
Of Mice And Men: Isolation And Loneliness In A Novel

Steinbeck demonstrates how isolated and lonely people were during the Great Depression and how did the great depression influence depression and loneliness.

Mice and Men is a book that was written by John Steinbeck. The book is set in the 1920 to the 1930, during this time was the Great Depression which was a time of suicide, depression, hard times and unfair treatment towards black people but that did just change because of the Great Depression black people where and are treated badly in America. isolation was a mental illness that was increased because of the Great Depression

Throughout 'Mice and Men' Steinbeck attempts to shed light on the difficulties of the 1930s focussing not on cities, but what life was like on the farms, and the lives of the farm workers that kept America alive. Between 1929- 1934 America suffered through the Great Depression, which greatly affected employment and overall prosperity. The Great Depression partly caused by the Dust Bowl- a huge dust storm that swept across the American Midwest, killing off most of the crops, making a lot of farmers so poor that they couldn't afford to grow more produce, which intern started the great depression and starting the whole process of men having to become isolated and depressed and work just to live and live to work.

During this time many men couldn't find work in the cities so many of them set of looking to find work on farms. Because of the Dust Bowl, there was no work unless you traveled to California, there was a mass migration happening inside of America men were collecting only what they needed and started the long gurney. Most men traveled alone, for it was very uncommon in 1920s society for two men to spend a long period of time together as traveling partners.

The first time you really get an understanding of how lonely men where during the Great Depression is when George and Lennie walk into the bunkhouse with candy and the bunkhouse is described to the reader. Steinbeck puts in an effort to describe the small things like the magazines, shaving set, and even the scarves- all things men may have had to go without for a long period of time if he was traveling from job to job.

Steinbeck uses objects like playing cards to create an atmosphere in the book. When George comes into the bunkhouse, the first thing he does is question why there is fly killer, which showed how curious George is. The second thing he does once the boss leave is he sits down and plays a game of Solitaire which shows another thing about George, that he doesn't mind being isolated and free to think his own thoughts but having Lennie around stops him from being isolated and gives him a loyal friend and someone he can call his brother. Lennie provides George with not just something to do, but adds a challenge to his every day life. Lennie takes George's isolation and gives him the opportunity to socialize, leading him to eventually buy a farm and live an easier life. Very few of the men on the farm talk about their past life, and this is one way Steinbeck uses imagery to show that when someone is isolated they shut themselves off.

Slim jim is one of the people that have not shut himself off completely. Examples of isolation can be subtle or overt, an example of this would be Crooks whole adult lif,. Steinbeck gives extra

detail of Crooks' living quarters, and how he is treated. Crooks is treated just like any other black person in 1930, with disrespect, nonacceptance even though they weren't slaves, they were still treated like one in very in- -human was like threatening with violence and also using mental violence. but Slim isolates himself sometimes and an example of this is when Crooks talks about 'Slim coming into the barn at night the check up on the horses during the night, even though Steinbeck describes isolation as a terrible thing that can kill your soul but from reading this book my understanding of isolation is that you only become lonely when you expect that you're lonely.

In conclusion Mice and Men is a book that does describe how isolation and loneliness affected farmers and the people living even though there are people to associate with they would rather stay isolated, but not everyone is the same because there is always the outlier.