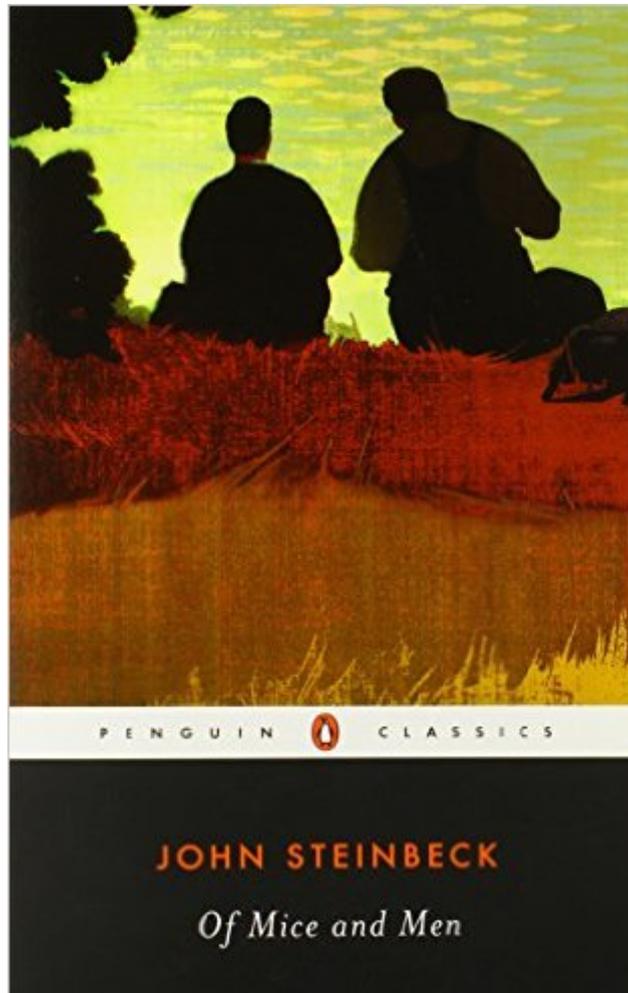


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Of Mice And Men (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

A controversial tale of friendship and tragedy during the Great Depression Over seventy-five years since its first publication, Steinbeck's tale of commitment, loneliness, hope, and loss remains one of America's most widely read and taught novels. An unlikely pair, George and Lennie, two migrant workers in California during the Great Depression, grasp for their American Dream. They hustle work when they can, living a hand-to-mouth existence. For George and Lennie have a plan: to own an acre of land and a shack they can call their own. When they land jobs on a ranch in the Salinas Valley, the fulfillment of their dream seems to be within their grasp. But even George cannot guard Lennie from the provocations, nor predict the consequences of Lennie's unswerving obedience to the things George taught him. *Of Mice and Men* represents an experiment in form, which Steinbeck described as "a kind of playable novel, written in a novel form but so staged and set that it can be played as it stands." A rarity in American letters, it achieved remarkable success as a novel, a Broadway play, and three acclaimed films. This edition features an introduction by Susan Shillinglaw, one of today's leading Steinbeck scholars. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

John Steinbeck wrote this classic gem in 1937. It's been a Broadway play and there have been several adaptations of it in movies and TV. I was generally familiar with the story but this was the first time I actually read the book. Wow! I was completely blown away! This is the story of two lonely and alienated men who work as farm laborers, drifting from job to job in California. Lennie is gentle giant, physically strong but mentally retarded. George guides and protects Lennie but also depends on him for companionship. Together, they have a dream to someday buy a little farm where they can grow crops and raise rabbits and live happily ever after. This, of course, is not to be as the title suggests. "The best laid plans of mice and men" is a line in a poem by Robert Burns, which describes how a field mouse's world is destroyed by a plow. Steinbeck's narrative voice is seemingly simple in his descriptions of nature as well as the details of the bunkhouse. His characterizations of the people are magnificent. We meet the other workers, all loners, and appreciate the beauty of the unique friendship between Lennie and George. We meet Candy, the old man who is outliving his usefulness. We meet Crooks, the black stable hand, shunned by the men and therefore turning to books for companionship. We meet the cruel Curley who taunts Lennie into a fight. And we meet Curley's wife, another lonely soul who uses her femininity to get the wrong kind of attention. There's tension in every word and I found myself holding my breath, knowing that something awful would happen, my eyes glued to the page, the world of Lennie and George deeply etched into my consciousness. I was pulled right into the story, wanting to shout warnings as I saw the inevitable consequences.

I am a tenth grade student and I recently read "Of Mice and Men" for a school project. I thought it was an excellent book. I felt that the author, John Steinbeck, did a first class job with this novel. It portrayed the relationship between George and Lennie in a way that made you become very attached to the characters. You wanted to read more to find out if they ever accomplished their goals and to see if their dreams became a reality. George and Lennie are complete opposites; George is a small, quick intelligent man, while Lennie is a man of huge dimensions but has the brain of a child. Throughout the story Lennie acts in ways that infuriate George, but George will always be there for his friend because he knows Lennie needs him to survive. Lennie can buck barley like no one else because of his pure strength, but would probably starve to death if he didn't have George to provide his daily meals. I think that has to do with why this book has been banned in the past by schools across the country. Some people may be offended by how the mentally challenged person is shown in this story. It seems as though the view being expressed is that people with mental

problems can't do anything for themselves. They are also a constant threat to others because they cannot control themselves. Lennie didn't realize what he was doing was wrong until it had gone too far. These are stereotypes of mentally retarded people that some people may believe are reinforced by this novel. They are lead to believe that this book is discriminatory towards the mentally challenged. Parents whom believed this did not want their children reading this book because they did not want them to be exposed to these types of ideas. Also, Curly's wife does not fit the traditional mould.

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