

Of mice and menn – this novel is all about the american dream

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



The Novel ' Of Mice and Men' was written in 1937 by John Steinbeck. It is the most touching tale about the relationship of two men, George and Lennie who are faced with difficult situations at times which are Steinbeck's aspects of his life seeing as there are the main characters of the novel. On the other hand Steinbeck highlights in the novel the social conflicts of the time period, such as the climate change cause by drought and the financial collapse of 1929, which had affected the increase of unemployment and poverty throughout the United States of America.

Of mice and men is a novel set on a ranch in the Salinas valet in California during the great depression of the 1930s. The main characters of the novel are Lennie and George. Lennie is described as a large guy who doesn't know his own strength, but also unable to gauge other people's weaknesses. Lennie is best described as childlike; he embodies the best characteristics of a childish mentality.

He is trustworthy and a nice guy although he is mentally disabled, Lennie is simplistic and docile. He gets distracted very easily and is obsessed over simple sensory pleasures, finding great joy in touching soft things, whether a cotton dress or a soft puppy. Although he lacks in capacity on controlling himself physically, he has a great protective instinct, especially when it comes to his friend, George.

George is a bright and healthy looking guy who isn't suffering from any diseases like Lennie is. George is like a guardian to Lennie by always look down to him making sure he is well and happy. George is small, wiry, quick-

witted man, however a loving and caring person, he struggles at times as Lennie has ruined everything but he still stays with him.

It's not normal for two people to work together travelling ranch to ranch as they do; this shows how strong their relationship really is. George promotes moral responsibility unlike Lennie or Curley's wife. He also has interesting physical characteristics such as restless eyes, strong small hands, thin arms, and a bony nose. His need in a companion (Lennie) exceeds the generally accepted traditional remedies for loneliness. Throughout the story, George isn't very lonely since he has got Lennie with him but in the end, when Lennie dies, he becomes lonely as he does not have anyone with him anymore.

This novel is all about "The American Dream" you've noticed that no one in the book is truly happy. Everyone's missing something. Except the boss, none of them own their own land or home. The only thing that anyone in the ranch has is a dream. People who work on the ranches have a low chance of going anywhere in life as it is tough with the low income they receive. In theory, anyone could become successful. Trouble is, in practice, most people need to be born rich to make it but George and Lennie dream of a better life and are different to everyone else as they got hope in themselves that they don't want to work on ranches every day until they die.

George and Lennie both have interesting and exciting dreams about how successful their futures will be. Lennie dreams with George of having a small piece of land; he is obsessed with one aspect of this dream: having a small rabbit hutch where he can tend rabbits. Lennie is incapable of making

decisions by himself which is why he relies on George entirely. But truthfully it was never going to happen! Steinbeck says “ each mind was popped into the future when this lovely thing should come about.” This shows that it’s all in a pretend future. The quote “ I got to thinking maybe we would”, George says to Lennie because he might of liked hearing it not realizing the truth with his childish mentality. You could spot a sign of loneliness which exists in George’s mind. He knows that there is no future for them and he doesn’t want Lennie to feel sad or upset, so by telling Lennie this lie, it will keep him happy and motivated on moving on. Steinbeck is trying to show us that there is no meaning of life if you fall into working in ranches and travelling.

One of the main aspects that are attached with most of the characters of the novel is loneliness. Steinbeck has purposely named the town ‘ Soledad’ because in Spanish, ‘ Soledad’ means loneliness. This relates to the town being lonely and how the people living in it are also lonely and it also gives us a clue that the novel is mainly about loneliness. Loneliness encourages characters to seek an alternate way of life. You can notice how most of the important characters from the start end up being separated from each other, such as Candy and his dog, George and Lennie and Curley and his wife. There is much confusion and difficult situations where things don’t go as well or mistakes are made.

There have been over one thousand migrant workers who came from different locations in America such as California. The men who decided to travel alone migrated from ranch to ranch in short-term. They were paid very little and there weren’t many options as no one would take them in. Lennie

and George were the type who migrate from ranch to ranch together looking for work and this wasn't very easy for them as they both were in difficult situations at times and had to leave for many reasons such as Lennie would do something wrong in a place as he is not as bright and gets distracted easily. This made both George and Lennie run away and come to Soledad from the town Weed where Lennie had petted a girl's dress which made them lose their job.

The bunkhouse was described as a rectangular building, which was dark and dull from the inside. Every man's bunk was identical to each others (8 bunks in total). All of the bunks had a little shelf to put there belongings on. They also had a square table in the middle of the room where everyone had played cards. Everyone on the ranch was lonely because all the men in the bunkhouse were single and they had no companion to share there feelings with like George and Lennie did. When George says " they got no family" this explains that they are like orphans who have nobody in life but themselves. This shows a sign of loneliness and isolation from others because all this time he hasn't really known the real meaning of life until he met Lennie. The men in the bunkhouse have nothing to look forward to except working on ranches for the rest of their lives.

People like Slim and others find it strange how George and Lennie's relationship is really strong and how they travel together working as a team. This is because most of the ranch hands tend to travel alone. This also shows that having company is unusual and being lonely is now seen as normal for the people living on the ranches.

Curley's wife is a young loving person who is fed up and wants some recognition, attention, her own identity and her own life. She is a very lonely character as she has nobody except her husband who she doesn't love and also doesn't receive love from him as well. Really she doesn't have her own identity as she is seen as just someone's wife, this is because Steinbeck has not given her an actual name by calling her "Curley's wife" to show us that she doesn't really have an identity. Also without Curley, she would be nothing as her life would have been so much different and harder with the social conflicts at the time period.

Steinbeck purposely had done this which shows a sign of loneliness in her character. Curley doesn't spend enough time with his wife, leading failure to satisfy her, either emotionally or physically. The lack of communication has pushed her into continuously looking for companionship, the quote "Think I don't like to talk to somebody ever' once in a while?" shows a sign of loneliness. She is isolated from the other ranch workers because they try avoiding her and not speaking with her as a fear of upsetting the boss's son (Curley), this clearly explains that Curley does not give her the attention she craves and desires. Her relationship isn't going really well as she has been looking for pleasure and flirting with other men. Curley isn't someone who is always there for her nor loving.

Another character who is very lonely is Candy. The old Handyman, aging away and is reduced to cleaning the Bunkhouse after losing his hand in an accident at work. Occasionally, Candy worries that the boss will soon declare him useless and demand that he leave the ranch. He was the person who

welcomed George and Lennie to the farm, showing them where there beds were. He also has a similar dream to Lennie and George to share his own land and animals also some economic values. He offers them all his compensation money in return for a share in his and Lennie's dream. Only meeting them on the first day shows how desperate he was. His life is the total opposite of his name because the name ' Candy' gives us an impression of sweet things but the character Candy is the total opposite. Finally, the most important thing in his life was his dog which was his best friend, who kept Candy company and has been in his life for a very long time.

The quote " I had him ever since he was a pup," shows that that the dog was someone he was able to care for which provided him with more than just friendship but family. The death of Candy's Dog made a big impact in the reflection of attitudes to his life, being isolated and insecure as he loses the only thing that mattered to him in his life. He has no family or friends, resulting in failure to understand the human attachments and relationships with others. Also the character " Carlson" tries to pressure candy into shooting the struggling old dog. Candy had very strong, loving feelings for him and couldn't preside. In the end because of peer pressure he agrees to let Carlson shoot the dog. You can see from the quote " Why'nt you shoot him Candy?" This shows that Carlson isn't very sympathetic and he can't understand how strong the bond is between Candy and his dog because he has a lack of understanding human attachments and relationships.

The most unequal character in the novel is Crooks. He is isolated due to the colour of his skin because people look at him differently and give him no

respect. He is the only black man in the book and at that time, America was a very racist, unpleasant place as Crooks were victimized. Crooks is a black stable-hand who is lively, sharp-witted and proud. He got his name from his crooked back. He also admits that he is extremely lonely, like most of the characters in the novel. He was referred to as “ stable buck”, “ nigger” or “ crooks” and he was never referred to by his actual name which suggests that no one actually is bothered to get to know him. Crooks lives alone away from everybody else. He is isolated in his own room in the barn, instead of being with the other hands in the bunkroom. Isolating him from the other ranch workers purely because colour of his skin.

The quote “ A guy goes nuts if he ain’t got nobody” suggests that he had literally gone insane from loneliness and low self esteem. On the other hand, it is clear that he craves companionship from the shocking reaction when Lennie comes over to his room. At first he rejected him hoping to prove a point, as why should a black man welcome a white man when he who isn’t welcome in a white man’s house. Lastly he couldn’t take it from his desire for company so he invites him over to sit with him. Crooks doesn’t stop talking, showing us that he yearns for company as he is terribly lonely. In his room Crooks has the California code which is meant to protect his rights of black people in America, but in reality the symbol means nothing as for men like crooks, who is unable to socialise or be accepted as who he is just because of the colour of his skin.

The character Curley is the boss’s son and is rather a two-dimensional villain. He gains his respect from others by picking fights with larger men. He is a

little, mean and bitter bloke who is very aggressive and boastful to others. Rumours been said that Curley is a champion prize-fighter. Candy says that he is "handy" quoting that he fights well. He came in the finals for the Golden Glove boxing competition, this shows us that he likes fighting and is committed to it. No one likes Curley because he doesn't deserve the respect with how he treats people. He is a married man and his wife isn't very happy with him as she thinks that he has missed many opportunities to spend some time with her and bond together like couples do. The only time Curley shows up with his wife is when his wife was found dead. He doesn't realize the fact he needs to think about others then just himself.

In Conclusion, Steinbeck has successfully presented all the characters to some degree of loneliness, which was the main theme. He has perfectly explained the different aspects of how their lives on the ranches can be very lonely even if you're still around each other. The way Steinbeck's style of writing makes you feel sympathy for the characters. Also you experience the people's lives were like at that time. The novel goes full circles, the situation ending basically the same as it began, at the same place.

I really think the book "Of Mice and Men" is a really interesting story and have enjoyed it, I really recommend reading it!