American culture and society seem to have a natural affinity for progressive thought, ideals, and systems, an affinity whose roots can be seen in our cultural attitudes of industry, expansion, and success. Perhaps it is due to this glorification of originality that the journeys of self-discovery seen in Thoreau’s Walden and Krakauer’s Into the Wild are so wildly popular (for the most part) with the American population. Walden is Thoreau’s account of the two years during which he retreated to nature to “live deliberately,” and the book acts as both a how-to guide and a carefully constructed detailing of Thoreau’s philosophical system (Thoreau 1854, 74). Into the Wild depicts Chris McCandless’s modern-day journey across America and into the Alaskan wilderness, following in the footsteps of Thoreau in an effort to live by pure ideals. These stories are highly similar, with their respective heroes sharing transcendentalist views on materialism, their love of nature, and solitude.