

2006—2007 SEASON

WU?@therep

OF MICE AND MEN

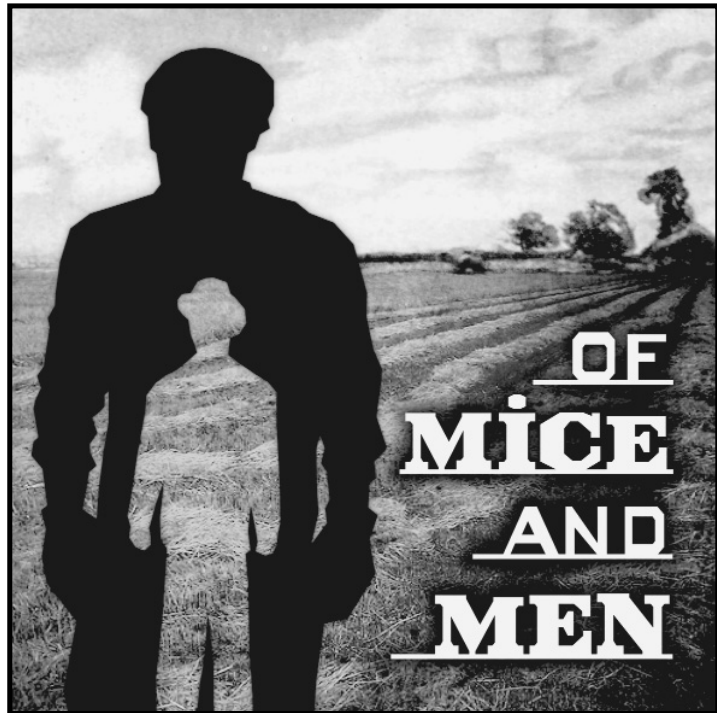
By John Steinbeck

Directed by Edward Stern

CONTENTS

- 2 The 411
- 3 A/S/L
- 4 FYI/HTH
- 6 B4U
- 8 F2F/RBTL
- 10 IRL
- 12 SWDYT?

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At The Rep, we know that life moves fast—okay, really fast. But we also know that some things

are worth slowing down for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together

WU? @ THE REP—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (**A/S/L**), a plot summary (**FYI**), biographical information on the playwright (**F2F**), historical context (**B4U**), and other bits and pieces (**HTH**). Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means **IRL**, anyway.

CU@therep!

The Teacher's Lounge



In an effort to make our educational materials more accessible to students and easier for educators to incorporate into the classroom, we have adopted a new, more student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and post-performance discussions. You may also want to visit our website, www.repstl.org for additional information including educational games, activity suggestions and behind-the-scenes information. Any materials, either from this guide, or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom. As always, we appreciate your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

NEATO!

Show Me Standards: CA 2, 3, 5, 6, 7; FA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; SS 2, 6 and Illinois Learning Standards: 1, 2, 5, 6, 18, 25, 26, 27.

MIHYAP: TOP TEN WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED AT THE REP

10. TBA Ushers will seat your school or class as a group, so even if you are dying to mingle with the group from the all girls school that just walked in the door, stick with your friends until you have been shown your section in the theatre.

9. SITD The house lights will dim immediately before the performance begins and then go dark. Fight off that oh-so-immature urge to whisper, giggle like a grade schooler, or yell at this time and during any other blackouts in the show.

8. SED Before the performance begins, turn off all cell phones, pagers, beepers and watch alarms. If you need to text, talk, or dial back during intermission, please make sure to click off before the show resumes.

7. TMI Not to sound like your mom, but "if you need to go now, you needed to go then." Leaving the theatre during the performance is disruptive, so take care of any personal needs before the show starts.

6. RTM When you arrive at the theatre, read the production program. It's like a deluxe version of liner notes and a free souvenir, all in one.

5. P-ZA? NW! Though your ability to eat ten slices at one sitting may impress your friends, no one wants to listen to you chew, slurp, or smack, so please leave all food, drink, and gum outside the theatre.

4. TLK-2-U-L-8-R We know that you will be dying to discuss what you see onstage with your friends, but please wait until intermission. Any talking—even whispering—is very distracting for both the actors onstage and the audience seated around you.

3. LOL Without you, we really wouldn't have a show. It's your job to laugh when a scene is funny or maybe even shed a tear or two in a tender moment. However, since you are not the audience at *The Jerry Springer Show* please refrain from inappropriate responses such as talking, whistling, making catcalls or singing along with the performers.

2. SOP While it's great that you want a celeb picture of your day at The Rep, the theatre is off-limits to the paparazzi. Flash photography interrupts the performance and along with videorecording is prohibited by Actors Equity rules. You can sneak a peek at production photos on our website, www.repstl.org.

1. LLTA Let the actors know that you respect their work by remaining for the curtain call at the end of the performance. Show your appreciation through applause.

A/S/L

LENNIE SMALL is a large, strong, mentally challenged, migrant worker who is traveling from farm to farm with his friend and protector, George. Lennie is kind-hearted and loves small, soft things, but must rely on George to keep him from unintentionally causing harm to himself or others.

GEORGE MILTON might appear hard and unkind, but he deeply cares for Lennie as is evident in his constant protection and companionship of the big man. George takes responsibility for Lennie, even including his friend in his own dreams for a better future.

CANDY is an aging farmhand who no longer has the strength to truly carry his weight on the ranch, but is being allowed to stay because of a work accident that caused him to lose his hand.

THE BOSS is Curley's father and the owner of the ranch where the men work.

CURLEY thinks himself second in command to his father, the ranch owner, and often struggles to prove his status among the other men. Curley is small in stature, and relies on boxing skills and big talk to secure his position of power.

CURLEY'S WIFE married Curley in hopes of a better life, but now finds herself the only woman on a ranch full of surly men. She often struts and prances among the workers, causing Curley immense jealousy in her pursuit of attention.

SLIM is the quiet leader of the ranch, respected by the other men even more than Curley or The Boss. Slim is just and compassionate, and he alone seems to understand George and Lennie's unique situation.

CARLSON is an insensitive, macho ranch hand. He owns a gun and is unafraid of Curley, but respects Slim's authority.

WHIT is a farmhand who tries to keep the peace in the bunkhouse and likes to spend his paycheck on the girls in town.

CROOKS, the stable buck, lives alone in the barn and tends to the farm equipment. He is isolated from the others, who often poke fun at him, because he is black.

BTW

The characters in *Of Mice and Men* are interesting because they all represent a certain "type" of person in society. In using these character types and giving them short, descriptive names, Steinbeck shows us people that could be anywhere, at any time. By giving us character types instead of going into any great depth of description about the minor characters, Steinbeck can create a universal message, one that is not specific only to this place or time.

- Think about each of the minor characters in this play. What do their names say about them? What universal personality type might each represent? How do these different types of people come to influence George and Lennie?



JOHN STEINBECK'S heart-wrenching classic, *Of Mice and Men*, gives us a look into the brutal struggle for the American dream in the early 20th century. George, a small, quick-witted man and Lennie, his large friend, have stopped by the bank of a river for a drink. As they talk, we find out that they are on their way to a job at a new ranch after fleeing an unfortunate situation at their previous place of employment. It becomes obvious through their discussion that George is traveling with Lennie as his protector, and that Lennie is mentally challenged. George discovers that Lennie has been stroking a dead mouse in his pocket and demands that he get rid of the rodent for it might be carrying disease. Lennie, who loves small, soft things, does not wish to lose his treasure, but George insists.

THE TWO HAVE DINNER and agree to bunk for the night by the river, which will also serve as a secret meeting site if anything should happen causing them to flee as they have in the past. As they lay under the stars, George tells Lennie the familiar story of their dream of having a farm of their own where they will work together and Lennie will raise rabbits.

THE NEXT MORNING, George and Lennie reach the ranch where they will begin work. In order to secure their jobs, George has instructed Lennie not to speak, so when the two meet the Boss, George does all the talking for his friend. The Boss, slightly suspicious of the new recruits, wonders why George will not allow Lennie to speak for himself. George gives the explanation that Lennie is his cousin who was kicked in the head by a mule when he was young. As George points out Lennie's harmless nature and clear physical abilities, the Boss accepts the story and assigns the two to begin work after dinner with Slim's team.

AS THE BOSS LEAVES, George and Lennie meet Candy, an old farm hand who has lost his hand in an accident, and Curley, the Boss' son, who is a mean little guy, with a chip on his shoulder. George immediately recognizes that Curley could be trouble, and instructs Lennie to keep away from him. Once George and Lennie are alone in the bunkhouse, Curley's wife appears, flirting with the new men. Lennie thinks she looks "purty" but remembering their past troubles, George demands that Lennie put her out of his mind. Soon the workers return from the



SKINNER: a worker responsible for driving the mules, oxen or horses used to farm a ranch

SWAMPER: a handyman, carries out various repairs and other menial duties

BUCKER: the workers who carry, lift and load ranch produce

STABLE BUCK: a person responsible for maintaining farm equipment, including animals

BUNKHOUSE: a building providing sleeping quarters on a ranch or in a camp

GRAY-BACKS: body lice

BARLEY: grain used for livestock feed, malt production and cereal

LUGER: a German semiautomatic pistol introduced before World War I and widely used by German troops in World War II

CULTIVATOR: a machine for loosening the soil and destroying weeds around growing plants

VALISE: a small piece of hand luggage

EUCHRE: a card game played usually with the highest 32 cards, in which each player is dealt five cards and the player making the trump is required to take at least three tricks to win

field for lunch and we are introduced to Slim and Carlson. Slim questions George and Lennie about their relationship and seems to approve. Carlson enters, asking Slim about the new pups his dog had that morning. The brusque man suggests that Slim give a puppy to Candy so they can shoot Candy's ancient, good-for-nothing dog. At the mention of puppies, Lennie looks at George excitedly, and his friend agrees to ask Slim if Lennie can have a puppy as well.

THAT EVENING after dinner, George and Slim find themselves alone in the bunkhouse while the other men play horseshoes. After Slim compliments Lennie on his work that day, George feels comfortable enough to confide in Slim that he and Lennie are not truly cousins and about their unfortunate past. After their game is over, the rest of the men, including Lennie and his new puppy, come in to the bunk. George sends Lennie to the barn with the pup as Carlson begins to badger Candy about his decrepit old dog. Whit tries to come to Candy's defense as Carlson insists the dog should be killed. After plenty of discussion, Slim agrees the dog should be put out of its misery and offers Candy one of his new pups.

AS CARLSON LEAVES with his gun and the dog, Slim also goes outside to the barn to do some work. Curley enters, frantically searching for his wife and after the others insist they haven't seen her, he heads to the barn to confront Slim. Coming back inside, Lennie again wants to hear the story of their dream farm, and as George begins to tell him the two suddenly realize that Candy is still in the room. As Candy questions the two about their farm, we realize that George knows of a piece of land that he could buy. Candy offers his savings as a quicker means of purchase, as long as the two will allow him to come along. He doesn't want to end up like his poor dog, disposed of when his use is up.

AFTER BEING BERATED by Slim for his accusations concerning his wife, Curley returns to the bunkhouse looking for an easy target on which to take out his frustrations. Curley picks a fight with Lennie, who resists until he gets George's approval to fight back. Lennie crushes the man's hand, and Slim warns Curley that if he tries to get George and Lennie fired, he will be the laughingstock of the town.

THE NEXT EVENING, most of the men have gone into town to the local brothel. Lennie is left alone and so decides to go to the barn to play with his puppy. In the barn, he talks to Candy and Crooks about his dream farm. Curley's wife enters and begins flirting with the men. She questions the men about what happened to her husband's hand, and noticing the cuts on Lennie's face, claims that he is responsible. In the barn, the following morning, Lennie strokes the puppy he has accidentally killed. Curley's wife enters and tries to console Lennie by letting him feel her soft hair. When Lennie becomes too excited, she screams and Lennie, trying to muffle her screams, kills her. Realizing what he has done, he runs away to the river to wait for George to rescue him.

BACK AT THE RANCH, the woman's body has been discovered and the men are forming a lynching party. As the men search for Lennie, George knows just where to find his friend. Slim understands what George has planned and allows him to go to the meeting place. Much to his surprise, Lennie discovers that George is not angry with him. George calms Lennie by talking about the farm and rabbits they will raise together. As George hears the sounds of the lynching party grow louder in the distance, he is faced with a painful decision about how to save his friend.

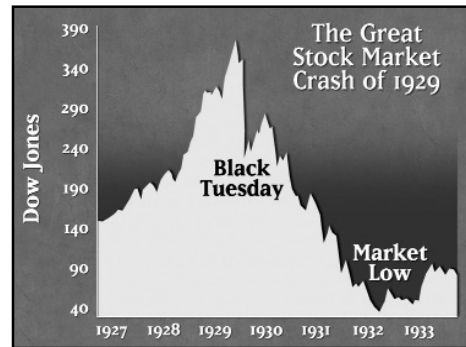


THE WORST OF TIMES

THOUGH THE CHARACTERS and events of the story are fictional, John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* does give us a glimpse into the reality of the time in which it is set. Displaced like so many others by the struggles of the Great Depression, migrant farm workers George and Lennie make their way across the country in the hopes of maintaining enough work to someday buy a farm of their own. Many of the other characters also have this same dream, but are being held back by the many repercussions of the horrible economic disaster.

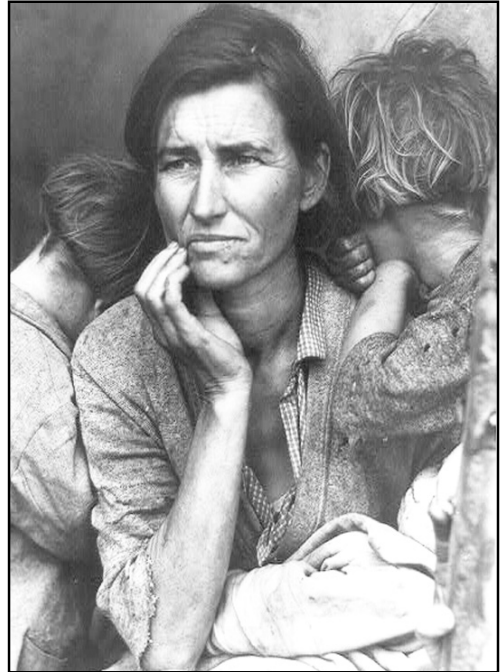
DURING THE ECONOMIC boom of the "Roaring Twenties," the average American was enjoying a lifestyle that included buying new appliances and automobiles on credit and dabbling in the big money of the stock market. Business was booming and while the rich were getting richer, new machine labor was cutting the jobs and wages of the working majority. Suddenly, on Black Tuesday, October 29, 1929, the stock market crashed, triggering the worst economic collapse America had ever seen. The Great Depression was here and on every corner banks were failing, businesses closing and millions of Americans found themselves unemployed.

PRESIDENT HERBERT HOOVER called the crisis "a passing incident" and assured the public there would be a return to business as usual in as little as 60 days. This promise, however, remained unfulfilled, as workers continued to be laid off and millions of homeless were forced into the decrepit shantytowns that were quickly springing up nationwide. In 1932, with the promise of a New Deal, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a governor from New York, won the presidency



from Hoover and immediately began instating policies to combat the depression.

ROOSEVELT'S NEW DEAL included legislation to stabilize the banking system, create government relief employment and prohibit discrimination. Agencies, like Murray and Ready's where George and Lennie got their work cards, were created to send migrant farm workers where they were needed. The Agricultural Adjustment Act was instated to provide funding to farmers who were unable to sell their abundance of crops to a bankrupt public. During this same time, a massive drought coupled with years of poor farming conservation led to what came to be called the Dust Bowl. The once fertile soil of the Great Plains dried up and blew away in severe dust storms that reached all the way to the Atlantic Ocean. Clouds of black dust made the sky appear black several states away, and farmers began to face a new challenge. In 1935, as part of the New Deal, the federal government began to create conservation programs designed to rehabilitate the Dust Bowl. The farmers that



had not abandoned their land were directed in new planting and plowing techniques. Skeptical as they were, however, the farmers took the government assistance if it meant being able to stay in their homes.

WITH FARMLAND that had become basically worthless and bank foreclosures on unpaid land, some families were forced out of their homes. Lured by the

hopes of rich land and a new life, many from the central and southern states traveled in a mass exodus to California. By 1940, several million people had moved out of the plains states and California was beginning to see severe overcrowding. In an attempt to turn away travelers, some cities even went so far as to station guards at state lines. Those people who were able to make it in to California faced a life that was hardly less difficult than the one they'd left behind. With the rise of modern machine labor and corporate-owned farms, workers were unnecessary. New settlers were forced to find tiny plots and build homes of salvage scraps and survive on the meager earnings they made picking fruit or cotton, often for only pennies a bushel.



JOHN ERNST STEINBECK, JR. was born on February 27, 1902 in Salinas, California, the place that would become the setting for some of his most memorable writing. His early life was comfortable, and as a boy he enjoyed exploring the mountains and valleys around his home and seeing the workers and field hands at work. In high school, Steinbeck did well in his classes and edited the school yearbook. He worked at various summer jobs, including as a ranch hand on local farms—experience that would greatly influence the youngster and become a theme in his novels and short stories.

AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, Steinbeck enrolled in Stanford University, and though he remained there until 1925, he never graduated. He did, however, continue to write and work on farms, especially Spreckels Sugar Ranch. Steinbeck immersed himself in the agriculture of the time and met many people who would be represented in works such as *Of Mice and Men* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. After college, Steinbeck moved to New York and spent five years working various jobs, writing and drifting from city to city. In 1929, he returned to California, and published his first book, *Cup of Gold*, just two months before the stock market crash.



face face

During the depression of the 1930s, Steinbeck married his wife Carol Henning, and the two lived and worked together in Los Angeles. Steinbeck continued writing and his wife did his editing, though the works he produced at the time including *The Pastures of Heaven* and *To a God Unknown* were both less than successful. His mother also fell ill during this period, and when she died in 1934, her son was greatly affected.

STEINBECK'S BREAKTHROUGH in literature came in 1935, with his novel *Tortilla Flat*, a work which had been rejected five times before being published in New York. He received the Gold Medal of the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco as the writer of the year's best novel and earned almost \$4,000 for the film rights. Encouraged by this success, Steinbeck continued to write and produced a popular and critical success in 1937 with *Of Mice and Men*. Following the book's production, he created a play version which won the New York Drama Critic Circle's Award and later became a popular movie.

WHEN *Of Mice and Men* was opening on Broadway, Steinbeck was already nearly finishing his next masterpiece, *The Grapes of Wrath*. The story of migrant workers first was assigned to Steinbeck as a piece for the

RBTL

Themes & Symbols

FRATERNITY/FRIENDSHIP

One of the reasons the end of the play is so tragic is because we realize that George and Lennie have lost an almost perfect friendship. The two men travel, live, work and even dream together, with no cause for the companionship but love. It seems at times that George must hate having to constantly care for Lennie, but we come to realize that Lennie gives just as much to George as he receives. This idealized friendship is presented as so uncommon and strange to the other men on the ranch, that we understand its true uniqueness and value to both men.

FRIENDSHIP

San Francisco News. In his research, he began traveling around the country to observe first-hand the hardships of the lives of the people. Moved by the violence and injustice many Americans were facing at this time, Steinbeck created his novel which quickly became a best seller, selling over half a million copies. His critical success did not come without a price, however, as his marriage began to suffer. Increasing public attention made reconciliation difficult, and in 1943, Steinbeck and Henning divorced.

DURING THE NEXT decade, Steinbeck began traveling a great deal and became interested in political writing. His promotional book, *Bombs Away*, centered on the Army Air Force, and *The Moon is Down* described a Nazi invasion of a small Norwegian village. Steinbeck also wrote the script for the war movie, *Lifeboat*, and a collection of articles published under the title *Once There Was a War*. At this time, Steinbeck also met and married his second wife, Gwen Conger, with whom he had two sons.

AFTER THE WAR, things were progressing reasonably well for Steinbeck. In 1945, he wrote *Cannery Row* and in 1947, *The Pearl*, which was also filmed. Things took a turn for the worse, however, in 1948 when Steinbeck received a blow with the sudden death of his long-time friend Ed Ricketts.

His marriage to Conger also ended at this time and Steinbeck fled to California to find peace in his writing.

THE 1950S brought Steinbeck a welcome change of pace. He began work on a great number of projects, including a screenplay for *Viva Zapata!*, the novel and play *Burning Bright* and the biblically inspired novel *East of Eden*. Steinbeck was also married again, for the third and final time, to Elaine Scott. He continued the story of *Cannery Row* with *Sweet Thursday*, and later Rodgers and Hammerstein used this story for their musical *Pipe Dream*. Steinbeck also returned to his favorite King Arthur stories of his childhood, and began work on a book he called *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights*.

IN 1961, Steinbeck was invited to the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy, an event which would lead to a lasting friendship with the White House. The next year, he won the Nobel Prize for Literature for his body of work which shows "an unbiased instinct for what is genuinely American, be it good or bad." Steinbeck died in his apartment in New York in 1968. His wife took him home to his beloved Salinas to be buried in a place reminiscent of the many valleys and rivers that graced the pages of his books.

FARM

GEORGE AND LENNIE'S FARM

The farm that George continuously describes to Lennie represents not only their dream, but the hope of paradise that everyone shares. They strive for this dream, sacrificing along the way in hopes of attaining it, but in the end reality will not let them reach their paradise. They, and the other characters, must be content with the life that fate has presented them.

DREAMS

Many of the characters in this play show us that they are dreaming for a different life. Curley wants to take over the ranch; Slim thinks of a mule team of his own; Crooks imagines working a garden patch and even Curley's wife admits her dreams of a Hollywood life. George and Lennie share a dream for a better future which Crooks tells us has been the dream of many men on the ranch. When Candy hears about their plans, he is immediately drawn in by the possibility of a better tomorrow. This dream bonds the men together and keeps them fighting through the bad turns they have all faced; however, in the end it seems that they must resign themselves to accepting their reality.

DREAMS

IRL

IN *OF MICE AND MEN*, George and Candy both struggle with decisions about ending the life of a friend. With the recent acclaim of the award-winning *Million Dollar Baby* and the massive media attention surrounding the life and death of Terri Schiavo, it is hard to miss America's own current turmoil over the legality and morality of a person's right to die. The word "euthanasia" comes from the Greek words meaning "good" and "death," and in modern usage has come to refer to assisted dying. The nature of this act requires a person to participate in the death of another.

Indirect euthanasia involves a physician providing means, such as a lethal dose of drugs, which a patient may then choose to use to cause death.

Direct euthanasia means the physician actually administers the medication or other treatment leading to death, rather than the patient performing this act alone.

In **Voluntary euthanasia** a request must be made by a fully informed and competent adult or surrogate.

Nonvoluntary euthanasia occurs without the consent of a patient (or surrogate) or even over the objection of the patient.

WHILE DIFFERENT LAWS make direct euthanasia legal in several countries around the globe, currently it is illegal in the United States. In Oregon, however, a form of indirect euthanasia known as physician-assisted suicide was legalized in 1997 and upheld by the Supreme Court in January of 2006. This citizens' initiative was voted on in a general election in November of 1994 where it passed by a margin of 51% to 49%. An injunction delayed the act until November 1997, when it was voted on again and passed by a margin of 60% to 40%.

OREGON'S DEATH WITH DIGNITY Act is very specific, and the state collects data yearly to ensure strict compliance. The law states that in order for a patient to participate in the Death with Dignity program, a person must be: a legal adult, 18 years of age or older; capable of making and communicating health care decisions for him or herself; and diagnosed with a terminal illness that will lead to death within six months. If a patient meets all of these

NATURE

NATURE

George and Lennie's farm, the quiet river meeting place—the natural environments in this play show us sanctuary. These are places where characters can find peace and safety, places they can escape the troubles of real life.

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS

Steinbeck presents many opposing views of strength and weakness in this play. Lennie is weak mentally, but is certainly strong physically. George is almost the opposite—quick witted but small and sometimes dependant on Lennie for physical protection. Curley tries to be strong by asserting his physical prowess, though he is not wise like the true strength on the ranch—Slim. Candy is maimed physically by the loss of his hand, but has a hidden power in his savings account. Even with all their different strengths, each character is rendered powerless at one time or another.

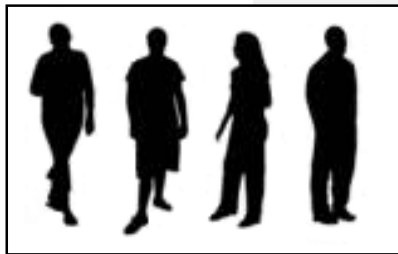


STRENGTH

criteria, he or she must then make two verbal requests, separated by 15 days, to the physician. The patient must then make a written request, signed in the presence of two witnesses. The physician must consult with another doctor on the patient's diagnosis, and the two must then determine whether the patient is of sound mind to make health care decisions. Any psychological disorder, including depression, must be followed by a psychological examination to ensure the patient's full understanding of the decision. The physician must also ask the patient to notify their family of the request, and must offer the patient alternative care options. If all of these steps are followed, the physician may then provide a prescription for lethal medication, but may not in any case

administer the prescription him or herself. Physicians and hospitals are not required to participate in this program, and may end the process at any time.

THE STEPS AND MEASURES the state of Oregon takes to ensure the rule of law in this case shows how extremely important and divisive an issue it can be. The ending of *Million Dollar Baby* provoked a barrage of criticism from both citizens and the media against the movie's director Clint Eastwood, and the Schiavo and Shindler families engaged in almost a decade of legal battles surrounding Terri Schiavo's fate. Each individual's religious, moral, political, legal and personal beliefs create very passionate opponents on both sides of the issue.



- Where does your belief lie and why? What factors influence your decision?
- Research both *Million Dollar Baby* and the Terri Schiavo case. How are these cases different? Who has the authority to decide the outcome of the situation?

BUNKHOUSE

The small bunkhouse where the ranch hands live becomes a symbol of the real world in the story. Everything that takes place in the bunkhouse shows the strengths and cruelty of reality—a place where dreams will be crushed and violence will reign.

CANDY'S DOG

The ancient sheepdog that Candy continues to care for seems to represent both Candy and Lennie's status on the ranch. Although Candy cares very much for his dog, as George does for Lennie, the fact that it has a problem which limits its usefulness means that it is no longer necessary. Candy tries to save his companion, but the fact that he cares for the animal means nothing. Carlson's insistence that the dog be put out of its misery illustrates the natural law stating that the strong will dispose of the weak.

DOG

What other themes and symbols can you see in the play?

Choose one of your own themes or symbols, or choose one listed and trace its course throughout the play. How does this contribute to the play? Why do you think Steinbeck chose this theme or symbol as a tool in this work?



SWDYT?



"Oh, I don't know. Hardly none of the guys ever travels around together. I hardly never seen two guys travel together. You know how the hands are. They come in and get their bunk and work a month and then they quit and go on alone. Never seem to give a damn about nobody. Jest seems kinda funny. A cuckoo like him and a smart guy like you traveling together."

- Slim seems puzzled at the strong friendship between George and Lennie. Why is their relationship odd to him? What social and historical factors would make this friendship different than what is "normal?"

"God Almighty, that dog stinks....Got no teeth. All stiff with rheumatism. He ain't no good to you, Candy. Why don't you shoot him?...This ole dog jus' suffers itself all the time. If you was to take him out and shoot him—right in the back of the head...why he'd never know what hit him....Aw, he'd be better off dead."

- Carlson badgers Candy quite a while before the old man agrees to give up his dog. What does this attitude say about the characters' views of life? How do they react differently to these events? What does this scene mean for the rest of the play?

"S'pose they was a carnival, or a circus come to town or a ball game or any damn thing. We'd just go to her. We wouldn't ask nobody if we could. Just say we'll go to her, by God, and we would. Just milk the cow and sling some grain to the chickens and go to her."

- George and Lennie have big dreams about a farm of their own and much of that dream is based in the freedom this farm would provide. What do these lines show about the importance of freedom? Is this feeling unique to George, or do you think others feel the same?

"Why, he'd do any damn thing I tole him. If I tole him to walk over a cliff, over he'd go. You know that wasn't so damn much fun after a while. He never got mad about it, neither. I've beat hell out of him and he could bust every bone in my body jest with his hands. But he never lifted a finger against me."

- When George is explaining Lennie's condition to Slim, we see how much Lennie truly relies on George to care for and protect him. How has this duty changed George's life? How has it changed Lennie's? What responsibilities come with this friendship?

"I seen hundreds of men come by on the road and on the ranches, bindles on their back and that same damn thing in their head. Hundreds of 'em. Jus' like heaven. Everybody wants a little piece of land. Nobody never gets to heaven. And nobody gets no land."

- When Crooks hears of George and Lennie's plans to get a farm of their own, his answer is less than hopeful. What does this outlook show about Crooks? Why do you think he attacks their plan? If he actually has seen hundreds of men with the same dream, what does this say about human nature? What are all these men truly striving for?

George: "Guys like us got no families. They got a little stake and then they blow it in. They ain't got nobody in the world that gives a hoot in hell about 'em!...But not us...Because I got you and..."

Lennie: "And I got you."

At the end of the play, this exchange between George and Lennie shows the true nature of their relationship. While it seems at times that George bears the brunt of Lennie's disability, we see here that Lennie means just as much to George. What does this scene tell us about the nature of human relationships? About loneliness and friendship? What do you think of George's decision to "save" his friend from the lynch group?