

Is slim handicapped –  
of mice and men



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Assessment Piece on “ OF Mice and Men”:

Slim? Handicapped?’

“ I ain’t much good with one hand. I lost my hand right here at the ranch.”

You will consider this as a handicapped person. What else will you include in this category? Mental disorder, parallelization, amputated, etc., everything that makes you depend on others or any other things including loneliness, emotionless, discriminated or anything that you can do but there is something stopping you from what you want to do.

This book, or novel should I say, is about loneliness, which is why every character in it faces this; in some way or the other, in different and various circumstances. Loneliness is a sign or is handicap ness as well. Crook, the Negro stable buck, longs for justice and camaraderie. Candy was not lonely but was made when Carlson, the impassive freak, killed his dog because he was old and worth nothing. Lennie and George were lucky in this matter. These two were all ways there for each other. They would keep each other out of loneliness. Curley’s wife is very flirtatious. Wonder why? Her marriage to Curley, for her, was just a compromise that she had to do. Now it’s as if her life is not hers anymore. She is in search of friendship. We don’t get to know about her main reason behind flirting so much until late in the book. She is lonely and has been ditched by many men earlier. She has been used by them and now she wants to develop a serious relationship. Everyone in this book have different reasons and tribulations for their loneliness.

America, at that time, was a very diverse place to what it is now. Friends were not very common. People who stand out in the crowd are those that

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have friends. "Ain't many guyz travel around together." Believe it's because of the atmosphere they themselves have created and also because they are scared of each other.

Candy's dog is very precious to him, not only because he had been with him ever since he was a pup but also because he could see himself in the dog's place after a very short period of time. He was getting old and would be of no use soon. Just like the dog, everyone would be eager to get rid of him. He had lost his hand at the ranch. He is disabled, both, physically and mentally. Physically, because he does not have a hand and mentally, because of the fear he has. His fear makes him handicapped.

In chapter 4, we are taken deep into the lives of different characters. It's as if they have opened their hearts to each other. Crook tells Lennie about his childhood and the fact that he had been discriminated ever since he was born. But Lennie was lost in his own thoughts about the rabbits and the ranch that they will own one day. He had been kicked out of the barn, "cause I'm black they say I stink" remarks Crook. His dream is to be treated equally. However, as soon as he starts flying into the sky there is always someone there to throw him back on to the earth. Everyone has the right to dream, if not live. But both of these rights were, as if, taken away from him. He cannot live his life the way he wants to, he can but there is something stopping him from doing so. He also had a broken back. These two things prove us that he was handicapped.

An emotionless person can be considered in this category too. Carlson does not, at all, care about other people's feeling. Friendship is not at all important

to him. When you lose someone, you feel terrible and you need some one to comfort you. That's exactly what slim was doing when George killed Lennie. " Now what the hell ya suppose is eatin' them two guys?" is only what Carlson's could say.

Slim was a much respected individual. Everyone looked up at him. " Candy looked a long time at Slim to find some reversal." When you give respect to someone, it comes straight from your heart. That person has secured a special place in your heart. This might be because the person cares for you. He is very generous and is the I-wants-the-best-for-everyone type of person. In short, Slim is a complete man. " Slim came directly to George and sat down beside him, sat very close to him. Never you mind A guy got to sometimes'". He feels everyone's emotion. He understood George's feeling even though he never had a close friend ever before. Unlike Carlson, he had no friends either, but he does not feel anything for anyone.

George is dependent on Lennie. He himself cannot live without Lennie. Losing Lennie means losing everything to him. He had to put a boulder over his heart to kill Lennie. He was shattered after this incident.

Slim is not an impassive chap like Carlson. He was not drowning in emotions either like George. So, he is out of this particular category of handicap ness. He is not physically handicapped like Candy and Crook. He is out of this category too. Nor is he a victim of loneliness. All the ranch workers were like his friends and companions, in a sense. People came, stayed there, worked there and left but he does not develop a serious relationship with any of them, which would hurt him, if broken. He is out of this category as well.

Symptoms of handicap ness are Physical disorder, loneliness, impassive behaviour, discrimination, etc. Slim does not indicate any of those symptoms, which brings me to my conclusion that slim is not handicapped in any sense.