

# Stream Piracy Encyclopedia Article

## Stream Piracy

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

# Contents

<a href="#">Stream Piracy Encyclopedia Article.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Stream Piracy.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>

# Stream Piracy

A stream can be defined as any flowing body of **water** in a clearly defined channel. Streams may increase the size of their valleys by the **erosion** of the **soil** and **rock** surrounding their channels, either by widening their valleys or by headward erosion. In the process of headward erosion, the stream valley at the uppermost part of the stream channel is worn away, and the stream channel is lengthened in the upstream direction. Because the sides of the uppermost part of the stream valley are often steeper than the sides of the valley further downstream, the lengthening of the stream channel usually proceeds faster than the process of valley widening. Rates of headward erosion and channel lengthening vary between different streams, because some streams will have steeper valleys, resulting in faster water flow rates and faster erosion. In some cases, this results in a phenomenon called stream piracy, in which part of the drainage of one stream is captured by another, faster-eroding stream.

A stream that has lost part of its drainage is termed beheaded. Stream piracy is also called stream capture or river capture.

**Stream piracy is the result of the drainage of one stream being captured by another, faster-eroding stream.**© Roger Wood/Corbis. *Reproduced by permission.*

## See Also

Drainage Basins and Drainage Patterns; Stream Valleys, Channels, and Floodplains