

Gunnery Sergeant Hartman

In literary terms, Hartman is easy to peg, he is a **STATIC** character. This is a character that changes little during their time within the text. They do not develop or change in their view or personality.



What does he do?

- Shouts...
- Bullies...
- Abuses...
- Shouts more...
- Orders...
- Shouts about killing...

One of the main purposes of a static character is that they act as a **FOIL** or a **CATALYST** for change for other, more **COMPLEX** characters. A foil is a character who **CONTRASTS** with other, more prominent characters. Because of their contrast, they tend to highlight the **TRAITS** of the **PROTAGONIST**'s personality (think Joker, think Private Pyle).

Hartman (can you spot the **IRONY** in the name?) is a catalyst for change. His unrelenting barrage of insults and orders to his raw recruits serve to sap them of their individuality and to an extent their humanity. As Joker remarks in a **MONOLOGUE** towards the end of the first half of the film: *"The Marines Corp does not want robots, the Marines Corp wants killers. The Marines Corp want to build indestructible men, men without fear."* In order to do this however, Hartman, as the only representation (**METAPHOR**) of the Marines we see here, proceeds to strip the men of aspects of their humanity which might impede their success as killers – traits such as pity, compassion, empathy are all extinguished. We see this clearly with Private Pyle and his demise and further on in Vietnam also during the film's second act, when we come across assorted motley characters whose demeanour and behaviour are deliberately disturbing and menacing.

Hartman is a classic **ANTAGONIST** in the first act of the film-text, though he is not necessarily a villain in any sense of the word. His job is simple: to disrupt the lives of his trainee Marines and change the way that they act and react to situations, in readiness for Vietnam.

It is hard to feel anything for a character-type like Hartman. He is a shouting machine and is presented as one in the **MISE-EN-SCENE** of the film. With the exception of a small number of sequences this character is constantly shouting. His steady stream of noise, while initially perhaps a little quirky and amusing (alongside his puerile but original turn of phrase when abusing his charges), eventually becomes both annoying and monotonous; Hartman easily becomes a **CARICATURE** for the audience, an exaggerated figure, not to be taken too seriously.

As has been stated before, Hartman is present within the text to do a job:

1. **to drain the humanity out of his recruits** – which allows Stanley Kubrick the chance to raise many questions.
2. **to represent military authority within the first half of the film.** (is this a good impression?)