

Derivatives

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In December 1843 the publication of a slender, russet-colored novella captured the attention of English-speaking readers. The small book was designed by the author¹ to impress: stamped-in-gold title, gilt-edged papers, four woodcuts, and four hand-colored etchings.

Praise was forthcoming. *Bells Weekly Messenger* said it “converted an incredible fiction into one of the strongest exhibitions of religious and moral truth, and into one of the most picturesque poetical allegories which we possess in our language.” *The Sunday Times*, a respected London newspaper, trumpeted the book “an exquisite gem in its way. . . . Generally the tone of the story is sweet and subdued, but occasionally it soars, and becomes altogether sublime.”² William Makepeace Thackeray characterized it as “a national benefit.”³

6,000 copies of *A Christmas Carol* were initially printed; a copy sold for five shillings.⁴ This London printing sold out in four days. Additional printings of the book were arranged. 15,000 copies were sold by the end of 1844.⁵ Since its first publication, the book has never been out of print. A first edition of the original slender book is today worth more than \$10,000. By far the most popular secular story about Christmas ever written,⁶ vivid characters introduced in the book—Scrooge, Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim—have become recognized personality types.

A Christmas Carol influenced how Victorians⁷ came to celebrate Christmas.⁸ The novella was written when England was becoming more urban and industrial, and there was waning interest in traditional Christmas celebrations of the countryside. *A Christmas Carol* portrays a comfortable and warm family-oriented celebration, a holiday that embraces a level of joyousness eschewed by the dour Evangelicals, but that avoids Georgian excesses.⁹

The novella also advanced two humanitarian values that emerged during the 19th century: it contributed to a compassionate awareness of the plight of the poor¹⁰ and enhanced the regard for personal philanthropy.¹¹

In the years since 1843, the resonance of *A Christmas Carol* has stimulated the creation of many derivative works: ballets, books, comics, films, operas, plays, and readings, which have—sometimes sensitively and imaginatively, sometimes awkwardly or frivolously—built on the characters and themes of the original story.

Charles Dickens is perhaps the best regarded 19th century English male novelist. He was and continues to be avidly read. Lord Kenneth Clark points out, “No living author has ever been more hysterically beloved by a larger cross-section of the community.”¹²

Dickens’ first sketch was published in 1833, when he was 21.¹³ Over his life he authored fifteen novels, ten of which were eight hundred or more pages long. Dickens also wrote articles, editorial notes, essays, letters, plays, stories, and travel pieces.¹⁴ In addition, he served as a magazine editor for most of his writing career.¹⁵

In much of his writing, Charles Dickens described in unsparing, evocative prose the life of members of the English urban lower-middle class—persons who led poverty-tinged lives but who also aimed for respectability—a group that had previously been largely neglected as a literary subject.

Charles Dickens was more than an insightful and productive writer. He had a vivid, take-charge personality, brought to his writing an overt concern for the poor, and carried out wide-ranging activities with great vitality.¹⁶ Dickens became a celebrity.

Charles Dickens’ personality embodied contradictory aspects. He was disciplined about his writing and very punctual in his personal life but sometimes acted impulsively; he was buoyant and confident but susceptible to feeling slighted and could hold grudges and even be cruel¹⁷; he was adept at entertaining—an expert actor, conjurer, and impersonator—but could be withdrawn and aloof; he had a deep empathy for the poor but believed in harsh prison conditions and was distrustful of trade unions¹⁸; he cared about artistic freedom but had a personality like an astute managing director of a major enterprise; he was frequently restive to leave for France or Italy but could not write well for long without nourishing walks through London¹⁹; he lauded the idea of a happy domestic family life but in his own family was inclined to do as he desired and expect other members to follow²⁰; he held himself out as being open to the public but, after a messy separation from his wife when he was in his mid-forties, he was largely successful in concealing an almost 13-year relationship with Ellen Tirnan, a woman 27 years his junior.

Some of Dickens’ personality traits may have been formed in childhood. One event is of particular importance. When Charles was twelve years old, his father’s irresponsibility with money led to Charles being taken out of school and put to work; shortly afterwards John Dickens was confined to debtor’s prison.²¹

Charles, a clever and ambitious boy, worked 10 hour days—with a break for lunch and for tea—in Johnathan Warren’s shoe-blackening factory at 30 Hungerford Stairs, Strand where, positioned by a window for better light, he received small rimmed earthenware pots that had been filled with smelly paste blacking. Dickens job was to cover them with oil-paper and then with blue paper, tie the papers on the pot

with a string, neatly clip away the excess paper, and paste a label on the pot.²² This youthful experience was deeply unsettling and humiliating for Dickens, creating in him the sense that his parents had cast him away, and his promising life was to be squandered in the dirt and decay of a tumbledown factory. Later Dickens would say that he felt a “secret agony” as he sensed his “early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man crushed to my breast.”²³ He never told his children about this painful episode in his early life. Some believe that this environment of contingency and change that he knew as a child made him uncertain about his place in the world as an adult and caused him, as a guard against failure, to be obsessed about pushing on to work on project after project and to make more money than he needed.²⁴

All writers have a lens through which they see, know, and interpret the world. Dickens viewed the world as one featuring the interplay of static, stereotypical characters, characters that he did not feel the need to make “rounded.” Dickens scholars have given his name—“Dickensian”—to this style of writing about characters that show repetitive, unchanging behaviors.

The writer Jane Smiley, who has written a Penguin biography of Dickens, makes the point that Dickens’ mind worked symbolically, and he wrote about a subjective world. His characters are not “realistic” but rather embody meanings. Smiley defends Dickens’ approach:

... Dickens appeals to that part of the reader that recognizes that . . . people and institutions often do populate our inner lives not as who they are but as what they mean to us, and that we often do not see them whole and complex, but simple and strange.²⁵

In 1837 Dickens became a member of the Garrick Club, a London club founded in 1831 for actors, artists, musicians, writers and men who patronized the arts. During the time Dickens belonged to the Garrick Club, he resigned on at least three occasions.²⁶ An account of a famous 1858 quarrel between Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray that led to Dickens’ final resignation²⁷ is even today mentioned in “About the Garrick Club” information on its web site.²⁸

While his writing allowed Dickens to move from the poor tenement to affluence and the pinnacle of fame as a writer,²⁹ he did not achieve a notable social position in England.³⁰ His own actions contributed to this outcome. Except for Thomas Carlyle and a few others, Dickens did not associate with intellectual equals,³¹ but rather most of his friends were “self-made men with backgrounds similar to his, [men who liked] to dress loudly, to go out to all sorts of theatrical entertainments.”³²

Dickens visited the United States on two occasions, for almost half a year in 1842 and for about the same length of time in 1867-1868. On his first trip Dickens, an eager visitor, was welcomed as a celebrity by Americans. But discontents emerged on both sides. Dickens chafed at the aggressive attentions of the Americans and

keenly felt his loss of privacy.³³ And some Americans reacted negatively to Dickens because of his unprepossessing appearance and his pointed criticism of United States' copyright protections. On his second trip, a quarter century later, Dickens was warmly received and had a better personal experience.

Charles Dickens had a lifelong attraction to acting; after the mid-1850s he found fulfillment by reading his works for the public. Initially Dickens read to support charitable causes; a few years later he decided to charge admission. The public readings were highly successful.³⁴ He frequently read from *A Christmas Carol*.³⁵ On his second trip to the U.S., he read in 76 cities to audiences totaling more than 100,000 persons. One of the places he read on that tour was the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, whose pastor was Henry Ward Beecher. Beecher was pastor of the 2nd Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis from 1839 until 1847.

Samuel Clements heard Dickens read in New York on his second U.S. trip. An unimpressed Clements reported for the *San Francisco Alta California* that Dickens was:

a tall, "spry" (if I may say it), thin-legged old gentleman, gotten up regardless of expense, especially as to shirt-front and diamonds, with a bright red flower in his button-hole, gray beard and mustache, bald head, and with side hair brushed fiercely and tempestuously forward, as if its owner were sweeping down before a gale of wind.³⁶

Charles Dickens ardently committed himself into the public readings; he was emotionally sustained but physical weakened by this activity. Dickens, who had arterial disease, suffered a stroke and died in 1870. He is buried in Poets Corner of Westminster Abbey.

A Christmas Carol is, in one sense, a straightforward story about the dramatic change in values and temperament of a London businessman at Christmas, but the novella has features that make it difficult to characterize simply.³⁷ It is a ghost story. It can be read to include time travel, into the known past and a hypothetical future. The tale has some features of a medieval morality play. It is designed to make an earnest point about the consequences of endemic poverty and lack of education. At the emotional core of the story is a sentimental concern for the welfare of a wise and kindly small boy who seems likely to die,³⁸ but the story is kept from being saccharine by dissonant elements: characters who are cruel; places that are tawdry; scenes that are grotesque; and events that are strange.

As measured by objective time, the novella is about revelations that occur over a period of less than two-thirds of a day in the life of Ebenezer Scrooge, a self-made man who is proprietor of a counting house living in mid-19th century London. Scrooge is intelligent, hardworking, brave, and has earned the grudging respect of his peers at the Royal Exchange.³⁹ But Scrooge believes the world is against him; he

has become a flinty, sour man who lacks human empathy, a grasping man who is exacting in securing business advantage.⁴⁰

Facilitated through the intervention of four ghosts, *A Christmas Carol* is a tale of secular redemption.⁴¹ The first ghostly encounter is with Scrooge's former partner Jacob Marley.⁴² At one time parts of the body were associated with human characteristics, and the bowels were thought to be the center of compassion; Scrooge ghoulishly observes that Marley's Ghost has no bowels.⁴³ Marley's spirit leads Scrooge to realize the palpable burden of his selfish actions over many years. Marley tells Scrooge that he will be haunted by three spirits that may give him a chance to "shun the path I tread."⁴⁴

The second ghost, the Ghost of Christmas Past, enables Scrooge to remember a past uneven in comfort and support: a fraught relationship with his father, love for his sympathetic younger sister, fun with rural boyhood friends, the pain of being left at school by his family, the bookish diversions of imaginary companions,⁴⁵ a fulfilling apprenticeship with a generous master, the pleasures of courting attractive Belle, and the awkwardness in breaking up with Belle over the importance of money.

The third ghost, the Ghost of Christmas Present, teaches Scrooge to see the resilient joy of others at Christmas. Scrooge sees caring relationships in the family of his clerk, Bob Cratchit, and the pleasure yielded by the convivial holiday gathering hosted by his nephew Fred.

The fourth ghost, the somber and frightening Ghost of Christmas Yet-to-Come, offers a glimpse of likely future events as Scrooge dies unremembered, his possessions filched and sold for a few coins by those who served him grudgingly in life.

The spirits bring about a transformation in Scrooge: at the story's conclusion Scrooge becomes "as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew" and lives with a lightness of being and concern for others that is the opposite of his earlier implacable grimness and selfishness.⁴⁶

A Christmas Carol and its five parts were unconventionally named by Dickens. The novella itself is called a carol. That musical term is used to emphasize the book's "rhythm and symmetry."⁴⁷ Divisions of the novella are not called chapters but rather staves, also a musical term.

Charles Dickens possessed formidable powers of imaginative description, and these powers are on full display in *A Christmas Carol*.⁴⁸ In Stave One, Dickens tells the reader about Scrooge; rather than say he is aloof and miserly Dickens says:

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his

old features, nipped his pointed nose, shriveled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice.

In *Stave Three* foods for sale on Christmas Day are alluringly described:

There were great, round, pot-bellied baskets of chestnuts, shaped like the waistcoats of jolly old gentlemen, lolling at the doors, and tumbling out into the street in their apoplectic opulence. There were ruddy, brown-faced, broad-girthed Spanish Onions, shining in the fatness of their growth like Spanish Friars. . . .

A Christmas Carol is set in London in the 1840s. Dickens biographer Peter Ackroyd describes this dismal London:

And so for most of his life Dickens lived in a city in which the odour of the dead emanated from metropolitan graveyards, where adults and children died of malnutrition or disease, where open sewers and cesspools spread their miasma into the foggy air, where it took only the shortest period to turn off one of the grand thoroughfares or respectable streets of the city and enter a landscape of filth and destitution, death and misery. We have here glimpses of an urban life which is so alien to us as to seem almost incredible; but which for Dickens and his contemporaries was both common and familiar.⁴⁹

Bleak economic laws— inexorable laws that were thought to be beyond human manipulation—were widely accepted in 1840s England. Economists and political leaders of the time were profoundly influenced by the pessimistic ideas of Thomas Malthus, who argued that population will grow faster than the means of subsistence.⁵⁰ Many thought leaders believed that poverty was inescapable and charity was futile and even misguided. The overt pursuit of “gain” was acceptable. The economic order was frequently exploitative of laborers, and society became callused to human suffering.⁵¹

A Christmas Carol was Charles Dickens’ heartfelt response to the plight of the poor. In early October 1843, Dickens had made a speaking trip to Manchester to raise money for the Manchester Athenaeum, which had been founded to provide a place of education and recreation for laboring men and women⁵²; this stimulated him to think about the incidence and effects of widespread ignorance and want⁵³ among the population.⁵⁴ During long walks he worked out *A Christmas Carol* in his mind.⁵⁵ He completed the novella in six weeks.

Some of Dickens’ own life experiences seem to be reflected in *A Christmas Carol*. While growing up Dickens had a slightly older sister named Frances Elizabeth, who was called Fanny; in *A Christmas Carol* Scrooge has a younger sister who he calls “little Fan.” Dickens also had a younger brother who was called “Tiny Fred,” a name

similar to Tiny Tim of the novella.⁵⁶ The Dickens family, between June 1822 and December 1823, lived in a four-room house—two rooms up, two room down, with a garret and basement—at 16 Bayham Street, Camden Town that was much like the one inhabited by the Cratchits.

Charles Dickens' inner life provides the basis for two important, closely-linked characters in *A Christmas Carol*. Scrooge and his nephew Fred each reflect a different dimension of Charles Dickens. Of course, the two characters are in many ways opposites: Scrooge is frosty and miserly; Fred is cheerful and unselfish. Dickens, like Scrooge, felt an insistent determination to make money so as to lessen his vulnerability in an uncertain world. On the other hand, Dickens, like Fred, loved parties and convivial gatherings.

In the novella Charles Dickens strikes a deliberate blow against the idea of “gain” and Malthus’ surplus population concept. In Stave Two the destructiveness of the idea of “gain” in human relationships is illustrated as Belle ends her engagement to money-obsessed Scrooge. In Stave Three the Ghost of Christmas Present reveals that Tiny Tim will die without human intervention; a now softening Scrooge expresses distress at this outcome. The Ghost reminds Scrooge that he had previously said that deaths among the poor would “decrease the surplus population.”⁵⁷

A Christmas Carol presents a story that is rich in both descriptions of the world-as-it-is and in the recounting of vivid, fanciful experiences. Should the novella be read as a realistic work reflecting an objective reality or as an imaginative work reflecting a subjective reality?

If the novella is read as a realistic work, questions are raised:

- Is Scrooge, an intensely miserly and misanthropic person, a credible character?⁵⁸
- What influences shaped Scrooge’s extreme personality? The novella is largely silent on this question, although it suggests a father who had not given affection and support.
- Are the events and scenes experienced by Scrooge after he retires on Christmas Eve revealed while Scrooge is in a dream state?⁵⁹ A dream explanation is undermined by Scrooge’s apparent lack of factual knowledge before Christmas Eve of much of what he learned from the three spirits.⁶⁰
- Is the dramatic and enduring shift in Scrooge’s values and personality at the conclusion of the story a believable change?⁶¹

While it seems best to appreciate *A Christmas Carol* as a symbolic work, some of the derivative works⁶² that I will consider have modified the story so that it moves toward realism.

Over the years *A Christmas Carol* has been presented in many professional and amateur dramatic productions. British actor Patrick Stewart brought a one-man dramatic version of *A Christmas Carol* to Broadway in the early 1990s and again in 2001. This version was performed largely without props.

A Christmas Carol has been a popular production of Regional Theatres in the United States. The Indiana Repertory Theatre has annually performed *A Christmas Carol* during the holiday season for many years.⁶³ A script written by late IRT artistic director Tom Haas is used.⁶⁴ A chamber theatre approach is followed: sets are minimized and the narration is performed by multiple actors.⁶⁵ The Dickensian costumes and abundant artificial snow create a mid-19th century sensibility. Subtle changes are made each year in use of props, staging, choreography, and lines so the play remains fresh for audience members who return to see the play in subsequent years.

Reading the text of *A Christmas Carol* before audiences has been popular. Dickens, in his readings of the novella,⁶⁶ used a version of about 11,500 words⁶⁷ that radically trimmed the original work. It took him about an hour and a half to read.⁶⁸

Clergyman and author Henry Martyn Field, attending an 1858 London reading, heard Charles Dickens portray Scrooge in his counting house. Field said that Dickens:

drew down his face into his collar, like a great turtle drawing in his head, put on a surly look, and spoke in a gruff voice. . . . We see him there, crouching like a wolf in his den, snarling at any intruder, and keeping a sharp eye on a poor clerk . . . who trembles under that evil eye.⁶⁹

In the United States, beginning in 1934, the reading of a radio play adaption of *A Christmas Carol* became a holiday tradition and popularized the novella; the annual reading was done continually into the 1950s.⁷⁰ The abbreviated Dickens' story was usually read by Lionel Barrymore; on one occasion his brother John substituted for him, and on another occasion Orson Wells read.⁷¹

Indiana poet James Whitcomb Riley, for whom Charles Dickens was a literary hero, showed esteem for the novella. In 1891 Riley—when a member of this Club—wrote a poem about Tiny Tim, titled “God Bless Us Every One” and crafted an associated prose story titled “Jamesy.” The story cannot be characterized as derivative but reflects a deep feeling for the situation of the poor and shows a respect for their values, as Dickens does in depicting Cratchit family life.⁷²

The first film version of *A Christmas Carol* was made in Great Britain in 1901; many films have followed.^{73, 74}

Ten well known film versions⁷⁵ of the novella that were made from 1935 to 2009 are considered in this essay.⁷⁶ Some films hew closely to the Dickens story, others depart.⁷⁷ The 2009 Jim Carrey film, *Disney's A Christmas Carol*, follows the novella closely. At the other extreme, the 1988 Bill Murray film, *Scrooged*, while relying on the novella for its basic story line, is a gag-filled "tale in a tale" motion picture set in the late 20th century. The ten films vary in the extent to which they have retained original language.

Well-regarded actors have played Scrooge in the films: Michael Caine, Jim Carrey, Albert Finney, Sir Seymour Hicks,⁷⁸ Fredric March, Reginald Owen, George C. Scott, Alastair Sim, and Patrick Stewart.⁷⁹ An acting challenge was presented to Michael Caine as he prepared to play Scrooge in the 1992 motion picture, *The Muppet Christmas Carol*. Caine made this declaration:

"I'm going to play this movie like I'm working with the Royal Shakespeare Company. I will never wink, I will never do anything Muppety. I am going to play Scrooge as if it is an utterly dramatic role and there are no puppets around me."⁸⁰

Jacob Marley has also been played by skilled actors, including Leo G. Carroll, Alec Guinness, and Basil Rathbone. Marley's part was treacherous for Guinness, who in the 1970 Albert Finney film, *Scrooge*, had to use a flying harness to play the role and sustained a double hernia.⁸¹

The Scrooge character in the films, while invariably grim and miserly, displays traits ranging from magisterial to sniveling as head of the counting house firm. George Scott, in the 1984 film, *A Christmas Carol*, and Patrick Stewart, in the 1999 film using the same title, portray Scrooge as a very confident and able head of a thriving but no-frills business. In the 1984 Scott film, a polished Scrooge, with arrogant aplomb, outmaneuvers other men in their business dealings at the Exchange.

Other Scrooges are portrayed as heading a small-scale but lucrative business operation. Sir Seymour Hicks, in the 1935 film, *Scrooge*, plays a dyspeptic man with a dingy, cramped office. In the 1970 Finney film, Scrooge is shown as a grumpy, penny-pinching owner of a minor firm that makes small loans to just-getting-by businesses.

The films show varied physical and social conditions.⁸² In the 1935 Hicks film and the 1999 Stewart film there are scenes showing dreary surroundings and poorly clad persons. On the other hand, the 1938 Reginald Owen movie, *A Christmas Carol*, shows sleek persons in a picturesque and prosperous 19th century London. Bob Cratchit, after he gets off work, is shown carefully shopping for a large goose, potatoes, apples, oranges, and chestnuts for next day's Christmas meal. Bob's house, while small, is nicely appointed, and he and his family are well nourished. It appears middle class.

While the book offers a rich variety of scenes, filmmakers have created some noteworthy original-to-the-movie happenings. In the 1970 Finney film, the Ghost of Christmas Yet-To-Come reveals to Scrooge possible future scenes. One is of a crowd of relieved debtors happily singing “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow” as a coffin holding Scrooge’s body is removed from his house. In another scene, Marley, played by Alec Guinness, greets just-arrived Scrooge in hell. Scrooge asks Marley where he is. Marley informs Scrooge he is in hell and drolly notes, “I should have thought it was obvious.” Marley goes on to inform Scrooge that Lucifer is pleased with his coming and has made Scrooge his personal clerk; Marley points out that, unlike the other parts of hell, Scrooge’s office will be kept freezing cold so Scrooge will not become drowsy.

Scrooge’s failings are illustrated in added scenes in some of the motion pictures.⁸³ In the 2009 Carrey film, Scrooge’s miserliness is emphasized as he takes the two pence coins off the eyes of Marley’s corpse prior to his burial. The 1938 Owen film shows a humorless Scrooge peremptorily discharging Bob Cratchit on Christmas Eve after Bob, enticed by some boys into a playful snowball fight after work, inadvertently knocks Scrooge’s hat off with an ill-thrown snowball.⁸⁴ The 1970 Finney film reveals a hard-hearted Scrooge requiring, on Christmas Eve, payment of due-that-day debts from two elderly women selling clothing items, a puppeteer, and a food vendor. In the 1951 British Alastair Sim film, *Scrooge*,⁸⁵ the greed of Scrooge is revealed as he engages in sharp practices to acquire control over a vulnerable company, his selfishness and lack of empathy is shown as he declines to care for his infant nephew Fred who is born when his much-loved sister dies, and Scrooge’s obsession with work and lack of human sympathy is shown as he waits until the end of office hours to visit near-to-death Marley.

Some of the movies make more straightforward the announced times of spirit visits. In the novella Marley’s Ghost says the first spirit is to come at 1AM, the second spirit at 1AM the next night, and the third spirit at midnight the following night. While the 1999 Stewart film and 2009 Carrey film follow this schedule, other films simplify it. For example, in the 1938 Owen film and 1970 Finney film Marley’s Ghost announces that the spirit visits will be on a single night at 1 AM, 2AM, and 3AM.⁸⁶

Some of the motion pictures endeavor to make the narrative more intelligible by incorporating occurrences that explain the reasons for Scrooge’s temperament and values. The 1951 Sim film, the 1984 Scott film, and the 1999 Stewart film reveal that Scrooge’s father rejected Scrooge after Scrooge’s mother died and, turning against Scrooge, shunted him off to a boarding school.⁸⁷ In the 1984 Scott film, Scrooge’s father is depicted as a severe man.⁸⁸ The 1951 Sim film introduces a new character: Mr. Jorkin, an unscrupulous businessman. Mr. Jorkin takes Scrooge under his wing early in Scrooge’s business career. He teaches Scrooge that life is hard and lures him into suspect business practices.

What might be regarded as a narrative gap in the novella is filled by most of the films. In the novella Belle is not introduced as a character until she breaks her long

engagement to Scrooge.⁸⁹ In most of the films an earlier scene is added that shows a young Scrooge becoming acquainted with attractive Belle at the Fezziwig Christmas party and then courting her.⁹⁰ The 1970 Finney film shows this courtship at considerable length.⁹¹

Some of the motion pictures add or modify scenes that emphasize the thoroughgoing transformation of Scrooge at the story's conclusion.⁹² In the 1938 Owen film, Scrooge is so well-groomed and beaming that his nephew does not initially recognize him when he calls on Christmas Day. Later, Scrooge reveals that he will make his nephew his partner, giving him resources needed to marry. The 1999 Stewart film shows a contrite Scrooge asking his nephew's wife if she can forgive "a stupid old man who does not want to be left out in the cold anymore?" Scrooge freely forgives debts to small business owners in the 1970 Finney movie and goes to Bob Cratchit's home dressed in a Santa outfit, bringing the prize turkey and many gifts, including a merry-go-round for Tiny Tim.

Derivative literary works and films have extended the pleasure of engaging with the characters and themes of *A Christmas Carol* and have provided other angles from which to view the original work, which allows us to understand better the Dickens' tale and more warmly appreciate it.

¹ “. . . *A Christmas Carol* was published by Chapman and Hall. He [Dickens] delivered the manuscript in early December, to be published for the Christmas trade. In an effort to avoid the sorts of contractual problems he had encountered with the low sales of his longer novel, he agreed with the publishers to publish on a commission basis—that is, he would design, edit, and produce the book (rather like book packaging today). Unfortunately, his desire to produce a beautiful artifact as well as a popular story meant that production costs were very high, and he realized, once again, only a small profit on what turned out to be a very large sale.” Jane Smiley, *Charles Dickens* (New York, NY: Viking Penguin, 2002), 55.

² Les Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas* (New York, NY: Crown Publishers, 2008), 135.

³ Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 56.

⁴ Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 154-156. The first printing of *A Christmas Carol* yielded much less than Dickens expected. Proceeds from the sale of the first printing of the novella were £992 5s. and expenses were £855 8d. The balance of account to Dickens' credit was £137 4s. 4d.

⁵ “But once Dickens's authorized edition arrived on American shelves, little time passed before the familiar depredations began. Almost immediately the New York firm of Harper and Brothers was advertising in the newspapers that their own edition of *A Christmas Carol* would hit the stands in January 24 [1844]. This blatant act of expropriation appeared in the form of a pale imitation of Dickens's lavish book, with two columns of text crowded on a page, lacking illustrations, bound in cheap blue paper, and selling at six cents a copy.

Given that a pound exchanged for about five American dollars at the time, the price was quite a bargain compared to the \$1.25 that buyers forked over for an authorized copy.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 139.

⁶ Dickens wrote four Christmas books after he wrote *A Christmas Carol*, but none of these were as popular as his 1843 novella.

- *A Christmas Carol* (1843)
- *The Chimes* (1844)
- *The Cricket on the Hearth* (1845)
- *The Battle of Life* (1846)
- *The Haunted Man* (1848)

⁷ “Prior to this small moment at the end of Dickens's tale [where a turkey is provided by Scrooge for the Cratchit Christmas meal], the traditional bird for the well-provisioned Christmas table in England was the goose, and the impact of *A Christmas Carol* was said to have sent the nation's goose-raising industry to near ruin.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 185.

⁸ “As for the first, Christmas in 1843 was not at all the premier occasion that it is today, when Christmas stories and their Grinches and elves and Santas abound, when ‘Christmas stores’ purvey Yule decorations the four seasons round, and a marketing effort that begins sometime in mid-October is said to determine the fate of an entire year for retailers.

There were no Christmas cards in 1843 England, no Christmas trees at royal residences or White houses, no Christmas turkeys, no department-store Santa or his million clones, no outpouring of ‘Yuletide greetings,’ no weeklong cessation of business affairs through the New Year, no orgy of gift-giving, no ubiquitous public display of nativity scenes (or court fights regarding them), no holiday lighting extravaganzas, and no plethora of midnight services celebrating the birth of a savior. In fact, despite all of Dickens's enthusiasms, the holiday was a relatively minor affair that ranked far below Easter, causing little more stir than Memorial Day or St. George's Day does today.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 103-104.

⁹ “He did not invent Christmas, however, as the more sentimental of his chroniclers have suggested. . . . But Dickens could be said to have emphasized its cozy conviviality at a time when both Georgian license and Evangelical dourness were being questioned. . . . What Dickens did was to transform the holiday by suffusing it with his own particular mixture of aspirations, memories, and fears. He invested it with fantasy and with a curious blend of religious mysticism and popular superstition so that, in certain respects, the Christmas of Dickens resembles the more ancient festival which had been celebrated in rural areas and in the north of England.” Peter Ackroyd, *Dickens* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1990), 413-414.

¹⁰ “His [Dickens] novels produced reform in the law, in magistrates’ courts, in the prevention of public hanging – in a dozen directions. But his terrible descriptions of poverty had very little practical effect: partially because the problem was too big; partly because politicians were held in the intellectual prison of classical economics; and partially, one must admit, because Dickens himself, for all his generosity of spirit, took a kind of sadistic pleasure in the horrors he described.” Kenneth Clark, *Civilization*, (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1969), 327- 328.

¹¹ “The early reformers’ struggle with industrialized society illustrates what I believe to be the greatest civilizing achievement of the nineteenth century, humanitarianism. We are so much accustomed to the humanitarian outlook that we forget how little it counted in earlier ages of civilization. Ask any decent person in England or America what he thinks matters most in human conduct: five to one his answer will be ‘kindness’. It’s not a word that would have crossed the lips of any of the earlier heroes of this series [‘Civilization’]. If you had asked St Francis what mattered in life, he would, we know, have answered ‘chastity, obedience and poverty’; if you had asked Dante or Michelangelo they might have answered ‘distain of baseness and injustice’; if you had asked Goethe, he would have said ‘to live in the whole and the beautiful’. But kindness, never.” Clark, *Civilization*,), 329.

¹² Clark, *Civilization*, 327.

¹³ “His first sketch, ‘A Dinner at Poplar Walk,’ was published in the Monthly Magazine in December 1833. Dickens, born on February 7, 1812, was only twenty-one. . . .” Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 1.

¹⁴ Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, v.

¹⁵ Dickens edited *Bentley’s Miscellany*, a monthly magazine, from January 1837 through early 1839. Later, he edited two weekly journals, *Household Words*, from 1850 to 1859, and *All the Year Round* from 1859 to 1870.

¹⁶ “But even so, Dickens’s more signal quality, the one most often commented upon by his acquaintances and the one he relied upon at all time, was his energy. It was in this period that he took up the habit of long, vigorous daily walks that seem almost unimaginable today for an otherwise very busy man with many obligations. At a pace of twelve to fifteen minutes per mile, he regularly covered twenty and sometimes thirty miles.” Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 23.

¹⁷ “Everyone noticed how odd and contrary he was. He could be all merriment and laughter at one point and, at the next, his eyes were said to flash ‘like danger lamps.’ He could be familiar and cordial with strangers, but willful and stubborn with his friends; he could talk freely and easily to the unhappy and the outcast, but was noticeable reticent with his wife and his own children.” Ackroyd, *The Life and Times of Charles Dickens*, 38.

¹⁸ “Additionally, as Dickens grew more radical in his political views (and more idiosyncratic—we should not interpret him as the sort of left liberal we know today—he was racist, imperialist, sometimes anti-Semitic, a believer in harsh prison conditions, and distrustful of trade unions), he divided himself more and more from his fellow novelists.” Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 117.

¹⁹ “He said always that he needed the ‘magic lantern’ of London’s streets to keep his vision bright, and his immersion in the anonymous crowds of the city material affected the nature of his invention.” Peter Ackroyd, *The Life and Times of Charles Dickens* (Irvington, NY: Hydra Publishing, 2003), 49.

²⁰ “One guest, a certain ‘Eleanor P.’, left a memoir of her visit [to see the Dickens family at Broadstairs in Kent] in which she dwelled on the peculiarities of Dickens’s behaviour; he was often seized with a wild hilarity, on one occasion seizing her and practically plunging her into the sea, which could be followed by taciturnity and even unfriendliness. She noted that member of his family seemed to be afraid of him and wary of his moods; they knew him only too well.” Ackroyd, *The Life and Times of Charles Dickens*, 69.

²¹ “Naval pay clerks were not paid like princes, of course, but the fact is that John Dickens was making about £350 in 1820, far more than the £40 pounds or so that a poor wretch like Cratchit made, and certainly enough to live comfortably on.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 120.

²² Ackroyd, *Dickens*, 68.

²³ “No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship; compared these everyday associates with those of my happier childhood; and felt my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man crushed to my breast. The deep remembrance of the sense I

had of being utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my misery . . .” Ackroyd, *The Life and Times of Charles Dickens*, 11.

²⁴ “Throughout his life Dickens would be preoccupied with the making of money; he was liberal and generous with others, but the early experience of poverty had helped to form his character. . . . [He] worried incessantly about his income. He would always take on work, and yet more work, in order to feel secure. In *A Christmas Carol* Scrooge is told, of his miserliness, that ‘you fear the world too much.’ There is more than a touch of Scrooge in Dickens himself.” Ackroyd, *The Life and Times of Charles Dickens*, 27.

²⁵ “But more important, his mind did not work by means of analytical sifting of premises and data, or through a refined analysis of motive and moral reckoning, as, say, George Eliot’s mind worked. Dickens’s mind worked symbolically. He apprehended the world through figures that were endowed with meaning. Objects come alive, and people become mechanical. His style invariably expresses a worldview that seems almost unmediated by normal reasonable discourse, as if there is no objective reality, only a subjective reality in which meanings present themselves in terms of vivid figures, come into conflict with one another, and shift. Eliot, whose art depends on the notion of characters living in an objective world that they must come to understand through experience and reasoning, whose mysteries are hidden in gradations of motive and action, would of course not appreciate the terror and joy of Dickens’s highly distinct subjectivity. But Dickens appeals to that part of the reader that recognizes that much is left undiscussed by reasonable discourse, that people and institutions often do populate our inner lives not as who they are but as what they mean to us, and that we often do not see them whole and complex, but simple and strange.” Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 119-120.

²⁶ Dickens was elected to the Garrick Club in 1837 and he resigned in 1838 and again in 1849. After the dispute involving Thackeray and Yates, he resigned for good in the late 1850s.

²⁷ Edmund Yates, a young journalist who had a professional relationship with Charles Dickens, had written an unflattering published profile of Thackeray, who then asked a committee of the Garrick Club to expel Yates as his conduct was “intolerable in a society of gentlemen.” Charles Dickens took the part of Yates. When the committee supported Thackeray in the dispute, Dickens resigned from the Club in the late 1850s.

²⁸ The Garrick Club, “About the Garrick Club,” <http://www.garrickclub.co.uk> (accessed June 29, 2016).

²⁹ “Another thing that made Dickens a national treasure, though, had nothing to do with publishing and everything to do with Dickens’s class origins, or, rather, the fluidity of his class origins. Carried upward and downward by the vagaries of his father’s career and poor money management, and then by his own hard work and genius, Dickens found himself in a unique position to observe all facets of English society. He was unconstrained by a classical education, untrained, as it were, to look at English society in the traditional way. His first thirty years were, in a fashion that contrasted with that of almost everyone around him, a training in freedom—in forming his own opinion, in judging for himself, in observing the effects of one group on another, one class upon another, of institutions upon individuals and individuals upon institutions. He differed from all of his contemporaries in that he represented no group, therefore he came to represent all.” Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 34-35.

³⁰ “And if Dickens was lonely in his household, he was lonely in society, also. He had, as Forster indicates, attained a pinnacle of affluence and fame which made him one of the most admired and most sought-after persons in Europe without his really ever having created for himself a social position in England, that society *par excellence* where everybody had to have a definite one and where there was no rank reserved for the artist. He had gone straight, at the very first throw, from the poor tenement, the prison, the press table, to a position of imperial supremacy over the imaginations of practically the whole literate world; but in his personal associations, he cultivated the companionship of inferiors rather than—save, perhaps, for Carlyle—of intellectual equals. His behavior toward Society, in the capitalized sense, was rebarbative to the verge of truculence; he refused to learn its patten and its manners; and his satire on the fashionable world comes to figure more and more prominently in his novels. Dickens is one of the very small group of British intellectuals to whom the opportunity has been offered to be taken up by the governing class and who have actually declined that honor.” Edmund Wilson, “Dickens: The Two Scrooges,” in *Literary Essays and Reviews of the 1930s & 40s* (New York, NY: The Library of America, 2007), 305-306.

³¹ “The truth is that he did not particularly welcome the company of other eminent writers and was not greatly interested in their work; he always preferred the society of those less significant than himself.” Ackroyd, *The Life and Times of Charles Dickens*, 105.

³² Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 119.

³³ “When Dickens first visited America, in 1842, he seems to have had hopes of finding here something in the nature of that classless society which the foreign ‘fellow travelers’ of yesterday went to seek in the Soviet Union; but, for reasons both bad and good, Dickens was driven back by what he did find into the attitude of an English gentleman, who resented the American lack of ceremony, was annoyed by the American publicity, and was pretty well put to rout by the discomfort, the poverty and the tobacco-juice which he had braved on his trip to the West. Maladjusted to the hierarchy at home, he did not fit in in the United States even so well as he did in England: some of the Americans patronized him, and others were much too familiar.” Wilson, “Dickens: The Two Scrooges,” in *Literary Essays and Reviews of the 1930s & 40s*, 290.

³⁴ “It was his habit to stride across the stage, precisely on time, with a colourful flower in his buttonhole. He never seemed to notice the enthusiasm that greeted his arrival, but waited quite calmly until the applause had subsided. He stood before a maroon screen with a small reading table and a carafe of water in front of him. He pretended to read from a book but, in truth, he had his stories by heart.

And then, when he began, he was transformed. He became each of his characters in turn, so that it seemed to some that he performed some act of magic or alchemy. He adopted all the gestures and expressions of Sam Weller or Mrs. Gamp, of Scrooge or Tiny Tim, so that these fictive creatures seemed literally to be alive upon the stage.” Ackroyd, *The Life and Times of Charles Dickens*, 174-175.

³⁵ “When December 1855 came around, Dickens set up several more charitable readings, one in Reading, one in Sherborne, and one in Bradford that attracted 3,700 people, followed by another in London. He read *A Christmas Carol* each time and used the story and the time of year and the occasions to promote the sort of openhearted generosity that had always been important to him. But the moneymaking possibilities were obvious and the temptation to exploit them growing stronger. As important, though, was Dickens’s palpable sense of his own popularity and power. It was one thing to act in a play or a farce, in character and often speaking the words of another author. It was quite different to say his own words, passing through the personae of characters he himself had created, giving voice and action to his own inner life.” Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 121.

³⁶ Michael Patrick Hearn, *The Annotated Christmas Carol* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 197-198.

³⁷ Here is a summary of *A Christmas Carol* prepared by the author:

Stave One The central character in *A Christmas Carol* is Ebenezer Scrooge who owns and operates a small money changing and counting house business in mid-19th century London. Scrooge is hardworking and regarded as trustworthy in business transactions, but he routinely exacts every advantage he can. Scrooge has a grim outlook, cold personality, and no empathy for others. He is miserly and selfish. Scrooge leads a solitary life, without family or friends. The story begins on a cold and foggy afternoon the day before Christmas. In his minimally heated office Scrooge scornfully rejects Christmas Greetings (and an invitation to dinner the next day) brought by his indefatigably cheerful nephew—his only relative—and characterizes Christmas as “humbug.” He rebuffs some gentlemen soliciting contributions for the needy, suggesting that if such persons are not willing to submit to harsh governmental programs for the poor, they would be better off dead, “and decrease the surplus population.” At the end of the work day Scrooge grudgingly acknowledges that his meagerly paid sole employee, clerk Bob Cratchit, can have Christmas Day off. That evening Scrooge goes to his rooms located in a gloomy old house. Thoughts of Jacob Marley, his former business partner who had died exactly seven years before, come to mind and obsess him. He begins to hallucinate, seeing the image of Marley on the door knocker and hearing bells and clanking chains. The noise of dragging chains signal the arrival, through a locked door, of the translucent figure of Jacob Marley, bearing chains of “cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel” and featuring a kerchief to hold his jaw in place. Marley explains that he has come to warn Scrooge that his failure to reach out and help others in a “kindly spirit” will result in “incessant torture of remorse” like he is suffering and says that Scrooge has a “chance and hope” of

avoiding that outcome. Marley says that three ghosts will visit Scrooge to show him how to “shun the path I tread.” With that, Marley’s Ghost is off in a swirl of like phantoms wandering “in restless haste” and remorsefully lamenting their inability to assist those in need.

Stave Two Scrooge is visited in the night by a dwarfish spirit, a white haired, but smooth-faced creature with a low voice, who transports Scrooge back to boyhood scenes. First they go to the remote rural boarding school where Scrooge was relegated by a by his capricious and neglectful father. Younger sister Fan appears at the school to bring Scrooge home; the Spirit and Scrooge warmly recall Fan as a delicate person with a large heart who died after bearing a son, Scrooge’s nephew. Later, they visit a warehouse—where Scrooge is apprenticed to a merry and good-hearted master—for a lively Christmas Eve celebration. Scrooge remembers everything and engages with what he sees: his “heart and soul” are in the ballroom scenes. Scrooge feels twinges of regret about his treatment of Bob Cratchit. The Spirit conjures another scene, during which a young woman, Belle, ends her long engagement to Scrooge. Belle says that she has seen Scrooge’s “nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you.” Scrooge entreats no more scenes, but the Spirit forces Scrooge to look on a later Christmas Eve scene with Belle, a now “comely matron” with a devoted husband and many lively and affectionate children.

Stave Three The second Spirit brought through the intervention of Jacob Marley appears, a jolly green-robed Giant standing before a ruddy fire amid a profusion of opulent greenery and succulent food, in the chamber next to Scrooge’s bedroom. This spirit announces himself as the Ghost of Christmas Present. The Spirit shows Scrooge, now chastened, scenes of Christmas morning in London and then they visit the four-room house of Bob Cratchit. At the Cratchit house Bob’s wife, assisted by her children, is preparing their Christmas meal; later the family enjoys the modest, but well-appreciated meal together. The youngest Cratchit child, Tiny Tim, a boy of pure-hearted and generous spirit, uses a crutch and has limbs supported by an iron frame. Scrooge asks the Spirit about the health prospects for Tiny Tim and is told, unless conditions change, that he will not live to see another Christmas. Scrooge asks if Tiny Tim could not be spared. The Spirit says Tiny Tim will die and sarcastically observes (echoing Scrooge’s earlier statement), “If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.” After the meal, Bob asks for a toast to Scrooge, “The Founder of the Feast,” but while the toast is made, with some objections by Bob’s wife, the toast is without heartiness, and it casts a dark shadow over the family for a time.

Later the second Spirit takes Scrooge to several places where Christmas day is being warmly but humbly celebrated: a mud and stone miner’s hut, a lighthouse on a dismal reef, a ship on the heaving sea. The Spirit then takes Scrooge to his nephew’s house where a jolly party is going on. Scrooge and his miserly ways are mentioned, but his nephew indicates that he cannot be angry with his uncle as his offences “carry their own punishment.” A game played later calls on guests to identify an animal that is disagreeable, savage, and that lives in London, but not in a menagerie, and is never killed in a market, and is not a conventional zoo or agricultural animal. Scrooge is the answer. Finally, the aging Spirit—whose life ends on the 12th Day of Christmas—allows Scrooge to see a ragged boy and girl in distress and need, representing “ignorance” and “want.”

Stave Four The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, a phantom shrouded in a deep black garment, silently escorts Scrooge to the Exchange (where there is mention of a death of a person who did business at the Exchange), to hear a conversation between wealthy businessmen (“Old Scratch has got his own at last, hey?”), to a foul and wretched part of town (where a shop owner who buys “iron, old rags, bottles, bones and greasy offal” buys—from a charwoman, laundress, and undertaker’s man—some of the belonging of a man who had died without family or friends), to a room with a covered corpse (which Scrooge declines to uncover, despite directions from the Phantom). Unnerved by the covered corpse, Scrooge asks the Phantom to show a person who feels “emotion caused by this man’s death”; the Phantom reveals a scene where a husband tells his wife the death of their creditor will allow them time to secure funds to pay a debt. Dissatisfied, Scrooge asks to see “some tenderness connected with a death.” The Phantom reveals members of the Cratchit family as they mourn the death of Tiny Tim. Scrooge, who wants to learn from the Phantom, looks for himself in these places, but does not see himself anywhere. When Scrooge asks what man he earlier saw dead, the Phantom takes him to a churchyard and points to a grave with a stone that bears the name

“Ebenezer Scrooge.” Scrooge makes an anguished request for a chance to live a better life in the future and importunes the Phantom, “Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone!” **Stave Five** Scrooge fitfully emerges from his dream, face wet with tears, and finds himself in his bed on Christmas morning. His anxiety lifted, and his values and temperament transformed, Scrooge is “as happy as an angel” and realizes that he has “time to make amends.” He is committed to live the lessons imparted by the three spirits. Scrooge arranges for the prize turkey at the local Poulterer’s to be anonymously delivered to the Cratchit family and dresses and goes out, extending warm Christmas Greetings to all. Encountering a man soliciting funds for the poor on Christmas Eve, he informs the startled man that he wants to make a generous gift, one that includes “a great many back-payments.” Scrooge appears at his nephew’s home for dinner and a party, is warmly welcomed, and has an enjoyable time. The morning after Christmas, at his office, Scrooge wishes Bob Cratchit a Merry Christmas and indicates he will raise his salary and “endeavor to assist” his “struggling family.” To Tiny Tim, who did not die, he became a second father and over time Scrooge “became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew.”

³⁸ “The portrayal of Tiny Tim—derived from Dickens’s memories of his sickly younger brother, whom he called ‘Tiny Fred’—has proved ‘real’ enough to prompt modern-day physicians to puzzle over the exact nature of the fictional child’s affliction. One researcher suggests that Tiny Tim suffered from a kidney disease known as renal tubular acidosis, a condition that can retard growth and weaken bones. In 1844, had the child been presented for care, doctors might not have used that name, but they would have recognized his symptoms and would have had effective dietary methods of treatment at hand.

More likely, however, Tiny Tim and Tiny Fred suffered from rickets, a common affliction of that time in cities where smog frequently blocked sunlight, the natural source of vitamin D. In the days before vitamin supplements, children were particularly susceptible to the disease, which leads to loss of bone density, muscle weakness, and osteoporosis. Such symptoms could have been reversed by an improvement in diet, which the Cratchit family would have enjoyed once Scrooge gave his clerk a raise.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 181.

³⁹ “5. *Scrooge’s name was good upon ‘Change.* Meaning that he was financially sound and his credit would be honored. ‘Change is the Royal Exchange, the financial center of London, lying between Threadneedle Street and Cornhill; opposite, on the northwest, lies the Bank of London, and on the southwest the Mansion house. . . . The building burned down in 1838, and a new one was under construction at the time of the story. It was opened by Queen Victoria in 1845.” Hearn, *The Annotated Christmas Carol*, 8-9.

⁴⁰ Scrooge’s sweetheart Belle tells Scrooge in Stave Two, “You fear the world too much.”

⁴¹ “But one of the primary gifts that Dickens gave his contemporaries was a secular counterpart to the story of the Nativity—which is, after all, the basis for the celebration.

Dickens, though nominally an Anglican, was a vocal critic of organized religion, especially where he saw hypocritical divergences between the preaching and the practice of Christian charity. Many critics have suggested that in his little Christmas fable—whether consciously or unconsciously—he complemented the glorification of the nativity of Christ with a specific set of practices derived from Christ’s example: charity and compassion in the form of educational opportunity, humane working conditions, and a decent life for all.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 180.

⁴² Left unexplained is why Marley comes back, in Stave One, to formally visit Scrooge. Marley mentions that he has returned invisible “many and many a day” to sit beside him as part of his penance. (Of course, Scrooge finds this off-putting.) Marley says that his ability to tell Scrooge about his present extra-earthly existence is limited. Was Marley required to return by specters-in-charge, or was Marley able to exercise a limited volition to return? Could Marley’s coming back to warn Scrooge have been done to help his old business partner? The banter between the two suggests, if not friendship, certainly a long course of business dealings and knowledge of how each other think. The “thankee” statement of Scrooge seems to reflect genuine gratitude.

⁴³ “96. *Marley had no bowels.* Certain parts of the body were at one time believed to be the seats of human affections; the bowels were thought to be the center of compassion, as mentioned in 1 John 3.17: ‘But whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brothers have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?’ Thus Marley, like Scrooge,

lacked in life any pity for his fellowmen. Dickens is, of course, also reasserting that ‘Marley was dead to begin with’: from the time of ancient Egypt, corpses have been disemboweled before burial, to retard the body’s deterioration.” Hearn, *The Annotated Christmas Carol*, 40.

⁴⁴ The following table sets forth times announced by Marley for spirit visits, the times of those visits as perceived by Scrooge, the time periods from which the content for Scrooge’s experiences is drawn, and objective times of Scrooge’s experiences.

	Times announced by Marley’s Ghost for spirit visits	Times that Scrooge believes encounters with spirits occur	Time periods from which spirits draw to present experiences to Scrooge	Scrooge experiences with the spirits as measured by objective time
Ghost of Christmas Past	1 AM early on Christmas Day	1 AM (But Scrooge is bewildered; it was past 2 AM when “he went to bed”; time has apparently jumped back)	Scrooge’s childhood to the day of Marley’s death seven years before	Early morning hours of Christmas Day, after Marley’s Ghost has left
Ghost of Christmas Present	1 AM the next day	1 AM (Scrooge awakes “in the middle of prodigiously tough snore”)	The upcoming twelve days from Christmas Day to January 5 th (the existence of the Ghost of Christmas Present ends on midnight on the Twelfth Day of Christmas)	Early morning hours of Christmas Day
Ghost of Christmas Yet-to-Come	Midnight of the third day	Midnight (As the bell strikes midnight, the Ghost of Christmas Present vanishes and the Ghost of Christmas Yet-to-Come appears. on the 12th Day of Christmas. the Phantom appears)	A time in London during a cold season, perhaps a year away	Early morning hours of Christmas Day (When Scrooge becomes conscious it is bright and clear outside)

⁴⁵ In Stave Two, when adult Scrooge visits the desolate school of his youth, he sees Ali Baba “wonderfully real and distinct,” and remembers how Ali Baba and other figures appeared to him when he was a neglected school boy.

⁴⁶ When Scrooge realizes he has been reclaimed—that, in effect, the chains of which Marley made him aware have been removed—he becomes joyous and feels an almost impish delight with life. Scrooge’s temperament is transformed.

⁴⁷ “The musical model for the composition (not only are songs evoked in the title of the work, but each part is called a ‘stave’) gave him a sure sense of rhythm and symmetry. The style is free but the freedom stays within the tight confines of the plot—the first bit, Scrooge in company, distaining others, balances the last bit, Scrooge in company, welcoming others, while the three dreams, of course, fall into the utterly natural symmetry of past, present, and future—what Scrooge has forgotten, what he is missing, and what might happen if he persists in his misanthropic ways.” Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 58-59.

⁴⁸ Another characteristic of Dickens’ writing was his tendency to use superlatives and hyperbole. Dickens was fond of Cockney overstatement, and he used this in his writing. For example, in Stave

Three of *A Christmas Carol*, in describing the dinner of the Cratchit family, the narrator says, “There never was such a goose.”

⁴⁹ Ackroyd, *Dickens*, 385.

⁵⁰ “For better or worse, the Malthusian theory of population was . . . incorporated into theoretical systems of economics. It acted as a brake on economic optimism, helped to justify a theory of wages based on the wage earner’s minimum cost of subsistence, and discouraged traditional forms of charity.

The Malthusian theory of population made a strong and immediate impact on British social policy. It had been believed that fertility itself added to national wealth; the Poor Laws perhaps encouraged large families with their doles. If they had ‘never existed,’ wrote Malthus, ‘though there might have been a few more instances of severe distress, the aggregate mass of happiness among the common people would have been much greater than it is at present.’ These laws limited the mobility of labour, he said, and encouraged fecundity and should be abolished. For the most unfortunate it might be reasonable to establish workhouses—not ‘comfortable asylums’ but places in which ‘fare should be hard’ and ‘severe distress . . . find some alleviation.’” Donald Gunn MacRae, “Thomas Malthus, English Economist and Demographer,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com> (accessed August 11, 2016).

⁵¹ “After about 1790 to 1800 there appeared the large foundries and mills which dehumanized life. . . . [Industrial potentates] gave England a flying start in the economy of the nineteenth century, but they also produced that dehumanization that obsessed almost every great imaginative writer of the time. Long before Carlyle and Karl Marx – in fact in about 1810 – Wordsworth had described the arrival of a night shift:

Disgorged are now the ministers of day;
And, as they issue from the illumined pile,
A fresh band meets them, at the crowded door –
And in the courts – and where the rumbling stream
That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,
Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed
Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths,
Mothers and little children, boys and girls,
Enter, and each the wonted task resumes
Within this temple, where is offered up
To Gain, the master idol of the realm,
Perpetual sacrifice.

This new religion of gain had behind it a body of doctrine without which it could never have maintained its authority over the serious-minded Victorians. The first of its sacred books – printed in 1789 – was the *Essay on the Principle of Population* by a clergyman named Malthus, which demonstrated that population will always increase faster than the means of subsistence. In consequence, misery and want were bound to be the lot of the majority of mankind. This depressing theory, which cannot be altogether brushed aside, even today, had been put forward in a scientific spirit. Unfortunately Malthus’s text contained such phrases as ‘man has no claim of right to the smallest portion of food.’ And these were used to justify the inhuman exploitation of labour. The other sacred books were the economic theories of Ricardo, also a most earnest man writing in a scientific spirit – but inexorable. Free enterprise and the survival of the fittest: one can see how they looked like laws of nature – and in fact were both to become involved with Darwin’s theories of natural selection.

When I call them sacred books I am not joking. Malthus and Ricardo were taken as gospels by the most serious and even pious men, who used them to justify actions they would never have thought of defending on human grounds.” Clark, *Civilization*, 326-327.

⁵² “It never happened in his lifetime, and he saw before him always the twin phantoms of Ignorance and Want. . . . Dicken saw the legions of what he called “doomed childhood” and believed that, unless they were properly instructed and their wants alleviated, they would rise up one day and tear down the very edifice of nineteenth-century civilization. . . . It was out of this vision of the world that Dickens now found his new subject; his imagination was seized by the conditions of the ragged

school in Saffron Hill and within a few weeks he had created *A Christmas Carol*, the wonderful story of redemption in which appear the two children, Ignorance and Want, infants who are "wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable." This was the book he had been wanting to write all along; and so this powerful Christmas tale, which has achieved a kind of immortality, was born out of the very conditions of the time.

Dickens actually thought of it on a short trip to Manchester which he made three weeks later, specifically to help another educational enterprise. The Manchester Athenaeum, founded to provide a place of education and recreation for the labouring men and women of that city, was desperately short of funds and he had agreed to make a speech in order to raise money." Ackroyd, *Dickens*, 407.

⁵³ Dickens' concern about the economically unfortunate is explicitly reflected at the end of Stave Three as the Ghost of Christmas Present reveals wretched children representing "Ignorance" and "Want."

⁵⁴ "The philosophy and psychology of *A Christmas Carol* are so familiar to us now that we forget that in Dickens's own day, his view competed with much less sophisticated notions of the origins and effects of states of mind. Indeed this idea—that shifts in objective conditions, such as wealth, social relationships, and class disparities, begin within the individual and are then manifested outwardly in material changes—runs counter to notions of materialism and determinism that were beginning to take hold among such political thinkers and Bentham, Marx, and Engels, who were at work in the same period. Karl Marx, in fact, seems to have been quite a fan of Dickens. But Dickens's Christmas stories . . . are increasingly specific and pointed about where necessary social change must come from. It is not enough to seize power or to change where in society power lies. With power must come an inner sense of connection to others that, in Dickens's life and work come from the model of Jesus Christ as benevolent Savior. The truth of *A Christmas Carol* that Dickens understood perfectly and bodied forth successfully is that life is transformed by an inner shift that is then acted upon, not by a change in circumstances." Smiley, *Charles Dickens*, 59.

⁵⁵ "As Dickens told his friend Cornelius Felton, a professor of Greek at Harvard University, through much of October he walked 'about the black streets of London, fifteen and twenty miles, many a night when all the sober folks had gone to bed,' working out in the his head the story that would become *A Christmas Carol*." Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 72.

⁵⁶ Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol and other Haunting Tales* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1998), xvi. Some persons believe the Tiny Tim character in *A Christmas Carol* is based on Harry Burnett, the son of Dickens' favorite sister Fanny. Burnett, who died from tuberculosis at the age of nine in 1849, was described by Fanny's pastor as "a singular child" and was known as being "meditative and quaint in a remarkable degree."

⁵⁷ Dickens disapproves the idea of using gain alone to measure the worth of business actions and shows the destructiveness of this idea in human relationships. In Stave Two Belle tells Scrooge that he now acts to "weigh everything by Gain," that his consuming drive for profit leaves no place for her and their long engagement should be ended. In Stave Three the Ghost of Christmas Present visits the Cratchit family on Christmas day. The Ghost reveals that Tiny Tim will die unless the shadows being shown are altered "by the Future"; Scrooge, now softening, expresses distress at this outcome. The Ghost reminds Scrooge that he had, in speaking to the two gentlemen soliciting money for the poor on Christmas Eve, stated the Malthusian-based view—"if they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population." The Ghost goes on to question what the surplus is and asks Scrooge, "Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die? It may be, that the in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh God! to hear the Insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!"

⁵⁸ The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)* includes at least two personality disorders that might fit Scrooge. The Schizoid Personality Disorder has seven Diagnostic Criteria; the following criteria (abbreviated here) might apply to Scrooge: not enjoy close relationships, chooses solitary activities, has little "interest in having sexual experiences," "takes pleasure in few . . . activities," and "shows emotional coldness." However, persons with the Schizoid Personality Disorder may have difficulty expressing anger and may lead lives that seem to be directionless; neither of these characteristics would seem to be shown by Scrooge. The Obsessive-Compulsive

Personality Disorder has eight diagnostic Criteria; the following criteria (abbreviated here) might apply to Scrooge: “excessively devoted to work . . . to the exclusion of leisure activities and friendship,” “adopts a miserly spending style toward both self and others,” and shows “rigidity and stubbornness.” (See: American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition* [Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association, 2013], 652-655 and 678-682.) Dr. Theodore Millon has developed a personality disorder category, “Parsimoniously Constricted Personality Type,” that might fit at least some of Scrooge’s traits. This personality type is perfectionistic, proper, stubborn, devoted to work, joyless, and grim. Millon indicates that such persons place a protective wall “between themselves and the outer world . . . , being ungiving and unsharing.” They are “penny-pinching” and wary against “the possibility of loss.” (See: Theodore Millon, *Disorders of Personality, Introducing a DSM/ICD Spectrum from Normal to Abnormal, Third Edition* [Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2011], 491, 500, 502-503.)

⁵⁹ Of course, a dream explanation would allow the several events and scenes revealed for Scrooge by each of the three spirits—events and scenes that would have taken considerable objective time—to be compressed to all fit into the experience of Scrooge during one night.

⁶⁰ It is difficult to accept that these scenes and events are experienced as part of a dream. There is no indication that Scrooge has any knowledge about the home life of Bob Cratchit and the life of Belle and her children until they are shown to him by the Ghost of Christmas Present.

⁶¹ “By conversion we mean the reorientation of the soul of an individual, his deliberate turning from indifference or from an earlier form of piety to another, a turning which implies a consciousness that a great change is involved, that the old was wrong and the new is right. It is seen at its fullest in the positive response of a man to the choice set before him by the prophetic religions.

We know this best from the history of modern Christianity. . . . The features of such conversion have been classified by William James as a passion of willingness and acquiescence, which removes the feeling of anxiety, a sense of perceiving truths not known before, a sense of clean and beautiful newness within and without and an ecstasy of happiness; these emotions are sometimes, and in fact often, accompanied by hallucinatory or quasi-hallucinatory phenomena. This type of experience is very well known.” Arthur Darby Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford University Press, 1933), 7-8. The relationship between the secular *A Christmas Carol* and the Christian message has been noted. An aspect of the relationship might be the way emotions generated by the experience of religious conversion are akin to the feelings of Scrooge at the start of Stave Four when he feels “as light as a feather . . . as happy as an angel . . . as merry as a schoolboy . . . as giddy as a drunken man.”

⁶² “According to a count made in the late 1980s, at least 225 live stagings, films, radio dramas, and television plays based on Dickens’s ‘little Carol’ had been produced after 1950, and that number does not take into account the untold number of amateur and regional productions staged every year. Not only has *A Christmas Carol* become the most ‘adapted’ of all the author’s works, but it would be hard to name any other work of fiction that has thereby become so ubiquitous a part of Western popular culture.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 174.

⁶³ An adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* written by late IRT artistic director Tom Haas was presented by IRT during the holiday season each year from 1980 to 1984. These plays were directed by Tom Haas. During the 1990 Christmas season IRT presented “A Dickens of a Christmas Carol,” directed by Janet Allen. Beginning in 1996, IRT has presented the Tom Haas adaption each holiday season up to the present 2016-17 season. Various persons have directed these plays, including Janet Allen, Pricilla Lindsay, and Scott Wentworth. In 2010 the play was shortened and the intermission was eliminated to make the presentation more suitable for young audiences.

⁶⁴ “. . . there are passages from other Dickens’ novels that Tom [Haas] transplanted into the text [of the IRT version of *A Christmas Carol*], when we needed narrative passages to cover costume changes and the like, so a real Dickens aficionado might catch sentences from other of their beloved novels!” Janet Allen (Artistic Director, IRT), e-mail message to author, October 18, 2016.

⁶⁵ The IRT play retains most of the novella’s most familiar scenes and includes the sometimes omitted Stave Three scene where deprived children representing “Ignorance and Want” are shown.

⁶⁶ “He had read *A Christmas Carol* 127 times between December 27, 1853, and March 15, 1870. Only ‘The Trial from Pickwick’ he had read more times, at 164 performances. All in all, the Public

Readings had brought in £45,000, nearly half of his considerable estate. They also did much to keep *A Christmas Carol* alive, and far beyond the holiday season.” Hearn, *The Annotated Christmas Carol*, 210.

⁶⁷ The full version of *A Christmas Carol* is about 28,500 words.

⁶⁸ “[Dickens] had radically trimmed *A Christmas Carol* to an hour and a half, retaining those episodes which worked best with his audiences. Gone were the long descriptive passages along with most of the sociopolitical content. Instead, he retained the famous holiday set pieces, the Fezziwig ball, the Cratchit Christmas, and Fred’s party. These scenes of jolly celebration contrasted beautifully with the horrors of old Joe’s rag-and-bottle shop, the Cratchits in mourning, and the denouement in the graveyard. He concentrated on character rather than setting. He merged Stave 4 with Stave 5. All that was left of Scrooge’s conversion was the purchase of the prize turkey and Scrooge’s unprecedented appearance at Fred’s door on Christmas Day.” Hearn, *The Annotated Christmas Carol*, 180.

⁶⁹ “5. *old Scrooge sat busy in his counting house.* Henry M. Fields, who attended a public reading in London, on June 17, 1858, thought Dickens as Scrooge was worthy of comparison with Edmund Kean’s Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. Dickens ‘drew down his face into his collar, like a great turtle drawing in his head, put on a surly look, and spoke in a gruff voice. . . . We see him there, crouching like a wolf in his den, snarling at any intruder, and keeping a sharp eye on a poor clerk . . . who trembles under that evil eye” (Summer Pictures from Copenhagen to Venice [New York: Sheldon, 1859], p. 32). Hearn, *The Annotated Christmas Carol*, 215.

⁷⁰ “In 1934 Lionel Barrymore starred in a U.S. radio-play adaption titled *A Christmas Carol*, an event that proved so popular that the piece became a holiday tradition that lasted into the 1950s—his brother John Barrymore and Orson Welles successfully took over during two different seasons when Barrymore fell ill. It is Barrymore’s series, in fact, that is generally credited with making Dickens’s story the popular phenomenon it has become in the United States.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 172.

⁷¹ Orson Wells, as narrator, introduced a live CBS Campbell Playhouse radio broadcast on the eve of December 24, 1939, as follows:

Good evening. This is Orson Welles. There are clearly a number of ways in which “A Christmas Carol” could be introduced. Myself, I am most struck by the happy fortune that enables us on this Christmas Eve to present Mr. Lionel Barrymore, the best-loved actor of our time, in the world’s best-loved Christmas story, “A Christmas Carol.” There is, I think, in all America nothing more eagerly awaited, more firmly rooted in the hearts of the radio family that numbers millions than this yearly performance of “A Christmas Carol.” “A Christmas Carol,” as Charles Dickens wrote it, has, by common consent, long been a classic. Mr. Lionel Barrymore’s appearance in it is rapidly becoming one.

“A Christmas Carol,” www.sheeplaughs.com (accessed November 7, 2016).

⁷² **“God Bless Us Every One**

‘God bless us every one!’ prayed Tiny Tim,
Crippled, and dwarfed of body, yet so tall
Of soul, we tiptoe earth to look on him,
High towering over all.

He loved the loveless world, nor dreamed, indeed,
That it, at best, could give to him, the while,
But pitying glances, when his only need
Was but a cheery smile.

And thus he prayed, ‘God bless us every one!’
Enfolding all the creeds within the span
Of his child-heart; and so, despising none,
Was nearer saint than man.

I like to fancy God, in Paradise,
Lifting a finger o'er the rhythmic swing
Of chiming harp and song, with eager eyes
Turned earthward, listening—

The Anthem stilled—the angels leaning there
Above the golden walls—the morning sun
Of Christmas bursting flower-like with the prayer,
'God bless us Every One!'

The poem is followed by a prose story, 'Jamesy.' The story is about a tattered bootblack who is the sole support of a very sick sister and incapacitated alcoholic father. The impecunious ten year old boy, Jamesy, is unusual in his savvy, resourcefulness, and entrepreneurial drive. A man, a customer of Jamesy, befriends him and the day before Christmas, as he arrives back in town by train, gives Jamesy seasonal gifts of gloves, socks, and a hat. Realizing the small family is living in deep poverty, the man takes some bills that Jamesy has given him in change and wraps them as a gift for Jamesy's sister to be opened on Christmas. Jamesy takes the man to meet the sister and father very early on Christmas Day. The sick sister is dying and tells the man that she has opened the gift from him. In a failing voice she tells the man that he 'must take the money back . . . for I don't need it . . . [and] give it to the poor.' While the story of Jamesy is not based on *A Christmas Carol*, the Riley story, like the Dickens tale, reflects a deep appreciation for the plight of the poor. The Riley story also shows a respect for the values of the poor, as Dickens does in depicting Cratchit family life in *A Christmas Carol*." James Whitcomb Riley, *Sketches in Prose; Occasional Verses* (Indianapolis, Indiana: The Bowen-Merrill Co., 1894), 6-7.

⁷³ "In *A Christmas Carol*, film producers were to discover the mother lode. The first motion picture version of the tale was a silent picture called *Scrooge, or Marley's Ghost*, produced in Great Britain in 1901. That was followed by half a dozen more silent films on both sides of the Atlantic, including one 1910 version by Thomas Edison. The first sound version, also called *Scrooge*, was made in 1928 in Great Britain." Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 171-172.

⁷⁴ *Blackadder's Christmas Carol* is a parody, reversing the story of *A Christmas Carol*. In this 43 minute 1988 production, set in the 19th century, Ebenezer Blackadder begins the story as a kind and generous man but, after spirits show Ebenezer his loathsome ancestors and his descendants, he concludes that it is the bad guys who have the fun and get ahead and he becomes cruel and greedy.

⁷⁵ The analyzed films are:

- *Scrooge*, directed by Henry Edwards, Julius Hagen – Twickenham Production, 1935
- *A Christmas Carol*, directed by Edwin Marin, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture, 1938
- *Scrooge* (released under that title in England; later released by in the United States United Artists as *A Christmas Carol*), directed by Brian Desmond Hurst, Renown Pictures Corporation Ltd., 1951
- *A Christmas Carol*, directed by Ralph Levy, CBS Television Network, aired on "Shower of Stars," 1954
- *Scrooge*, directed by Ronald Neame, Waterbury Films Production, 1970
- *A Christmas Carol*, directed by Clive Donner, Entertainment Partners, Ltd., 1984
- *Scrooged*, directed by Richard Donner, Paramount Pictures, 1988
- *The Muppet Christmas Carol*, directed by Brian Henson, Walt Disney Pictures, 1992
- *A Christmas Carol*, directed by David Jones, TNT/Hallmark Entertainment, 1999
- *Disney's A Christmas Carol*, directed by Robert Zemeckis, Walt Disney Pictures, 2009.

⁷⁶ The earliest three of these ten movies were made in black and white while the seven more recent movies were all made in color. A color version of the 1954 March film has not apparently survived. A "colorized" version of each of the first three films is now available.

Two of the films were made in an unconventional way. The 1992 Michael Caine film, *The Muppet Christmas Carol*, was photographed with puppets playing most characters. In the 2009 Jim Carrey film, *Disney's A Christmas Carol*, computer images were generated from the movement of tracking

sensors while actors performed. Nine of the ten films were set in mid-19th century London. The 1988 Bill Murray motion picture, *Scrooged*, is set in New York in the late 20th century.

Three of the films feature original songs, including the 1954 Fredric March film, *A Christmas Carol*, the 1970 Finney motion picture, *Scrooge*, and the 1992 Caine Muppets film. Perhaps the song that became best known was “Thank You Very Much” from the 1970 Finney film.

Most of the films leave out some scenes from the novella. Most commonly omitted is the Stave Two scene showing Belle, some years after ending her engagement to Scrooge, as a contented and happy person with many children and an adoring husband. Out of the ten motion pictures, this scene is found only in the 1935 Hicks film (where the cluster of active children exceeds ten) and in the 1984 Scott film. The scene in which the Ghost of Christmas Present shows the two destitute children, Ignorance and Want, is also frequently omitted.

In the ten films a few new characters are introduced and some characters are given new names. In the 1992 Caine Muppet version, Jacob Marley has a brother, Robert. Mr. Jorkin, a wily and unscrupulous businessman who is later revealed to be an embezzler, is introduced in Stave Two of the 1951 Sims film. In the ten motion pictures Scrooge’s sweetheart is usually called Belle, as she is in the novella, but this character is also named Alice and Isabelle.

⁷⁷ Two of the ghosts assume startlingly varied forms in the films. Marley’s Ghost is depicted in some films as transparent and in some as solid and in the 1954 Fredric March film, *A Christmas Carol*, and the 1984 Scott film, alternately transparent and solid. In the 1935 Hicks film Marley’s Ghost is visible to Scrooge, but not to film watchers. The Ghost of Christmas Past is variously a woman in a white cap, an old man bathed in light, a dwarfish creature that continuously modifies its appearance, a light, an attractive young woman (in the 1954 March film the same actress portrays both Belle and the Ghost of Christmas Past), a variable flame loosely associated with a body, a mature, dignified woman clad in red (played by Dame Edith Evans), and, in the Bill Murray film set in the 20th century, an unkempt cigar-chomping New York taxi driver.

⁷⁸ Seymour Hicks first played the role of Scrooge in 1901.

⁷⁹ Buddy Hackett has a cameo role as 19th century Ebenezer Scrooge in the “tale within a tale” film, *Scrooged*.

⁸⁰ Ben Beaumont-Thomas interview of Brian Henson on December 21, 2015, “How We Made: *The Muppet Christmas Carol*,” *The Guardian*, <http://www.theguardian.com> (accessed October 24, 2016).

⁸¹ Kenneth Von Gunden, *Alec Guinness: The Films* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 1987), 199.

⁸² The 1935 Hicks film and the 2009 Carrey film both include a scene that contrasts the well-being of the rich and poor. Each film shows preparation of a sumptuous Christmas Eve feast at the Mansion House for many upper class guests. In the Hicks film the cooks throw out food to the poor. In the Carrey film, one instance of such generosity is shown, but a feral dog claims the food. In the Hicks film the Lord Mayor makes a toast to the Queen and well-groomed gentry sing “God Save our Gracious Queen”; poor people outside also sing.

⁸³ There are other examples, not mentioned in the essay. In the 1992 Caine Muppet movie Scrooge cynically comments that the lack of discipline associated with December makes it a “harvest time for the money lenders.” In the 1951 Sim film Scrooge eats at an inexpensive restaurant, asks for bread, but declines it when he learns the bread will add a halfpenny to the cost of the meal. In the 1935 Hicks film Scrooge denies a desperate couple more time to pay. Belle overhears the conversation and confronts Scrooge. Belle says Scrooge is a “man without pity”; Scrooge responds by indicating that Belle must leave his business affairs alone.

⁸⁴ The hat, after being knocked by a snowball from Ebenezer Scrooge’s head, is run over by a passing carriage. Scrooge informs Bob Cratchit that he owes sixteen shillings and six pence for the hat; this sum is more than the fifteen shillings and six pence Bob is being paid each week.

⁸⁵ “It is the consensus of most critics that the very best film adaptation of Dickens’s story came in 1951 with the British production of *Scrooge* (released in the United States as *A Christmas Carol*), with Alastair Sim as Scrooge and Mervyn Jones as Bob Cratchit. The film received favorable reviews in the United States, but, likely because of its rather downbeat portrayal of Scrooge, it did not become widely popular until the 1970s, when it began to receive regular television airings during the Christmas season.” Standiford, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, 172-173.

⁸⁶ The 1951 Sim film and 1992 Caine film have Marley's Ghost only saying the first spirit will come at 1 AM.

⁸⁷ In the 1951 Sim film it is revealed that Scrooge's mother died giving birth to Scrooge, that Scrooge's father never forgave him, and Scrooge barely knows his father. In the 1984 Scott film it is revealed that Scrooge's mother died when Scrooge was born and that his father held a grudge against him because of that. In the 1999 Stewart film Scrooge tells the Ghost of Christmas Past that his father turned against him when his mother died and did not want to see him ever.

⁸⁸ Young Scrooge is limited by his father to only three days of Christmas holiday before he is sent off to his apprenticeship.

⁸⁹ When the Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge unalterable "shadows of the pasts" of the occasion when Belle indicates to Scrooge that the engagement should end, the contrast between the outlook of the mature Scrooge (who has learned from the Ghost of Christmas Past) and the young Scrooge (smitten with Belle but focused on making money), is well illustrated. In the 1970 Finney movie the mature Scrooge tells the spirit that he loved his fiancé and does not know why he let her go. When it appears that the younger Scrooge is not responding to his fiancé's suggesting that their engagement should end, the mature Scrooge reacts by saying, "Say something, you fool." In the 1999 Stewart film Belle releases Scrooge with a full heart "for the love of the man you once were"; the mature Scrooge implores young Scrooge "to go after her." In the 1984 Scott film the mature Scrooge tells the Ghost of Christmas Past that he almost went after Belle at the time their engagement ended but did not because he had received a small inheritance and while Belle wanted to marry Scrooge wanted to lay a foundation for his future financial success and he accordingly loaned out the money.

⁹⁰ Seven of the nine motion pictures (excluding the film *Scrooged*) include scenes of Scrooge's courtship of Belle (or Belle's character who has another name in that film).

⁹¹ Scrooge and Isabelle (the name for Belle in the film) are shown in a variety of enjoyable activities as they court: picnicking, boating, reading together under a tree, engaging in archery, and taking a carriage ride.

⁹² There are other examples, not mentioned in the essay. In the 1951 Alistair Sim film, Scrooge, in his happiness after being reclaimed on Christmas morning, hugs the charwoman and presents a guinea to her. The charwoman gives Scrooge an unbelieving and skeptical look. Scrooge says it is a Christmas gift. She says "Merry Christmas Mr. Scrooge in keeping with the situation." Scrooge asks her what she earning and raises her salary from two shillings a week to ten. In the 2009 Carrey film Scrooge frightens the housekeeper with his warmth, slides down bannister, and wants to dance with her. In the 1954 March movie, a gleeful Scrooge ends up having Christmas dinner with the Cratchit family; Tiny Tim says he is glad Scrooge could come. In the 1992 Caine Muppet movie Scrooge brings a turkey for a large dinner at the Cratchit home. In the 1938 Owen film, Scrooge promises a place in the business for the eldest boy, Peter. The final scene of the 1999 Stewart film is of Scrooge welcoming the Cratchit family to his home at Christmas.