

My essay on Of Mice and Men

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Submitted: February 12, 2007

Updated: February 12, 2007

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1 - What

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Of Mice and Men essay

Main characters in a book come in many shapes and sizes. They are created from the air, from nothing, and put into a novel being told what to say and what to do by the author. *Of Mice and Men* really emotionally puts in the main characters such as, Lennie and George, but what about the minor characters? Lennie and George are portrayed as hard workers and loners, but what about the other people? Such characters as Candy, Curley's wife, and Crooks are not given that much attention. It is either by who they are or how they act. Steinbeck portrays each character, though, with his/her own feeling and emotion so deep, that they have their own story about survival or dreams that **they** want to pursue.

The first character that is a troubled but understandable minor character is Candy. Candy is an old, handicapped man with a big dream on his little shoulders. He dreams to be with Lennie and George when they buy the house with the garden and all of the rabbits and crops. Candy is that one barrel of hope, because he says he has enough money to pitch in to buy the ranch. After George and Lennie present the dream to Candy, Candy's hopes run wild about the maybe success of fulfilling the dream.

Sure they all want to do it. Everybody wants a little bit of land, not much. Jus' somethin' that was his. Somethin' he could live on and there couldn't be nobody throw him off of it. I never had none. I planted crops for near ever' body in this state, but they wasn't my crops. And when I harvested them, it wasn't none of my harvest. But we gonna do it now, and don't make a mistake of that. George ain't got the money in the town. That moneys in the bank. Me, an' Lennie and George. We gonna have a room to ourselves. We re gonna have a dog an' rabbits an' chickens. We re gonna have green corn; maybe a cow or a goat. (pg. 76)

Candy is handicapped in the way of his lifestyle and the way he has a wooden hand. Candy is put pretty low on the status quo **because** he is handicapped. Because he can't take care of himself that well, and because he doesn't own land, he was categorized as: He can't speak his mind to the boss, has to be silent mostly; but at least he has I better than Curley's Wife.

Another character that had a story behind her was Curley's Wife. She, first off, doesn't have a name, which indicates to me that she was not really important to begin with. I see differently. She seems so lonely and broken up inside by people always thinking she's a tramp by what she's wearing and how she flirts with other guys then her own husband. She, at the beginning, was compared to eve- a

temptress to other men. She is now portrayed as lonely near the ending of the novel.

As Steinbeck writes, Why can't I talk to you? I never get to talk to nobody. I get awful lonely. You can talk to people but I can't talk to nobody but Curley. Else he gets mad. How'd you like not to talk to nobody? (Steinbeck, pg 86)

She finally confesses everything to Lennie; even about her dream in becoming a famous actress.

Coulda been in the movies, an' had nice clothes all them nice clothes like they wear. An' I coulda sat in them big hotels, an' have pitchers took of me. When they had them previews I coulda went to them, an' spoke in the radio, an' it wouldn'ta cost me a cent because I was in the pitcher. An' all of them nice clothes like they wear. Because this guy says I was a natural (pg 89).

Curley's wife was also, at first, really rude to Crooks and Candy because of where she thinks she lies on the status quo. You can tell a certain change in character from chap. 1-chap. 5. Her anger also starts to filter out when Lennie tells her he can't talk to her. What's the matter with me? Ain't I got a right to talk to nobody? Whatta they think I am anyways? (pg 87) Curley's Wife's character is quite complex. She is beautiful and daring, but a misunderstood tramp. She also stated that she doesn't really like Curley. She just wanted to get married and make something of herself. Steinbeck created a character who really needs to be seen beneath all of the fire underneath her skin.

The one minor character that has hurt and is judged the most is Crooks. Crooks is the African-American that works on the Tyler Ranch. He was kicked in the back by a horse, hence the name Crooks. Crooks is also handicapped, but compared to Candy, he is really in bad shape. Crooks is very ill-tempered towards other people, because of how he is shunned from the white society. If one white person tried to make friends with him, then he would just shoot them down. No one has tried before; except Lennie. Lennie wanted to make friends with Crooks, but seeing how Crooks is not used to company; he tries to think of ways to torture Lennie. It is a low way of feeling better, but it is the only way he knows how to. Crooks, as with Curley's wife, feels very lonely. He lives in a stable with the horses, another name he is called is Stable Buck, where he lives in his own little abode. Crooks collects junk for every year he was at the ranch, even though it is a law that black people cannot hold possessions. To him, they were treasures. Steinbeck writes, Crooks possessed several pairs of shoes, a pair of rubber boots, a big alarm clock, and a single-barreled shotgun. And he had books, too; a tattered dictionary and a maul-ed copy of the California civil code for 1905. There were battered magazines and a few dirty books on a special shelf over his bunk. A pair of large gold-rimmed spectacles hung from a nail on the wall above his bed. (pg 67).

Steinbeck was maybe portraying Crooks as broken because of the amount of broken objects that he possesses. Crooks is broken because he is handicapped, black, and had no rights. The whole world, at this point, seems to be going against him.

Minor characters are a main aspect of completing a novel. No matter what novel it is, a minor character would always play a part in completing the plot and maybe ending of the story. Candy, Curley's Wife, and Crooks are all minor characters that complete Of Mice and Men. The smaller the character, the bigger the dream that Candy, Curley's Wife and Crooks all wished to fulfill.