

Name:

***ITW* Analysis of Krakauer's Attitude Towards McCandless**

Directions:

1. Read the excerpts below while identifying literary devices, modes of discourse, types of sentences, etc.

2. Identify Krakauer's argument about McCandless throughout the passages. (1 argument that encompasses all 3 passages)

3. Write a SOAPStone thesis as if you were going to write a rhetorical analysis essay about the passages below. (Subject/Occasion/Audience/Purpose (argument)/tone)

4. Choose 3 literary devices, observations, modes of discourse, types of sentences, etc. that you would discuss if you had to write an analysis of the passages below. Write down the devices/observations/mod, etc. and their effects.

a.

b.

c.

Fun thing to look up: the Latin meaning of “congress” on [vocabulary.com](https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/congress)

We Americans are titillated by sex, obsessed by it, horrified by it. When an apparently healthy person, especially a healthy young man, elects to forgo the enticements of the flesh, it shocks us, and we leer. Suspicions are aroused. McCandless's apparent sexual innocence, however, is a corollary of a personality type that our culture purports to admire, at least in the case of its more famous adherents. His ambivalence toward sex echoes that of celebrated others who embraced wilderness with single-minded passion—Thoreau (who was a lifelong virgin) and the naturalist John Muir, most prominently— to say nothing of countless lesser-known pilgrims, seekers, misfits, and adventurers. Like not a few of those seduced by the wild, McCandless seems to have been driven by a variety of lust that supplanted sexual desire. His yearning, in a sense, was too powerful to be quenched by human contact. McCandless may have been tempted by the succor offered by women, but it paled beside the prospect of rough congress with nature, with the cosmos itself. And thus was he drawn north, to Alaska.

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McCandless didn't conform particularly well to the bush-casualty stereotype. Although he was rash, untutored in the ways of the backcountry, and incautious to the point of foolhardiness, he wasn't incompetent—he wouldn't have lasted 113 days if he were. And he wasn't a nutcase, he wasn't a sociopath, he wasn't an outcast. McCandless was something else—although precisely what is hard to say. A pilgrim, perhaps.

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In attempting to understand Everett Ruess and Chris McCandless, it can be illuminating to consider their deeds in a larger context. It is helpful to look at counterparts from a distant place and a century far removed.

Off the southeastern coast of Iceland sits a low barrier island called Pápas. Treeless and rocky, perpetually clobbered by gales howling off the North Atlantic, it takes its name from its first settlers, now long gone, the Irish monks known as pápar. Walking this gnarled shore one summer afternoon, I blundered upon a matrix of faint stone rectangles embedded in the tundra: vestiges of the monks' ancient dwellings, hundreds of years older, even, than the Anasazi ruins in Davis Gulch.

The monks arrived as early as the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., having sailed and rowed from the west coast of Ireland. Setting out in small, open boats called curraghs, built from cowhide stretched over light wicker frames, they crossed one of the most treacherous stretches of ocean in the world without knowing what, if anything, they'd find on the other side.

The pápar risked their lives—and lost them in untold droves— not in the pursuit of wealth or personal glory or to claim new lands in the name of any despot. As the great arctic explorer and Nobel laureate Fridtjof Nansen points out, “these remarkable voyages were... undertaken chiefly from the wish to find lonely places, where these anchorites might dwell in peace, undisturbed by the turmoil and temptations of the world.” When the first handful of Norwegians showed