Bob Jones and Mary Smith

Ms. Nafso

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Transcendentalist Paragraph

Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau would consider Chris McCandless to be a worthy transcendentalist because he strongly held to his own beliefs, even when others did not understand him. Emerson, the father of Transcendentalism asserts, “Trust thyself” in his essay “Self Reliance” (362). This relates to how Chris McCandless trusts his instincts and goes to Alaska. When he sat with Wayne at the bar in Wyoming, he declares how he wants to “get out of this sick society.”Even when Wayne tells him to be careful and “not get too caught up in this stuff,” Chris trusted his instincts and continued on with his adventure (*Into the Wild)*. He did not allow expectations of others to change his actions. Emerson and other transcendentalists believe that people should follow what they believe is right for them, even if it means being misunderstood. Many of the people that Chris met on his journey did not understand why he was going to Alaska, but Chris stuck to his convictions, just like Emerson suggests when he writes, “whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist” (Emerson 362). The transcendentalists encourage people to act out of what they feel is right for them individually. Chris did not follow generally accepted beliefs, but rather explored what was true for him, and this is the mark of a true Transcendentalist.

Works Cited

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