

Scrooge's transformation essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In *A Christmas Carol*, the protagonist Ebenezer Scrooge undergoes a radical change of character and attitude towards social interactions, material possessions, and Christmas. Too radical to be credible, as people don't change that extremely and easily. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that, if Scrooge was a real person, these changes would be permanent.

Wilson, Edmund. "Dickens: The Two Scrooges." *The New Republic* (1942): n. pag. Web. 26 November 2012.

Wilson's essay is widely regarded as the most influential study of Dickens of the 20th century. He points out that Scrooge's transformation from the "melancholy misanthrope to the joyful embodiment of Christmas cheer" is too big of a change to happen in such a limited amount of time as it does in *A Christmas Carol*. According to Wilson, the protagonist would unquestionably go back to his old "wicked and paranoid self" after the end of the story. Scrooge would end up as a "victim of a manic-depressive cycle, and a very unhappy and unpleasant person". Dickens, like Scrooge, was capable of the extremes of both evil and good, and was a rather unstable character, which leads him to the assumption that the protagonist's bipolar nature is representative of Dickens' own deep personal, psychological and social problems, resulting from a childhood trauma. He supports his argument by quoting Dickens' daughters' and wife's contradictory statements describing the author's personality. (158)

Gilbert, Elliot. "The Ceremony of Innocence: Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*." *PMLA* 90. 1 (January 1975): 22-31. JSTOR. Web. 17 November 2012.

Gilbert argues that Scrooge's spiritual and "moral growth" in A Christmas Carol is happening too quickly to be psychologically valid. This, however, doesn't mean the story is flawed, but is what makes it effective. The article focuses on Scrooge's moral and spiritual recovery. This essay is helpful for me because it examines the rediscovery of Scrooge's "metaphysical innocence", instead of looking at A Christmas Carol as a psychological case of an old neurotic man, who is temporarily transformed into a better human being by the visions 3 Christmas spirits show him. Jaffe, Audrey. "Spectacular Sympathy: Visuality and Ideology in Dickens' A Christmas Carol." PMLA 109. 2 (1994): 254-265. JSTOR. Web. 20 November 2012.

Jaffe describes the way Scrooge saves his own life by recovering his empathy, sympathy and his naturally good self. She focuses on the "ideological values" in Western culture and how the story shows its readers a series of culturally enhanced scenes. She claims that the readers' understanding of the story depends on their ability to identify with the Christian values that are conveyed in those scenes. This essay will help me write my paper because it examines Dickens' value system comparatively on a cultural level.

Glancy, Ruth. "Dickens and Christmas: His Framed-Tale Themes." Nineteenth-Century Fiction 35. 1 (1980): 53-72. JSTOR. Web. 22 November 2012.

Glancy explores all of Dickens' Christmas-themed works and compares them to each other. She writes about the changes his character's often undergo during that special merry time of the year and why he chooses to let so

many of his stories take place around Christmas. She also examines his strong relationship with the holiday.

I think this article is relevant for my paper because it doesn't only deal with Scrooge and other characters in Dickens' stories, but tells me something about the author as a person and his thoughts on the Christian holiday that is a central theme in *A Christmas Carol*.

Cox, Don Richard and Gilbert, Elliot. "Scrooge's Conversion." *PMLA* 90. 5 (1975): 921-924. JSTOR. Web. 20 November 2012.

Cox argues that the "wicked misanthrope" Scrooge in the beginning of *A Christmas Carol* is, in fact, a hyperbole. He wasn't a sinner in the classically religious sense, so much as simply greedy, which influenced his attitude towards charity and helping out those who are in need. When the spirits visit him, he realizes that there are more important things in life than money and becomes the generous "good" Scrooge.

This essay will support my research paper because it offers another point of view at Scrooge's transformation than the usual moral/religious one and I want my argumentation to be as thorough as possible.