

Defining and analysing antiheroes philosophy essay



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Intro: People these days tend to face a lot of stress and troubles; they also have a hard life, since everything is becoming more expensive and people are losing their jobs. Therefore people tend more to help only themselves and reduce helping others. They are becoming more selfish and this kind of life affected also the characters in stories, film and books. While mythical archetypical heroes are generally predictable stock characters, fictional antiheroes are unpredictable characters with a depth of human emotions and thus relate better to everyday people.

An Antihero is no Hero (or a Villain)

Indiana Jones and Toht: Indiana Jones is the hero in the film, while Marion is in trouble in the bar, fighting against Toht and his fellows, Indiana Jones comes in the right time and enters the bar and he knows how to deal with the situation and he starts shooting Toht's fellows and kills most of them one by one, he also know how to protect Marion and himself. Toht on the other hand is the villain, he is mean and he gets what he wants by using force and violence and threatening, but he gets defeated by Indiana Jones, the hero, he is kind of stupid where he picks the medallion without thinking that it might be hot from the fire and he hurts himself.

Ulysses and the Cyclops: Ulysses is the main antagonist/hero in the film. He was not scared when the Cyclops came in the cave and started threatening him and his friends. He talked freely about his origin and where he comes from and he was talking with dignity without showing any fear. He knows what to do, he was working everything out in his mind, he calculated every step he made and he had the idea of making the Cyclopes drunk so he goes

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to sleep and that they are going to stick the wood in his eye making him blind. And he also knew how to act after making the Cyclopes blind by going from one place to another inside the cave making the Cyclopes move so that he takes the big rock at the end and open the door for them to go out, and at the end he succeeded.

Frank McCloud (Key Largo) is an Antihero.

A prime example of the modern antihero is Frank McCloud who displays five antihero characteristics.

Elicits considerable sympathy:

Frank McCloud elicits considerable sympathy, and this happens multiple times during the movie. One of the times is When he get smacked in the face by the villan " Rocco", however Frank did not say anything he looked kind of embarrassed, shy and helpless. So he went silently to sit next to George's wife. Moreover, Frank elicits sympathy due to the situation he got stuck in. He got back from war and wanted to do something good to his friend's family but then he had to deal with murders. Another situation is when he mentions that he has no address, he has nothing, no job, no family, no place to live and no friends. These things also make him elicits considerable sympathy.

Elicits Considerable admiration:

Frank McCloud elicits admiration in the film in three situations. First when they all are down stairs and the singer Gaye Dawn is begging Rocco for a

drink and he refuses to give her one. Frank gets up and gives her a drink, even though he knows that Rocco might harm him. Second situation where Frank elicits considerable admiration is when Rocco threatens Nora by his gun and he points it at her face, Frank gets up and stands in front of him defending

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and helping Nora. The third situation happens at the end of the film, when he summons the courage and pulls the trigger killing the murders one after another.

Postmodern rejection of the traditional values:

Frank McCloud shows postmodern rejection of traditional values, and this can be noticed throughout the film. He does not have plans for his future, he does not have family nor friends, and he does not even have hopes, and he says it " I had hopes but gave them up."

Disillusionment felt after WWII:

Frank McCloud shows disillusionment after WWII, this shows up in the situation when Rocco gives him the gun and tells him to shoot him, Frank, however, does not know that the gun had bullets inside, he could not tell from the weight, even though he was a soldier. He also shows disillusionment when he rejects the values that the army taught him. He says " I would fight for nobody's battle but for my own". And this is against the values one learns in the military, one has to fight for his country, for the others to keep the country save.

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Fraught with human frailties:

Frank McCloud is fraught with human frailties, he is not sure of certain things, he is afraid, and he apologizes a lot. He also fears the death, and he says " me dying in world of Johnny Rocco". He is helpless in some situations and cannot make decision of what to do and how to handle the difficulties.

Charlie Allnut is another Antihero.

Another example of an antihero is Charlie Allnut, who as well displays five antihero characteristics.

Elicits considerable sympathy:

Charlie Allnut elicits considerable sympathy throughout the movie. First when he is on the boat with Rose and it is night and it starts to rain, while Rose is underneath a tent, he has to

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stay outside and freezes, and when he gets in, Rose sends him outside again, even though it is his boat. Another situation where Charlie elicits sympathy is when he is sitting on the table with rose and her brother and his stomach starts to make unusual sounds. One more situation is when he has to pull the boat and he gets all the seashells on his body and he gets sick. And a last thing that shows he elicits sympathy is that he does not have anybody in his life.

Elicits considerable admiration:

Charlie Allnut elicits considerable admiration many times throughout the film, he makes tea for Rose and takes care of her, he tolerates her, he let her sleep underneath the tent so she does not get wet from the rain. Charlie also makes the audience admire him when he asks the German captain to marry him and Rose.

Postmodern rejection of the traditional values:

Charlie shows postmodern rejection of traditional values when he arrives at the village and stands in front of the church and makes the people fight for the cigar that he intentionally throws on the ground. He also gets drunk on Sunday and he says " I sleep it off on Sundays". He went all the way to Africa and bought a boat because he does not want to work for anybody.

Disillusionment about the war:

Charlie shows disillusionment about the war, he is against Rose's idea to go and blow up the German ship; because he does not care and he says is multiple times.

Fraught with human frailties:

Charlie Allnut is fraught with human frailties. He takes back the promise he made, and he is negative and pessimistic. He smokes and drinks a lot.

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Why Antiheroes Relate Better To Everyday People (as Opposed to Superheroes).

Acting as a hero or superhero is definitely a good thing; however it is a very stressful life as a superhero. People also have a very busy life that they want to maintain, and they care less about the problems of others since they have enough problems to take care of. All these reasons count toward the result that people act as antiheroes more than superheroes. To be also a superhero, one has to take care of other people and one cannot have a peaceful life, because one is exposed to troubles and difficulties everyday that he/she has to take care of. Life is becoming more stressful and it is also becoming harder and harder, one has to fight but for his own food, living, job and for his family. And therefore people do not care if others have a job, food or a place to live in, everybody cares about his/her own life and family. They consider and strive to achieve their values, the ones that benefit them and their family members, and they do not even care about the values that are recognized by the culture they live in. These characteristics are not characteristics of a super hero but more of an antihero. This is a reason why antiheroes are more like everyday people. " An anti-hero is a protagonist that lives by the guidance of their own moral compass, striving to define and construe their own values as opposed to those recognized by the society in which they live." Another reason is that people show their strength only when they and their families are in danger, they do not show their strength when somebody they do not know is in trouble, but when there is somebody they know or is part of the family and is in trouble then the antihero shows his strength and gets this relative out of trouble and help him. " The anti-hero may save the world at night." Where on the other hand a super hero is

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always ready to help everybody not only his/her family and relatives. People nowadays also show themselves as poor and as if they require sympathy from everybody in order to achieve what they want and what they need. They do not mean harm but they sneak and try to get what they want by this method.

People nowadays face a lot of difficulties in life and they do not always succeed, they fail most of the time, and thus the antihero relates better to them. " Anti-heroes can be awkward, obnoxious, passive, pitiful, or obtuse- but they are always in some fundamental way, flawed or failed heroes." Everyday people achieve success sometimes, but this success comes after series of failures.

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They fail and fail and move from one failure to another until they succeed but then they move to another failure and so on. So in this point the antihero relate to everyday people. " Another type of anti-hero is a character who constantly moves from one disappointment in their live to the next, without end, with only occasional and fleeting successes." Everyday people also are not sure of what to do in certain situations, they are surrounded with troubles and difficulties of the life, and therefore they cannot decide what problem to solve first and this effects the way they think and cause that they do not know how to act and respond if something dramatic happens or f they get stuck with murders or bad people. They lack the courage, the strength, experience, and the wisdom, which all are the basic means to get out of dangerous conditions or situations. People these days also do not commit to

any ideals, they consider themselves as different, and they are different. “

One type of anti-hero feels helpless, distrusts conventional values and is often unable to commit to any ideals, but they accept and oftentimes relish their status as outsiders.”

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Conclusion:

Being an antihero is a good benefit to a small group of people, where the antihero takes care of himself and his family members. While being a superhero is a good benefit to larger groups of people or even to a whole society that may suffer from troubles and difficulties.

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