

# How Steinbeck presents the character of Curley's wife in *Of Mice and Men*?

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



In the John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men* he introduces us to the character of Curley's wife. She could be interpreted as a mis-fitting character in the novel as no one relates to her. Steinbeck relates her to how women were powerless during 1930's and makes her seem desperately lonely and isolated from the others on the ranch. She has sexual power which she uses to get to the men on the ranch and she just needs someone to talk to. She dislikes her husband and had a desire to become a movie star. She is not seen as an individual and has no name. This shows how a woman belonged to their husband. This essay is going to examine in detail how Curley's wife has been presented in this novel. Steinbeck presents her as a negative married woman. She has been presented first through the dialogue of ranch-hand Candy when he describes her to George. His opinion is very sexist towards Curley's wife as he says "Curley married... a tart". This shows Steinbeck presents her in a very crude manner. The word "tart" shows the immediate impression and effect Curley's wife has on the other men on the ranch. Steinbeck used this effect because he wants to show the reader the first impression the men have about Curley's wife. This affects the reader to pre-judge Curley's wife even before she entered. She has been portrayed as dangerous. When Curley's wife first appears both George and Lennie notices "... the rectangle of sunshine in the doorway is cut off". This suggests that Curley's wife is like darkness. She is also dangerous and brings only trouble to ranch hands because when she appears their "sunshine" is cut off. Light represents hope in this novel. The fact that light/sunshine has been cut off links back to the idea that Curley's wife will stand between their dream and future and may take

away their happiness and dream just like darkness. Steinbeck presents her as being very flirty and in need for attention. She is described as "she has full rouged lips and wide spaced eyes and heavily made up. Her hair was hung in little rolled clusters, like sausages". This part about her hair could be taken as an insult and she has failed to make herself attractive.