



Department of English and American Studies NEWSLETTER

- DECEMBER 2022 -

INTRODUCTION

Dear students.

As we are nearing the end of the lecture period and the beginning of examinations, the Department wishes you the best of luck in the coming days and weeks.

The *Winter Holidays* are also quickly approaching. Even though 2022 has been a challenging year for many, **we hope you will spend these few weeks in peace, wind down a little bit, reflect on the previous year and set your goals for the next one.**

Speaking of reflection, we asked some of our students to reflect on the message of Charles Dickens' *The Christmas Carol* from the perspective of a 21st-century student. Below you can read some of the thought-provoking submissions.

See you next semester.

Let us know what you think about our newsletter and what features you would welcome in the future. [Click here](#) or find the link in our [Linktree](#) and let us know what you think.

MISCELLANEOUS



If you missed last month's **Literary Colloquium**, you can find the recordings on our [YouTube channel](#). Images and summaries of the event are available on our **social media sites**.



Also check out our ongoing competition.

As part of last month's colloquium, students also attended a workshop where they made hand-drawn illustrations for **William Wordsworth's** sonnet *The World is Too Much With Us*. You can vote for your favourites on our [Facebook page](#) (or find the link in our [Linktree](#)).

The three drawings with the most likes are eligible for a (book) prize. For more information, check out the link above.

THE CHRISTMAS CAROL TODAY

LILLI BÖDŮKOVÁ

In today's world, almost everybody is in a hurry most of the time, and most of us focus on earning as much money as possible; we all somehow forget to enjoy the moment and notice the most important things in life. Many people think that money is the most important thing in life; however, it's not. Those people believe that money equals happiness, but they forget that money brings happiness just for a short time. If you are not healthy, free or loved, your money won't make you happy forever. You can't replace your loved ones with money. You can enjoy those things you bought with your money, but there will always be something you miss when you are lonely. **And when the end comes, your loved ones will be beside you, not money.**

DOMINIK ZAŤKO

The actual message is rather observable. I am a very sensitive person in terms of feeling the energy of people I meet every day, and I truly need to say that everything and everyone around us is just a reflection of who we are. As we grow older, as individuals and as a society, we should be aware that we are all losing the right direction. The aspects of putting ourselves first and rushing ourselves for a career, studies, and money are downgrading our values towards something that I believe should have never happened to us. I believe the evolution of humankind should have led us not only to be equally valuable in our society but also to evolve into beings sharing a common consciousness and love in the first place. **The Christmas Carol shows precisely the same thing happening to us; hopefully, its happy ending will be a reality for all of us one day!**

SVITLANA PALCHYK

Christmas has always been about stability, family, and tradition. It is a frozen space on the curved line of time, where everything is always the same, in the same room, with the same people, at the same table surrounded by the same familiar Christmas tree lights. It is a reason to be old-fashioned and even tasteless in some fashion or interior design choices once a year, and that's why we love it.

Unless you've been robbed of it. Unless the scraps of your table are buried underneath your home's wreckage, you had to leave your family and move far away.

It's not hard to despise Christmas when you're so far from home. All these excited, happy people who can afford to spend their money carelessly when you no longer even have a place for a Christmas tree. This is the part where I understand Scrooge - the old man from *A Christmas Carol*, who turned away from the fun of holidays after his friend died on Christmas night. I know people like Scrooge, and I don't blame them. But even Scrooge got out of this loop of disappointment. There should always be things to look forward to, even in the most hopeless times, so maybe simply living in the hope of a Christmas miracle could get us through the day?

Could the garlands and lights on the streets, even if just for a moment, distract us from our fears for the future and bad memories? Could we walk through Nitra and observe all the different colours, different sounds, happy, contented families with their excited kids, eat a croissant with a cocoa drink, and simply be? **That would probably be enough...**

I recommend you listen to the original song that inspired *Carol of the Bells*, "*Shchedryk*" (Щедрик) a Ukrainian folk song.

ADAM KUCHTA

In my opinion, *The Christmas Carol* is a **timeless classic**, and it will stay that way. For that reason, even in the 21st century, each individual can learn something new from it. Emotions are the one thing in life which we can say for certain will always exist; they will not just disappear one day. Therefore, everyone has their flaws, but those flaws can be fixed if the correct steps are taken. **Even in today's fast-paced society, we should have time to sit down and reflect, not just rush through life blindly.**

VIRA CHERNOMORETS

The Christmas Carol is the most "Christmassy" story that I've ever read. For me, as a student, it is so sweet to be deep in memories from the first time I read it in 6th grade. Snowflakes, cold outside, hot chocolate and family dinner. Christmas fills my heart with these tastes and warm light. It flips the page on the past year and opens the new blank pages of the upcoming year.

Charles Dickens provides the most accurate moral message - the self-serving, callous and unsociable person, through the lessons of the past, the mistakes of the present and fear of a miserable future (in Scrooge's case - fear of death), can change. It teaches readers the value of being helpful, kind, and caring and the importance of being with family, loved ones and friends. After reading this story, we are scared of turning into Scrooge, but it gives us hope that even if we are Scrooge, we can become better people.

Christmas also gives us hope that in the coming year, we can be better, and there will always be people who accept us.

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