

Of mice and men analysis

Business



“ Of Mice and Men” deals with many facets of human responsibility and love.

The main moral conflict deals with George’s responsibility to Lennie, and to the rest of the group. There were major conflicts in this story line, Lennie had a problem with his self-control, he couldn’t control his actions. He touched a women’s dress once and she cried for help accusing him of rape. The townspeople chased George and Lennie out of town because they believed what that girl had said. Lennie was a “ troubled” in most peoples’ eyes and George had to constantly get him out of trouble.

He had to take care of Lennie because without George, Lennie would not survive.

They had to travel from town to town because of Lennie’s compulsive behavior. “ Of Mice and Men” teaches a grim lesson about the nature of human existence. This John Steinbeck’s novel also shows an example of an ethical dilemma in which one must decide between right and wrong. George sets the tone of the story early in the book when he reminds Lennie that the life of a “ ranch-hand” is among one of the loneliest lives. Men like George who migrate from farm to farm rarely have anyone to look to for companionship and protection.

Lennie got himself into a huge mess one day when he was left alone with Curley’s wife, one of the “ ranch-hands” at the farm they were staying at. Lennie started to touch her hair and when she asked him to stop because he was making her uncomfortable, he got really nervous. Lennie accidentally broke her neck and killed her not knowing his own strength. When Curley and the other ranch-hands found Curley’s wife dead, they soon came to the

conclusion that Lennie was at fault and without explanation they set out to track him down and ultimately kill him.

This put George in a bad situation because he had to make the most important decision in his life. George had always taken care of Lennie and felt he was responsible for his well being and was supposed to look out for him.

In previous situations George could have easily gotten Lennie out of trouble by getting him away from the problem. This time, however, it was a very different, more complicated situation. George realized he couldn't get Lennie out of this, that they would never have their own farm which was their dream.

Lennie would never be safe because he couldn't control himself and would constantly get them into trouble. George felt that had to decide whether to kill Lennie before Curley did, or to simply let him run away.

His mental disability which produced uncontrollable behavior would always be a hindering factor. Lennie was George's best friend though, and he trusted him with his life. This internal conflict ripped George up inside, debating the "right" thing to do. He always wanted the best for him and this was the last resort, he had to put Lennie out of his own misery.

When he found Lennie and sat beside him, calming his nerves he persuaded him telling him everything was going to be all right he was at ease. That was when George pulled out a gun and aimed it at the back of Lennie's head and pulled the trigger.

This decision was the hardest thing that George had to do in his life and there was much debate over it. In the end George realized their dream would never be a reality and Lennie would always be a burden, a thorn in his side. There was nothing more he could do but to let him go in the only way he knew how.

Lennie could be at peace now without the danger and the ignorance of a society that would never accept someone different from them. The climax of this book was when George shoots his best friend Lennie in the back of the head to “ save” him the pain of being beat, imprisoned or killed by a group of strangers who don’t “ understand him. ” Obviously, this raises a huge moral question, many would say that George shouldn’t have killed Lennie because “ God says you can’t kill, or you’ll go to hell.

These people that view this statement as an absolute and unchangeable truth that exists outside of them are concerned only with the punishment involved. (Stage 1 Kohlberg) Other people might say that George was only trying to help Lennie, so he wasn’t intending to do anything wrong; nevertheless, he still had to run away and lie about what happened if he was ever caught. (Stage 2 Kohlberg) The majority of people though I think would fall into (Stage 3), which is where Kohlberg seemed to think most would end up.

People here think that members of society need to be concerned about others’ feelings and try to behave in “ good ways. ” I feel that ultimately this is the level where George was, which is why he felt it was the right thing to shoot Lennie, because the other farmers were mean for “ picking on him,

because he didn't know better and he didn't know what he was doing. " There was a moment while reading though, where I also felt that George was in stage 2, the level of self-interest, my reasoning being that it was more about the returning favors.

An individual in Stage 2 wants to meet his own self-interest. This is proven throughout the book, especially when George asked himself " what ' s in it for me " He often questioned why he was stuck with Lennie when all he ever did was get him in trouble, and he gains no benefit at all from being with Lennie. Personally I feel that I am more fitted of Level 4 thinking; even though I understand why George did what he thought was right, he still committed murder, and should be sent to prison. What would happen if everyone started shooting their friends just to ' save them some pain'?

You have to consider not only the good of the individuals, but also the good of society as a whole. Does George, or anyone else for that matter, have the right to kill Lennie, even though he was a murderer? The popular saying about this type of issue is, two wrongs don't make a right. This is true when it comes to the conflict.

George would become just as guilty as Lennie by murdering him, even if he thinks he did it in everyone's best interest. Murder is never justified but its obvious that George felt that he did the right thing by killing Lennie.