

"of mice and men" by john steinbeck essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

= Curley's wife is a significant character in "Of Mice and Men" because she is both a victimizer and victim, and symbolizes the objectification of women. Curley's wife is the only woman in the plot. She is defined by her part in the story, Curley's wife or possession. She is depicted, like the women in Weed, as a liar and manipulator of men. Steinbeck's initial portrayal of Curley's wife shows her to be attractive, unkind, and seductive. She is much like the other characters, lonely and somewhat powerless with few choices and unfulfilled dreams. She is a pathetic character, isolated from everyone else. The men are fearful of her because she is the wife of their boss. The power she embodies creates fear among the ranch workers and is based on her position and her desperate need for attention.

The description of Curley's wife, suggest that she overdresses for her time on the ranch. George says, " She had, rouged lips and wide-spread eyes, heavily made up. Her fingernails were red. Her hair hung in little rolled sausages." (31) He also says, " she wore red mules, on the insteps of which were little bouquets of red ostrich feathers." (?) The recurrence of the red implies danger. This could be a forewarning about trouble in the future. The impending Danger creates a fear in the workers on the ranch. For example when George tell Lennie, " Don't you ... She is the boss's wife and has the power to fire them from their jobs or even have them lynched. For example when she threatens to have Crooks lynched. (another example spread out more)In this case she is a victimizer.

But there are also no other women on the farm, she has no friends, is mistreated by Curley, and has got herself a (?) status by giving men " the eye" on many occasions. (quote) For example she gets annoyed when the

men become dismissive because they, " don't want no trouble" (84).

Curley's wife doesn't want to be alone. She says, " I never get to talk to nobody. I get awful lonely."(?) Curley's wife is starving for attention and when she doesn't acquire it she feels she has the right to have it. She says, " What's the matter with me? Ain't I got a right to talk to nobody?" (?)Curley's wife is absolutely secluded on the ranch, and Curley has seen to it that no one will talk to her without fearing a beating.

Curley's wife shows throughout the course of the story that she is unhappy in her marriage because her husband seems to care little for her, and is really more interested in talking about himself than anything else, and Curley's wife likes to talk about her lost opportunities. She speaks of a traveling actor who told her she could join their show, without knowing that this is a pretty standard pick-up line, also with the offer to go to Hollywood. Curley's wife has convinced herself that her mother stole the letter, rather than realize the men weren't really interested in her for any real talent.