

Steinbeck's novel, *'Of Mice and Men'* represents what life was like for people during The Great Depression through following the lives of two men, George and his animalistic companion Lennie. The two men arrive at a ranch where they work alongside other men, all of whom have their own story to tell about the way in which the political system has affected their lives. One of these men, a 'swamper' named Candy befriends the two and shares their dream of owning their own land and having rabbits. The reader feels sympathetic towards the character of Candy as he is old and often marginalised by the other workers.

Candy's vulnerability is portrayed to the reader in the extract through the fact that he is called 'old Candy' suggesting that he has past the age at which he would be considered useful on the ranch. This is made even more significant through the introduction of Carlson as 'thick-bodied' shortly after. As Candy is also seen to be complaining of 'gut ache' while the others are seemingly alright, he is also seen as weak and inferior. As well as this, he asks his friends in the bunkhouse for a 'slug of whisky' which he is not only refused but Slim says 'I'd drink it myself if I had' which shows the attitude of the people at the time, every man for himself.

Sympathy for Candy is created through the suggestion of shooting his dog by Carlson. To Candy the dog was his only friend, 'I had him since he was a pup' and so the idea of losing him came as a shock. Candy's love for his dog and sadness he feels at the thought of any harm coming to him, creates a sympathy from the reader as they would not like to think of anything bad happening to an innocent animal and therefore would not like to be in Candy's situation. Candy's dog is very much like Candy in the way that he is old and useless and therefore the idea of him being killed is representative of the fact that Candy could be cast out of his job and left to die too. For this reason the audience connects more with the character of Candy as he faces a terrible fate through no fault of his own. This technique is used by Steinbeck as a way of conveying the social and political unrest of the time.

The distribution of power in the bunkhouse is uneven, with the younger and stronger men gaining more respect than the outcasts who are marginalised by the others due to their disabilities, including Crooks, the crippled black stable worker, Lennie due to his disability and Candy because of his age. Candy cannot stop Carlson from shooting his dog as he has no real reason for wanting him to stay alive other than the love of his company. As Slim, who has the most power out of all the workers, agrees that 'That dog ain't no good to himself,' there is very little that Candy can do to persuade Carlson not to shoot him. This shows Candy's lack of confidence in himself as he does not speak up in defence of his friend saying 'maybe it'd hurt him' without much conviction.

The audience feels a stronger emotional connection towards Candy and his dog as Candy begs Carlson to let his old dog live for one more day, 'maybe tomorrow' showing how much he cares for his pet and how much of an influence they have had on each other's lives. This is more emotive as he appears to have given up hope of saving his dog as he asks to postpone the inevitable death instead of asking for his life to be spared.