Curley

Introduction: give a general response to the question set and outline what you will be covering in your essay.

Curley wanted to be a boxing champion. He fails in this ambition, getting to the finals but (we presume) not winning. This thwarted ambition seems to fuel his bitterness.	"Got in the finals for the Golden Gloves. He got newspaper clippings about it."
He epitomises the unfairness of society as a while. Even though the American Dream suggests that hard work and talent lead to success Curley is in a secure position as the Boss's son while George, despite his clear intelligence, makes a meagre living as an itinerant worker.	"S'pose Curley jumps a big guy an' licks him. Ever'body says what a game guy Curley is. And s'pose he does the same thing and gets licked.Then ever'body says the big guy oughtta pick somebody his own size, andmaybe they gang up on the big guy. Never did seem right to me. Seems like Curley ain't givin' nobody a chance." "Won't ever get canned 'cause his old man's the boss." "Curley don't take no chances. He always wins."
Curley's self image and sense of worth stems from his ability with his fists. By beating up men who are bigger than him this status is enhanced (this is a harsh world where men seem to respect violence). This is why, coupled with Lennie's vulnerability (clearly sensed by Curley) he targets Lennie.	"His glance was at once calculating and pugnacious." "Well, nex' time you answer when you're spoke to." "Curley's pretty handy. He done quite a bit in the ring. He's a lightweight, and he's handy."
This status as a "tough guy" is fragile. When Slim stands up to him the other men turn on him, laughing at him openly – he attacks Lennie as a way of re-establishing his status.	"You're yella as a frog belly. I don't care if you're the best welter in the country. You come for me, an' I'll kick your God damn head off." "Come on, ya big bastard. Get up on your feet. No big son-of-a-bitch is gonna laugh at me. I'll show ya who's yella."
He treats his wife as a possession. The glove he wears is less about consideration for his wife and more about highlighting his status to the other men. He wants the other men to know he has a young attractive wife while they don't.	"Curley says he's keepin' that hand soft for his wife."
Curley's Wife clearly dislikes her husband. She seems pleased that his hand was crushed and describes their life together in unpleasant terms. It seems that even when he is alone with his wife Curley is obsessed with fighting and violence.	"Swell guy, ain't he? Spends all his time sayin' what he's gonna do to guy she don't like, and he don't like nobody." "Think I'm gonna stay in that two-by-four house and listen how Curley's gonna lead with his left twice, and then bring in the ol' right cross?"
The crushing of Curley's hand seems initially justified and fitting – especially when Slim contrives to ensure that George and Lennie don't lose their job. But this scene helps precipitate the ending: Curley's need for revenge means there is no hope of bringing Lennie in alive. The message here seems to be that cruelty and meaness win out n the end.	"I'm gonna get him. I'm going for my shotgun. I'll kill the big son-of-a-bitch myself. I'll shoot 'im in the guts."
Curley seems to exemplify what George says about men who are on their own.	"I seen the guys that go around on the ranches alone. That ain't no good. They don't have no fun. After a long time they get mean. They get wantin' to fight all the time."

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