

10. Antihero

- A central character in a story, film, or drama who lacks conventional heroic attributes.
- Generally found in modern novel or play. (also film)

Differences between

Traditional hero

- (i) of high estate
- (ii) possessing dignity
- (iii) Courage
- (iv) Powerful
- (v) honest/moral
- (vi) Well mannered
- (vii) Rational
- (viii) Inspirational
- (ix) helpful
- (x) selflessness

&

Antihero

- (i) Complex
- (ii) Realist/practical
- (iii) dishonest
- (iv) Passive
- (v) clownish

along with
some good
qualities

(A Glossary of
Literary Terms)

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→ but, both of them are protagonists (central character)

→ We may also call them 'nonheroic protagonists'

→ Some examples:

(i) The heroine of Defoe's "Moll Flanders" (1722)
— a thief and a prostitute.

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(ii) Lowly protagonists of → John Steinbeck's "Honey on Down" (1953)
→ Kingsley Amis' "Lucky Jim" (1954)

(iii) Yossarian (central character), of Joseph Heller's "Catch-22" (1961)

(iv) Humbert Humbert in Vladimir Nabokov's "Lolita" (1955)

(v) Tyrone Slothrop in Thomas Pynchon's "Gravity's Rainbow" (1973)

(vi) Vladimir and Estragon in Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" (1952)

(vii) Blind and paralysed old man, Hamm in "Endgame" (1958)