

The Mosquito Coast activities.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Mosquito_Coast

The Mosquito Coast is a 1986 American [drama film](#) directed by [Peter Weir](#) and starring [Harrison Ford](#), [Helen Mirren](#), [Andre Gregory](#), and [River Phoenix](#). It is based on the [novel of the same name](#) by [Paul Theroux](#). The film tells the story of a family that leaves the United States and tries to find a happier and simpler life in the jungles of Central America. However, their jungle paradise quickly turns into a [dystopia](#) as their stubborn father's behavior becomes increasingly erratic and aggressive. It was shot in the cities of [Cartersville](#) and [Rome](#) in [Georgia](#), in addition to [Baltimore, Maryland](#), and [Belize](#).

Plot

In narration, Charlie Fox explains that his father, Allie Fox, is a brilliant inventor with "nine patents, six pending." Allie has grown fed up with the [American Dream](#) and consumerism, believing that Americans "buy junk, sell junk, and eat junk." Furthermore, he fantasizes that there is a nuclear war on the horizon as a result of American greed and crime.

Allie and Charlie go to a hardware store to buy components for a new invention, an ice machine known as Fat Boy. Upon seeing that the product was made in Japan, Allie refuses to purchase it. After Allie and Charlie acquire the components at a local dump, he finishes assembling his creation. Allie's boss, Mr. Polski, an asparagus farm owner, complains that Allie is not tending to the asparagus, which is rotting. Allie, Charlie, and Allie's youngest son, Jerry, meet Mr. Polski, and Allie shows him "Fat Boy." The machine leaves Polski unimpressed. As he drives past the fields, a dejected Allie comments on immigrants picking asparagus, and says that where they come from, they might think of ice as a luxury. The home of the migrant workers is in a state of disarray, exemplifying their poverty.

That night, Jerry tells "Mother" that he believes something terrible is about to happen. Mother rebuffs her son, explaining that she believes something good will happen. The next morning, Allie throws a party for the immigrant workers before telling his family that they're leaving the United States. Onboard a [Panamanian](#) barge, the family meets Reverend Spellgood, a missionary, his wife, and their daughter, Emily. Emily flirts with Charlie. Allie and the Reverend try to get along, despite having entirely different religious views. When the barge docks in [Belize City](#), the families disembark and go their separate ways. Allie, with the consent of the [Belize](#) government, purchases a small village called Jeronimo in the rainforest along the river.

Mr. Haddy takes Allie and his family upriver to Jeronimo. Allie meets the inhabitants and proceeds to start building a new, 'advanced' civilization, in the process inventing many new things. The locals take kindly to Allie and his family, but Allie's to build a [utopian](#) civilization keeps them working to their limits. Reverend Spellgood arrives to convert Jeronimo's citizens. In the process, Allie and Spellgood angrily denounce each other, leading to a permanent schism: Allie believes Spellgood to be a religious zealot; Spellgood believes Allie to be a communist. Allie sets to constructing a huge version of "Fat Boy" that can supply the town with ice. Upon completing the machine, Allie hears rumors of a native tribe in the mountains that have never seen ice. Allie recruits his two sons to carry a load of ice into the jungle to supply the tribe. Upon arriving, Allie finds that the load has melted, and that the tribe has already been visited by missionaries.

When Allie returns to Jeronimo, he learns that Spellgood has left with much of the populace, scaring them with stories of God's biblical destruction. The near-empty town is visited by rebels, who demand to use Jeronimo as a base. Allie and his family agree to accommodate them while Allie constructs a plan to be rid of them. Set on freezing them to death, Allie bunks the rebels up in the giant ice machine, tells Charlie to lock its only other exit, and activates it. The rebels, waking in panic, try to shoot their way out. To Allie's horror, the rebels' gunfire sets off an explosion within the machine. By the next morning, both the machine and the family's home is in ruins, and chemicals from the destroyed machine have severely polluted the river.

Forced downstream, Allie and his family arrive at the coast. Mother and the children rejoice, believing they can return to the United States. Allie, refusing to believe his dream has been shattered, announces that they have all they need on the beach and tells them that America has been destroyed in a nuclear war. Settling on the beach in a houseboat he has built, and refusing assistance from Mr. Haddy, Allie believes that the family has accomplished building a utopia. One night, the storm surge from a tropical cyclone nearly forces the family out to sea until Charlie reveals that he has been hiding motor components given to him by Mr. Haddy, allowing them to start the motor on the boat. The family becomes physically and emotionally weaker for lack of food and shelter.

Traveling upstream once again, the family stumbles across Spellgood's compound. Coming ashore, Allie sees barbed wire, and mutters that the settlement is a Christian concentration camp. While the rest of the family sleeps, Charlie and Jerry sneak over to the Spellgood home. After finding out that the United States was not destroyed and that Emily will assist them in escaping from Allie, Charlie obtains the keys to a jeep. Before Charlie can persuade Mother and his sisters to leave, Allie sets Spellgood's church on fire. Spellgood shoots Allie, paralyzing him from the neck down. The family escapes aboard the boat.

The family begins traveling downriver again, with Allie drifting in and out of consciousness. Allie asks his wife if they are going upstream. She lies to him for the first time. Charlie's narration reports the death of Allie, but gives hope that the rest of the family can live their lives freely from now on.

Glossary:

Dystopia (from the Greek): community or society that is undesirable or frightening.

Rebuff: reject (someone or something) in an abrupt or ungracious manner.

barge: a long flat-bottomed boat for carrying freight on canals and rivers, either under its own power or towed by another.

Schism: a split or division between strongly opposed sections or parties, caused by differences in opinion or belief.

Barbed wire: a type of steel fencing **wire** constructed with sharp edges or points arranged at intervals along the strand(s).

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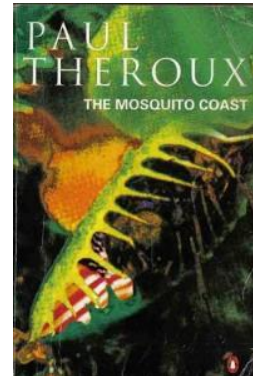
Paul Theroux's The Mosquito Coast: Summary & Analysis

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The Mosquito Coast depicts the story of an unstable, antisocial individual whose unsubstantiable paranoia causes him to dramatically alter the courses of his and other people's lives.

The man's continual fear of a nuclear invasion by an irate, immoral country eventually this man to and his family to a remote jungle area of Honduras where he planned to establish a utopian society design. Some themes that are conveyed through this story are the ability of split-second decisions dramatically alter anybody's life, and the inability of certain individuals to be able to mentally handle life of western civilization.

Allie Foxx highly opposed the style of life which had developed in the United States. He believed be useless, and our government to be corrupted, continually drawing the unwanted attention of countries tactile missiles. He saw t.v. and mainstream life as a form of mental poison. He strictly children to incorporate the same mental attitude which he held. He saw himself as the last real The combination of all these delusions eventually prompted him to relocate himself and his family country altogether, where he whatever lifestyle he so desired. Charley is the thirteen year old son naive to the practices of modern society because of his father's continual and insisted sheltering evils of everyday life. He is very impressionable and sees his father as the most brilliant man on is the ten year old younger brother of Charley. He enjoys bettering his brother, and cutting him puts on a guise of valiant bravery, yet inside he is merely a frightened child. Although he immensely respects his brother he is unable to relate these emotions for he views them as feminine.



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The story begins on a farm in Massachusetts, but quickly shifts to the primitive, remote jungles of Honduras. It all takes place during the early nineteen-eighties. The setting corresponds well with the time period and the main character. This period showed many leaps in technological advancement, which Allie refused to be a part of. He instead chose to live a simple, sheltered life. And the remote of Honduras was essential in attaining this type of lifestyle. The dialogue of the natives in the story combined with the effects of the harsh jungle environment make the author sound as if he knows much of the style of life which is typical of the poverty stricken natives of South America. He also seemed fascinated by the effects that unforgiving nature can have on a group of people.

Recommended by

This story does an effective job of immediately fascinating you with the unusual attitude of Allie Foxx, and from that point it never lets your attention waver. It also is effective at stimulating emotions as you read. It shows you unusual situations and encourages you to think of how you would handle such a situation. The story also helps you understand why some people think the way they do, although it seems so unrealistic and idiotic to you or I.