Christopher McCandless: Story Of Death

Jon Krakauer's novel, Into the Wild, explores the life of Christopher McCandless. A young man who left society and all his belongings in a quest to find a more modest life in the wild. However, after only four months into his journey, Christopher passed away due to malnourishment and the harsh conditions of the Alaskan wilderness. There are various opinions on the death and decisions of Christopher McCandless and whether or not they were admirable or foolish. However, from studying Christopher's past and actions it is clear that he was just a naive boy and his death was merely the consequence of his impulsive and irrational thinking.

To begin with, Christopher McCandless was born into a middle-class family, with parents who worked hard to create a bright future for him and his sister. They offered him money for school and other resources in hopes that he would use them to achieve greater things in life. Although, Chris disregarded these offerings and viewed them instead as a trick planted by his parents to earn his respect. In a letter he wrote to his sister he states, 'I can't believe they'd try and buy me a car'...' or they think I'd actually let them pay for my law school if I was going to go... I'm going to have to be real careful not to accept any gifts from them in the future because they will think they have bought my respect.'(Krakauer 21). Christopher's words illustrate how ignorant he was towards the opportunities others had given to him. He was an intelligent individual with a possibility of a great future. However, him being closed-minded and self-reliant he was not able to see this and therefore that made it easier for him to abandon everything.

In addition to leaving a stabile life behind, Chris did not fully prepare himself to go into the wild both mentally and physically. Jim Gallien pointed out, ' His gear seemed exceedingly minimal for the harsh conditions of the interior, which in April still lay buried under the winter snowpack...He had no ax, no bug dope, no snowshoes, no compass.' (Krakauer 5). Chris was ignorant enough to believe he could survive the harsh weather of Alaska on his own. Even after numerous people told him the danger awaiting him in the wilderness if he went unprepared. Therefore his death was just a result of his unwillingness to listen to others and his moronic ideals of independence.

It may be argued that Christopher McCandless was not, in fact, foolish and ignorant but rather motivated and independent. Some may say this because even through tough situations Christopher continued to persevere to reach his goals. 'He was determined. Real gung ho. The word that comes to mind is excited. He couldn't wait to head out there and get started.' (Krakauer 6).Although this quote shows how determined and assured Christopher was it also proves how he was also childish and ignorant because even though he was determined man, he ultimately did not think his decisions through and instead acted on impulse.

Overall McCandless was a talented young man, but ultimately his selfish attitude towards life led to his death. Chris possessed great aspirations that had the potential to be created into something great but unfortunately, they were not taken advantage of. Also if Chris had been better prepared for his trip there is a good chance he would have survived. Chris is not a hero, nor should he be seen as one. His actions can be admired by others but impulsive and naive actions should not constitute a hero.