000\$

Into the Wild, by Jon Krakauer follows the intriguing true story that was the life of Christopher Johnson McCandless. In June 1990, Chris McCandless graduated from the Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, majoring in history and anthropology. In August of 1990, McCandless became a ghost. He moved from his apartment, he donated twenty-five thousands dollars to OXFAM (a charity to feed the poor in America), he changed his name (to Alexander Supertramp), and began on an epic adventure. In April 1992, Chris hitchhiked to Fairbanks, Alaska. For years he dreamed of an Alaskan Odyssey. From Fairbanks, McCandless traveled to Stampede Trail, receiving a ride from Jim Gallien, the last person to see Chris McCandless alive. McCandless was found dead by moose hunters on an abandoned bus on the Stampede Trail on August 18th, 1992. There is some debate to how Chris McCandless died. Krakauer suggested that he died of starvation due to the ingestion of a toxic fungus that was on a Potato Seed. Found in his possession was a diary and a camera. With this diary and camera we were given some insight to his life that was otherwise a mystery. Throughout *Into the Wild*, The author, Jon Krakauer contrasts his life to that of McCandless, trying to give us some reason as to why McCandless decided to venture, *Into the Wild*. The true story of McCandless was inspiring. He showed incredible courage throughout his Alaskan Odyssey, surviving 112 days. It was depressing to read about his sacrifices and how ultimately he had to surrender his life to feel the presence of peace and freedom. Further more, *Into the Wild* demonstrates typical teenage behavior. Despite *Into the Wild* being an

incredible book, there are few reasons why this book is arguably controversial. An underlined theme in this book is suicide. Chris McCandless started on the Stampede Trail with a .22 caliber rifle (big enough only to kill small game), a gas station map, a camera, a diary and a ten pound bag of rice. He later wrote in a postcard to his friend doubting his return. McCandless didn't have direct intentions but, he killed himself. The deliberate suicide of Everett Ruess is also used by Krakauer to contrast stories between Ruess and McCandless. Another possible issue highlighted from *Into the Wild*, could be the rebellion of Chris McCandless from the pressures of society, more specifically the pressure to succeed applied by his father Walt. This was present as a possible reason for his revolt. Perhaps other concerns presented in *Into the Wild*, would be the promotion of gun use or even the number of crimes that McCandless endorses. For example, McCandless received a ticket for hitchhiking. At another point, Chris has his handgun confiscated by immigration crossing back over the border from Mexico to the United States. He also steals a bike, a rather minor detail.

Given the nature of this book, I wouldn't suggest it for anyone not in junior high school. It involves mature subject matter that may not be suitable to younger readers. I otherwise feel confident that it would be an excellent book for anybody looking to gain a new perspective on life.