

Oppression of the weak by the strong

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



Oppression Of The Weak By The Strong " True friendship is like sound health; the value of it is seldom known until it's lost." (Charles Caleb Colton). The novel takes place in the Northern part of California (Salinas). It sets a picture in the readers mind by them by having us think that they have to walk around from place to place to try to find a ranch to work on and not run into any trouble. George and Lennie live this life style everyday in John Steinbeck's novel Of Mice and Men. The two men are completely different, one being a retarded fellow (Lennie), and the other, a typical ranch hand (George) who travels with him. On the path to achieving their dream they run into obstacles, but stick together stressing the importance of true friendship. They go around asking for work in Weed and then run into trouble there. Therefore having to move from there into another small town and ask for work. They get a job and rack in the money for the small part of land they want themselves for a little ranch. Of Mice and Men is a book about two men and their struggle to achieve their dream of owning a farm through their companionship. Steinbeck shows that friendship helps one to cope with hard times, while loneliness during struggles creates bitterness. Johnson 2

Steinbeck uses Lennie and George's friendship to illustrate that companionship keeps them focused and positive in trying to overcome their struggles life has set upon them. They share a friendship so great that if either person dies or both are separated, the other could not survive. Their friendship is a true one, where they share their lives together, benefitting from each other's company. " We don't have to sit in no bar room blowin' in our jack jus' because we got no place else to go. If the other guy gets in jail then they can rot for all anybody gives a damn. But not us. But not us! An'

why? Because..... because I got you to look after me, and you got me to look after you, and that's why" (Steinbeck p. 13-14). Because of the extent of Lennie and George's friendship, they go beyond the mere sharing of words. George and Lennie share a dream of owning a farm, due to their friendship with each other. Steinbeck gives an example of characterization by Lennie and George showing how strong their friendship is between them. Their friendship makes this dream possible, because if there were only one person there would be no one to share the dream with. It would be just a silly old thought, and not a serious possibility. Another example is when Candy feels the same way when Curley shoots his dog, he states " I ought to of shot that dog myself, George. I shouldn't ought to of let no stranger shoot my dog" (61). Candy means well and thinks that to be a better owner, that he should have killed his dog himself and not let a stranger take his dogs' own life. He thinks their friendship is better than to let someone else kill his dog, because he left his dog confused and alone. Characterization is shown by Steinbeck when he tells the reader that Candy, in reality is a good guy but just easily influenced by people and a pushover. All three of them go through different but similar situations where they Johnson 3 are made to make a difficult decision. On the other hand Candy's and Curley's wife's loneliness pushes them to become bitter and to have irrational actions. Candy is the center of attention due to his dog, which Carlson wants to kill. Steinbeck foreshadows the death of Candys' dog. Candy is an old man who has no one to talk to or keep him company besides the dog. To him, the dog was more than an animal that smelled, it was a companion to share life with. When Carlson tells Candy he wants to kill his dog, Candy is hesitant to answer. Candy

stalls, and finally gives in to Carlson's request. He had this dog his whole life, and now that it's gone, Candy would be abandoned without a friend. " Tell you what' s'pose I went in with you guys. Tha's three hundred and fifty bucks I'd put in. I ain't much good, but I could cook and tend the chickens and hoe the garden some. How'd that be? I'd make a will an' leave my share to you guys in case I kick off, 'cause I ain't got no relatives nor nothing"(59). Out of this loneliness he jumps on to Lennie and George's dream giving practically everything he has to them, stressing the importance of friendship and sharing your life with a friend. In this novel most of the people have no one to share their life with as intimately as George, Lennie, Candy and his dog did, leaving themselves with a void which they tried to fill in. In example, Curley's wife, she has a husband but he was never there to spend time with her, so she went in search of someone to talk to. " Think I don't like to talk to somebody ever' once in a while? Think I like to stick in that house alla time?"(77). Curley's wife is trying to portray that she is lonely and needs a friend to keep her company because she feels as if Curley doesn't fill the void in her. What Curley's Johnson 4 wife needs is a companion or a friend which she can spend her life with because even though she is beautiful, she is lonely, therefore resulting in unhappiness. Throughout the book Steinbeck shows that by looking at the situations which George, Lennie, Candy, and Curley's wife were in, we can conclude that he wrote the book to tell us how important it is to have a friend to share your life with. In life people are going to be lonely and needy and everyone basically just wants someone around them. Even in this time frame, people don't want to be alone so they become crazy, provocative, and so forth. And once they finally get the attention they

have been seeking they either keep hold of it or discard the person and then seek out more from others.