

The use and abuse of power

Business



Power-How the use or abuse of it can affect others “ Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment.

” -Mahatma Gandhi. There are some characters in the book *Of Mice and Men* who have power over the less fortunate, able or less powerful. Some of these characters misuse their power by not using it wisely, and the mistreatment of their power can affect many other people in different ways. But some characters utilize their power for good. In the book *Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck shows that those who use or abuse power can affect others in detrimental ways.

Curley abuses his power by flaunting his dominance and his actions negatively affect other people on the ranch. For instance, when George and Lennie just arrived at the ranch, Curley says to Lennie when Lennie doesn't talk, “ Well, nex' time you answer when you're spoke to” (26). Curley obviously has power as the boss's son, and he doesn't like Lennie since Lennie is big and strong. Curley tries to show that he is better than Lennie by being mean to him. Another instance of when Curley misuses his power is when Lennie is smiling at the thought of rabbits and Curley attacks him.

“ He [Curley] slashed at Lennie with his left, and then smashed down his nose with a right.” (63) This is another example where Curley maltreats his power to flaunt his dominance. Curley knows he won't get in trouble for attacking Lennie so he does it to show that he is the boss. When Lennie is just smiling about something else, Curley automatically thinks that Lennie is

laughing at him at attacks Lennie since Curley wants to be powerful and is jealous of Lennie. Curley's actions affect Lennie by making Lennie injured and his face damaged.

Another instance when Lennie kills Curley's wife, Curley is out for revenge he says " I'm gonna get him. I'm going for my shotgun. I'll kill the big son of a b**** myself. I'll shoot ' im in the guts" (96). Here, Curley tries to go out for revenge, even though Lennie didn't kill his wife out of meanness. Curley's jealousy of Lennie takes over and he goes out to kill Lennie.

Curley knows that this is his chance to kill Lennie, so he wants to do it, also to just get rid of his enemy so Curley won't have his power or dominance challenged again. Carlson also has power on the ranch over less able people and he misuses it. In one part of the story, Carlson is telling Candy that he should shoot the dog and kill it. Carlson says to Candy " The way I'd shoot him, he wouldn't feel nothing. I'd put the gun right there.

" He pointed with his toe. " Right back of the head. He wouldn't even quiver" (45). Carlson does not even show that he knows what Candy is going through. He just forces Candy to hand over his dog so he can kill it. Here, in this situation, Carlson has power over Candy who is a less able old man.

Carlson just uses his power to get what he wants, not caring about what other people feel or think. His actions and misuse of power affect Candy by making Candy sad. Later in the book, when Curley is going out to kill Lennie Carlson joins in. He says " " I'll get my Luger," and he ran out too" (96). Carlson is just going out to kill, even though it is not his problem.

He just wants to feel powerful again, and his actions can harm Lennie. In the past, George has abused his power over Lennie but he has learned from those mistakes and now uses power responsibly. George tells Slim about how he used to play jokes on Lennie but why he stopped, George says “ He d*mn near drowned before we could get him. An’ he was d*mn nice to me for pullin’ him out, well, I ain’t done nothing like that no more” (40). George used to play tricks on Lennie, and he had the power to keep on playing tricks.

But George uses his power wisely and decides to stop playing tricks on Lennie because of the danger. George could leave Lennie anytime he wants to, but he says “ I want you to stay with me, Lennie” (13) This shows that George really does care about Lennie. At the end when George is about to kill Lennie “ He pulled the trigger. The crash of the shot rolled up the hills and rolled down again” (106). This shows that George really does care about Lennie and he wants to kill Lennie before other strangers like Curley do. John Steinbeck shows that the use or abuse of power can affect others.

The use of power is important because it may decide the consequences of other people. Nowadays, the people who have control and power, such as governors, presidents, military leaders, and many more, they decide what things may happen. If they make the wrong decision, they kill many people