

A Christmas Carol
Professor Dr. Divya A. Dohss
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
Lecture 32
The Gothic Plot, Spectrality and Commodity

(Refer Slide Time: 00:11)



Week 7: A Christmas Carol

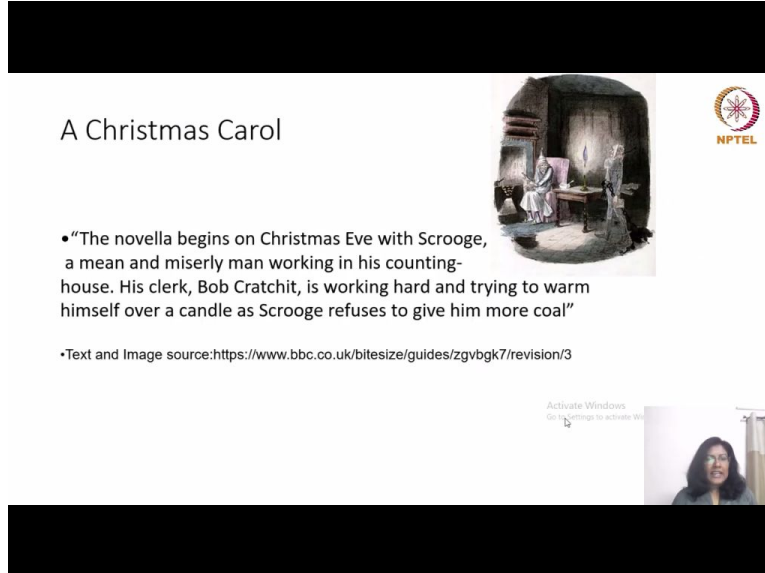
Lecture 7B: The Gothic Plot, Spectrality, and Commodity

Image source:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/4>



Hello, and welcome to week seven lectures on Dickens' A Christmas Carol. In today's session, I will take you through the plot details and the idea of Gothic commodity, where the spectral and the economics are combined to produce particular effects in this Gothic novella.

(Refer Slide Time: 0:36)




A Christmas Carol

- “The novella begins on Christmas Eve with Scrooge, a mean and miserly man working in his counting-house. His clerk, Bob Cratchit, is working hard and trying to warm himself over a candle as Scrooge refuses to give him more coal”

•Text and Image source:<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/3>

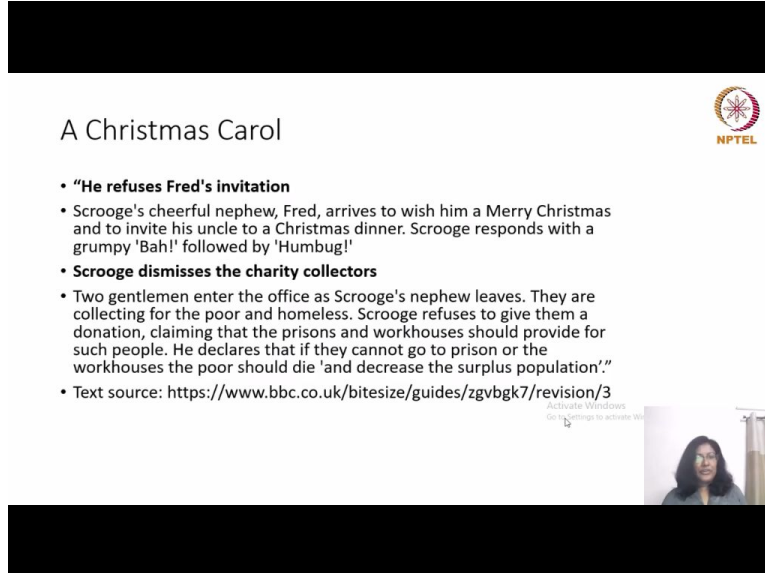
Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows



“The novella begins on Christmas Eve with Scrooge, a mean and miserly man working in his counting-house. His clerk, Bob Cratchit, is working hard and trying to warm himself over a candle as Scrooge refuses to give him more coal. This kind of introduction in the tale immediately gives us a very good idea of the kind of nature that Ebenezer Scrooge has, the very name Scrooge is symbolic.”

Critics suggest that it is a combination of screwing, the idea of screwing and gouging. So you can see the hard-hearted nature of the character emerging through his name itself and he lives up to his name when he refuses to give coal to his clerk, Bob Cratchit, who is very hard working. So there is an immediate contrast of natures between Ebenezer Scrooge and Bob Cratchit, Ebenezer Scrooge is rich, but miserly Bob Cratchit is trying hard to make a living and survive in London.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:08)



A Christmas Carol

- **“He refuses Fred's invitation**
- Scrooge's cheerful nephew, Fred, arrives to wish him a Merry Christmas and to invite his uncle to a Christmas dinner. Scrooge responds with a grumpy 'Bah!' followed by 'Humbug!'
- **Scrooge dismisses the charity collectors**
- Two gentlemen enter the office as Scrooge's nephew leaves. They are collecting for the poor and homeless. Scrooge refuses to give them a donation, claiming that the prisons and workhouses should provide for such people. He declares that if they cannot go to prison or the workhouses the poor should die 'and decrease the surplus population.'"
- Text source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/3>

Scrooge's cheerful nephew, Fred, arrives to wish him a Merry Christmas and to invite his uncle to a Christmas dinner. Scrooge responds with a grumpy 'Bah!' followed by 'Humbug!'. So these are very famous words in all of Dickens 'Bah, Humbug!'. And these words are associated with the miserly nature of Scrooge. Christmas is around the corner. And Fred arrives with an invitation to his uncle to invite him for a Christmas dinner at his place, but he refuses.

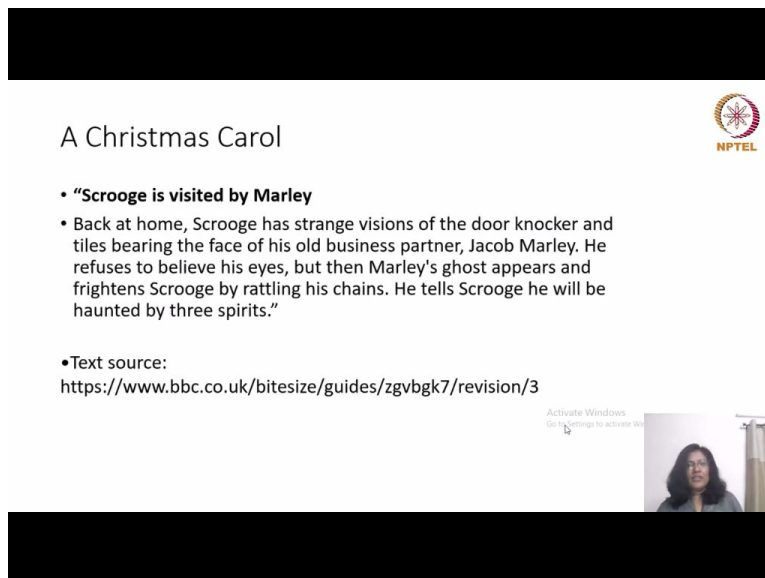
“Two gentlemen enter the office as Scrooge's nephew leaves. They are collecting for the poor and homeless. Scrooge refuses to give them a donation claiming that the prisons and workhouses should provide for such people. He declares that if they cannot go to prison or the workhouses, the poor should die and decrease the surplus population.”

You can see the way in which Scrooge's real character is laid bare for us in a very harsh context. Two gentlemen enter the county house once the nephew leaves and they want Scrooge to donate towards the poor and the homeless, and Scrooge refuses to give support, to give a donation claiming that the poor should go to prisons to debtors' prisons or to workhouses. And workhouse is an institution which houses, which accommodates the poor, gives them work to do, finds them work and Scrooge believes that instead of offering charity to these homeless poor, these people should be made to enter workhouses.

And he says that either they have to go to prison or the workhouses or they should just die. The poor should just die and decrease the population that is not really helping society. So you can see how flinty hearted Scrooge is through this meeting with the two gentlemen who have come to him seeking charity.

So, it is a very neat set of events one after the other written by Dickens to lay bare the character of Ebenezer Scrooge. He refuses to give coal to his employee. He refuses to go to his nephew's house for Christmas dinner. And he also refuses charity which will help the poor in society. So from a personal to a professional to the context of a citizen, he is not really very helpful or generous, or very sociable as well.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:35)




A Christmas Carol

- **“Scrooge is visited by Marley**
- Back at home, Scrooge has strange visions of the door knocker and tiles bearing the face of his old business partner, Jacob Marley. He refuses to believe his eyes, but then Marley's ghost appears and frightens Scrooge by rattling his chains. He tells Scrooge he will be haunted by three spirits.”

•Text source:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/3>

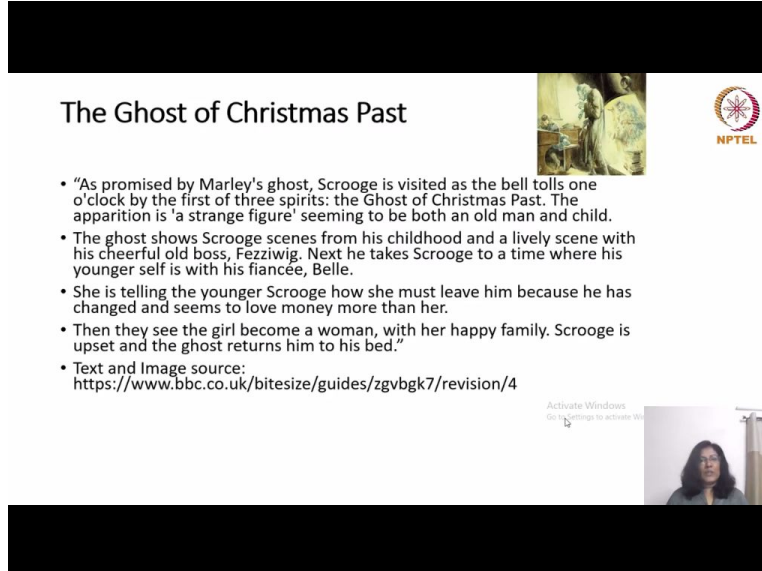
Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows.



“Back at home, Scrooge has strange visions of the door knocker and tiles bearing the face of his own business partner, Jacob Marley. He refuses to believe his eyes, but then Marley's ghost appears and frightens Scrooge by rattling his chains. He tells Scrooge he will be haunted by three spirits.”

This is a kind of a frame ghostly visitation. Jacob Marley was a partner of Ebenezer Scrooge, who is no longer alive. Jacob Marley is dead and he visits the ghost of Jacob Marley visits Ebenezer Scrooge at his home and he warns him that three spirits will visit him. So, the supernatural narrative of this novella has begun.


(Refer Slide Time: 06:35)



The Ghost of Christmas Past

- “As promised by Marley's ghost, Scrooge is visited as the bell tolls one o'clock by the first of three spirits: the Ghost of Christmas Past. The apparition is 'a strange figure' seeming to be both an old man and child.
- The ghost shows Scrooge scenes from his childhood and a lively scene with his cheerful old boss, Fezziwig. Next he takes Scrooge to a time where his younger self is with his fiancée, Belle.
- She is telling the younger Scrooge how she must leave him because he has changed and seems to love money more than her.
- Then they see the girl become a woman, with her happy family. Scrooge is upset and the ghost returns him to his bed.”
- Text and Image source:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/4>

Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows



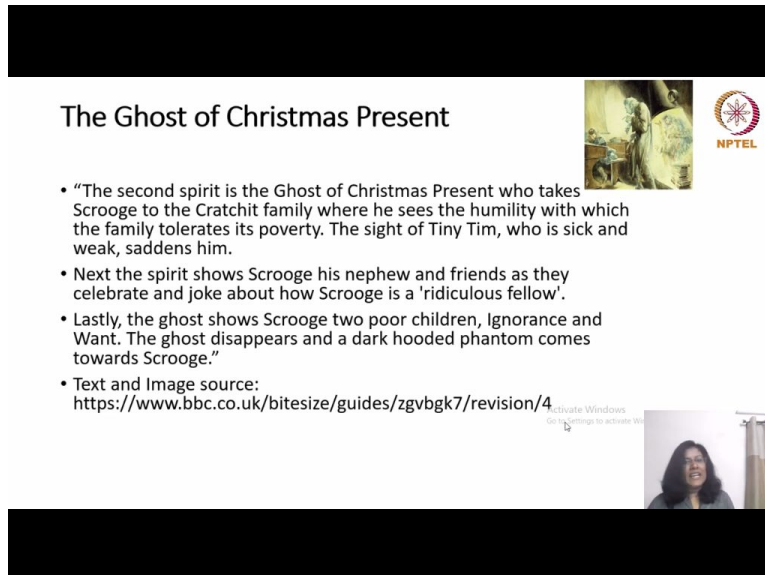
“As promised by Marley's ghost, Scrooge is visited as the bell tolls one o'clock by the first of the three spirits, the Ghost of Christmas Past. So, this is the first ghost that visits him. It is called the Ghost of Christmas Past. The apparition is a strange figure seeming to be both an old man and a child. So you can see the hybrid nature of this spirit. It seems to be simultaneously both an old figure and a child. The ghost shows Scrooge scenes from his childhood and a lively scene with his cheerful old boss, Fezziwig. Next, he takes Scrooge to a time where his younger self is with his fiancée, Belle. She is telling the younger Scrooge how she must leave him because he has changed and seems to love more money than her. Then they see the girl become a woman with her happy family. Scrooge is upset and the ghost returns him to his bed.”

The Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge to his childhood and later to his life with his old boss, Fezziwig. He seems to be very comfortable. And then, Scrooge is taken to a time where his younger self is with his fiancée, Belle. And we are shown how that engagement between the fiancée and Scrooge is broken because Belle states that Scrooge loves his money more than he loves her. You can see the inception of greed in the younger Scrooge at that point in the past. The girl becomes a woman and she gets a very happy family and Scrooge is very upset when he sees that image and the ghost bring him back to bed.

So the trajectory of Scrooge from his past is shown to the older Scrooge. So the ghost is very symbolic. The combination of an old man and a child is symbolic because a child could be

symbolic of Scrooge, a child himself, and the sufferings that Scrooge had, when he was a child is also shown. So there are childhood problems which influence the way that Scrooge grows up into a miserly, misanthropic character.

(Refer Slide Time: 09:20)



The Ghost of Christmas Present

- “The second spirit is the Ghost of Christmas Present who takes Scrooge to the Cratchit family where he sees the humility with which the family tolerates its poverty. The sight of Tiny Tim, who is sick and weak, saddens him.
- Next the spirit shows Scrooge his nephew and friends as they celebrate and joke about how Scrooge is a 'ridiculous fellow'.
- Lastly, the ghost shows Scrooge two poor children, Ignorance and Want. The ghost disappears and a dark hooded phantom comes towards Scrooge.”
- Text and Image source:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/4>

“The second spirit is the Ghost of Christmas Present who takes Scrooge to the Cratchit family where he sees the humility with which the family tolerates its poverty. The sight of Tiny Tim, who is sick and weak, saddens him. Next, the spirit shows Scrooge his nephew and friends as they celebrate and joke about how Scrooge is a ridiculous fellow. Lastly, the ghost shows Scrooge two poor children, Ignorance and Want. The ghost disappears and a dark hooded phantom comes towards Scrooge.”

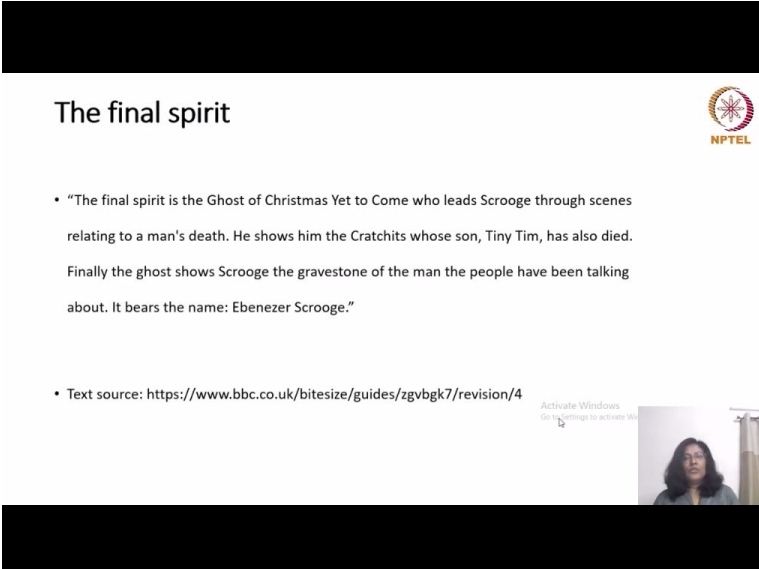
Now, the second spirit is called the Ghost of Christmas Present, because it shows him images of the present, visions of the present. It sort of takes him to Bob Cratchit’s family. The family is tolerating its poverty with moderate cheer. They see the humility in the family. Even though they are very poor, they are very cordial towards one another. And the child, the Tiny Tim, the child of Cratchit is very sickly and that sight saddens Ebenezer Scrooge.

Next, the spirit takes Scrooge to his nephew and friends who make fun of Scrooge and they joke about him and they call them very ridiculous, and Scrooge is shown all these images by the

ghost, the Ghost of Christmas Present, and finally, the ghost shows two poor children who are symbolically named Ignorance and Want.

There is a symbolism which suggests that Scrooge is responsible for these children, whom he has symbolically fathered, perhaps there was Ignorance and Want, and those figures are present, those children are present in society because of the miserly nature of Ebenezer Scrooge. The father figure is not very generous. That seems to be the subtext that Scrooge is told very powerfully by the ghost.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:36)




The final spirit

NPTEL

- “The final spirit is the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come who leads Scrooge through scenes relating to a man’s death. He shows him the Cratchits whose son, Tiny Tim, has also died. Finally the ghost shows Scrooge the gravestone of the man the people have been talking about. It bears the name: Ebenezer Scrooge.”
- Text source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/4>

Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows.

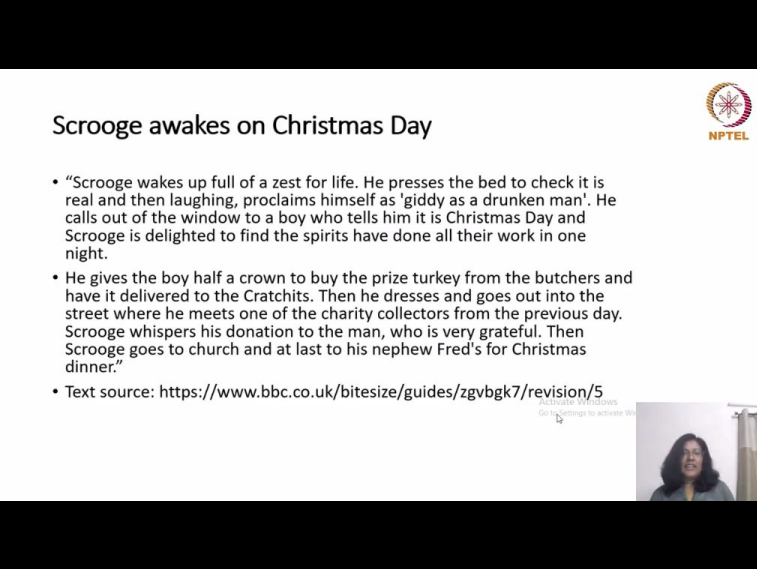


“The final spirit is the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, who leads Scrooge through scenes relating to a man’s death. He shows him the Cratchits whose son Tiny Tim has also died. Finally, the ghost shows Scrooge the gravestone of the man the people have been talking about. It bears the name Ebenezer Scrooge.”

The third ghost is called the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, and that ghost shows Scrooge images of events to come. It shows images of death, first of Tiny Tim, Bob Cratchit’s son and it shows the depth of Scrooge himself. It shows him the gravestone. On the gravestone is written the word Ebenezer Scrooge and he dies in a miserable manner. He is completely cut off from society and he is buried in a churchyard in a horrible grave. So these are the impressions that are

given to Scrooge by the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. So this ghost is warning Scrooge that if he does not mend his ways, then these are the things that will happen.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:58)



The slide features a black header bar at the top. Below it, the title "Scrooge awakes on Christmas Day" is centered. To the right of the title is the NPTEL logo, which consists of a circular emblem with a star-like pattern and the text "NPTEL" underneath. Below the title is a bulleted list of text. The first bullet point describes Scrooge waking up with a zest for life, checking the bed, and laughing. The second bullet point describes him giving a boy half a crown for a turkey, meeting a charity collector, going to church, and finally to his nephew Fred's for dinner. The third bullet point is a text source link. In the bottom right corner of the slide, there is a small video thumbnail showing a woman speaking, with a "Settings to activate" overlay.

Scrooge awakes on Christmas Day

- "Scrooge wakes up full of a zest for life. He presses the bed to check it is real and then laughing, proclaims himself as 'giddy as a drunken man'. He calls out of the window to a boy who tells him it is Christmas Day and Scrooge is delighted to find the spirits have done all their work in one night.
- He gives the boy half a crown to buy the prize turkey from the butchers and have it delivered to the Cratchits. Then he dresses and goes out into the street where he meets one of the charity collectors from the previous day. Scrooge whispers his donation to the man, who is very grateful. Then Scrooge goes to church and at last to his nephew Fred's for Christmas dinner."
- Text source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/5>

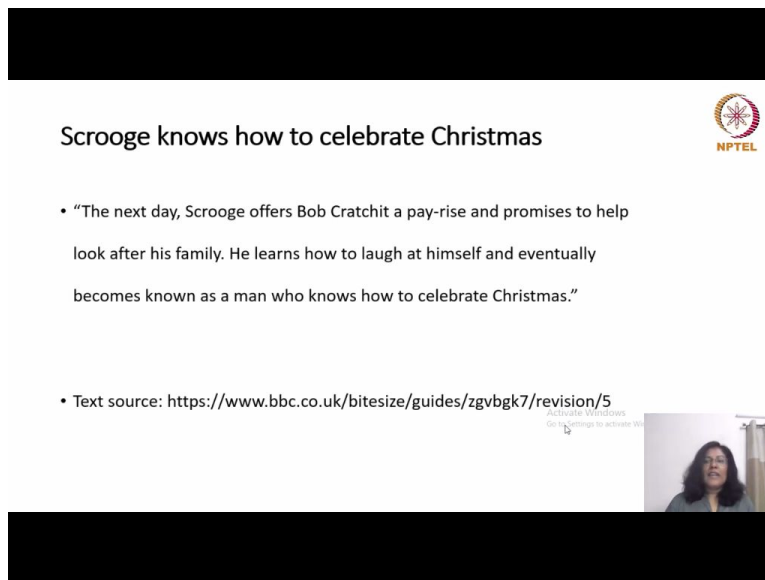
“Scrooge wakes up full of a zest for life. He presses the bed to check it is real and then laughing, proclaims himself as giddy as a drunken man. He calls out of the window to a boy who tells him it is Christmas Day, and Scrooge is delighted to find the spirits have done all their work in one night.”

When Scrooge wakes up, the next day he is extremely happy. He is giddily happy. He is as giddy as a drunken man because he realizes that all is not over yet. Life is not over. He is still around and he still can reform his attitude. And he is very delighted to realize that the spirits have done a good job with him in one night.

He gives the boy, whom he sees outside his window, half a crown to buy the prize turkey from the butchers and have it delivered to the Cratchits. Then he dresses and he goes out into the streets where he meets one of the charity collectors from the previous day. Scrooge whispers his donation to the man who is very grateful. Then, Scrooge goes to church and at last to his nephew Fred's for Christmas dinner.”

You can see the immediate transformation in Ebenezer Scrooge. He offers money to the boy so that he could get good turkey from the butchers and give it to his employee, Bob Cratchit so that they can make a wonderful dinner for Christmas. Then he dresses and he goes out into the streets where he meets the charity collectors and he makes sure that he names his donation to the man in a very quiet manner who is very appreciative of this gesture. Then Scrooge goes to church and finally to his nephew's place for Christmas dinner. So he makes sure that he makes reparations for all the evil, 'that he has done towards his immediate social circle'. So, there is a very clear indication in Scrooge's character to suggest that all will be well at the end of the day.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:26)



Scrooge knows how to celebrate Christmas

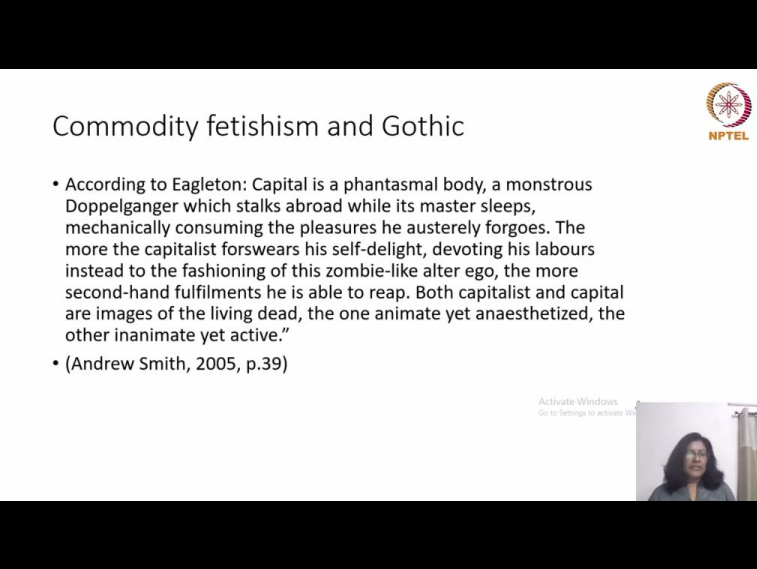
- "The next day, Scrooge offers Bob Cratchit a pay-rise and promises to help look after his family. He learns how to laugh at himself and eventually becomes known as a man who knows how to celebrate Christmas."
- Text source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgvbgk7/revision/5>

"The next day, Scrooge offers Bob Cratchit a pay-rise and promises to help look after his family. He learns how to laugh at himself and eventually becomes known as a man who knows how to celebrate Christmas."

Scrooge does something remarkable when he offers a pay-rise to Bob Cratchit who desperately needs that kind of support from his employer. He also assures Bob Cratchit that he will look after his family. He wants to make sure that nothing will happen to Tiny Tim, and Scrooge realizes that it is time that he learns to laugh at himself, not take him too seriously and take himself too seriously and eventually he becomes known as a man who can celebrate Christmas in the proper spirit. So, there is a radical transformation in the character of Ebenezer Scrooge and the three

spirits of Christmas are responsible for this kind of change in this misanthrope Ebenezer Scrooge.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:44)



The screenshot shows a presentation slide with a black header bar at the top. The title 'Commodity fetishism and Gothic' is centered. To the right is the NPTEL logo. Below the title is a list of two bullet points. The first bullet point is a quote from Terry Eagleton. The second bullet point is a citation for Andrew Smith. In the bottom right corner, there is a small video inset showing a woman speaking, with a Windows watermark above it.

Commodity fetishism and Gothic

- According to Eagleton: Capital is a phantasmal body, a monstrous Doppelganger which stalks abroad while its master sleeps, mechanically consuming the pleasures he austerely forgoes. The more the capitalist forswears his self-delight, devoting his labours instead to the fashioning of this zombie-like alter ego, the more second-hand fulfillments he is able to reap. Both capitalist and capital are images of the living dead, the one animate yet anaesthetized, the other inanimate yet active.”
- (Andrew Smith, 2005, p.39)

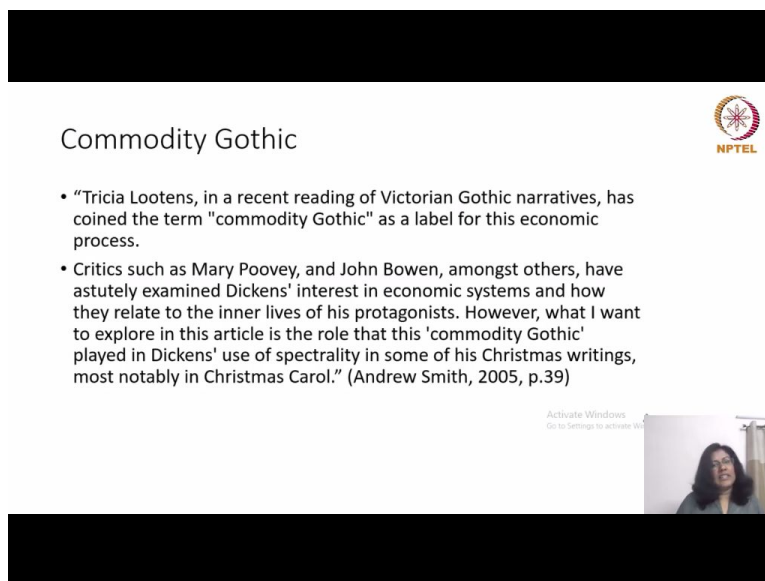
Let us now talk about the idea of commodity fetishism and the nature of the Gothic.

“According to the critic, Terry Eagleton, capital is a phantasmal body, a monstrous doppelganger, which stalks abroad while its master sleeps, mechanically consuming the pleasures he austerely forgoes. The more the capitalist forswears his self-delight, devoting his labours instead to the fashioning of this zombie-like alter ego, the more second-hand fulfillments, he is able to reap. Both capitalist and capital are images of the living dead, the one animate yet anaesthetized, the other inanimate yet active.”

Eagleton very remarkably describes the nature of capital and the nature of the capitalist through Gothic terms. He says that capital and capitalist are monstrous doppelgangers. They are monstrous twins, monstrous images of one another. The capitalist can sleep. The master can sleep, but capital will be stalking abroad like a ghost, like a supernatural being, like a spirit. The capitalist can be austere. The capitalist can be like a Spartan. He can work all his hours. He could not do what his labours all the time towards his work. But at the end of the day, he will be fashioning this zombie-like alter ego, the capital, which is going about and enjoying all the pleasures, whereas the master is able to enjoy only second-hand fulfillments.

So what Eagleton is trying to say is that both capital and the capitalist are ultimately images of the living dead. They are not really living, while the master is animate, yet he is like somebody who is drugged. And while the capital is inanimate, it is still active. So what is interesting to us is the Gothic manner in which the idea of economics is presented to the readers by this critic Eagleton. It is very interesting to place this idea of capital in relation to this novella, A Christmas Carol, and see what are the dividends that we can obtain by applying the theory of the capital and the capitalist to this particular work.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:46)



Commodity Gothic

- “Tricia Lootens, in a recent reading of Victorian Gothic narratives, has coined the term “commodity Gothic” as a label for this economic process.
- Critics such as Mary Poovey, and John Bowen, amongst others, have astutely examined Dickens’ interest in economic systems and how they relate to the inner lives of his protagonists. However, what I want to explore in this article is the role that this ‘commodity Gothic’ played in Dickens’ use of spectrality in some of his Christmas writings, most notably in Christmas Carol.” (Andrew Smith, 2005, p.39)

Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows

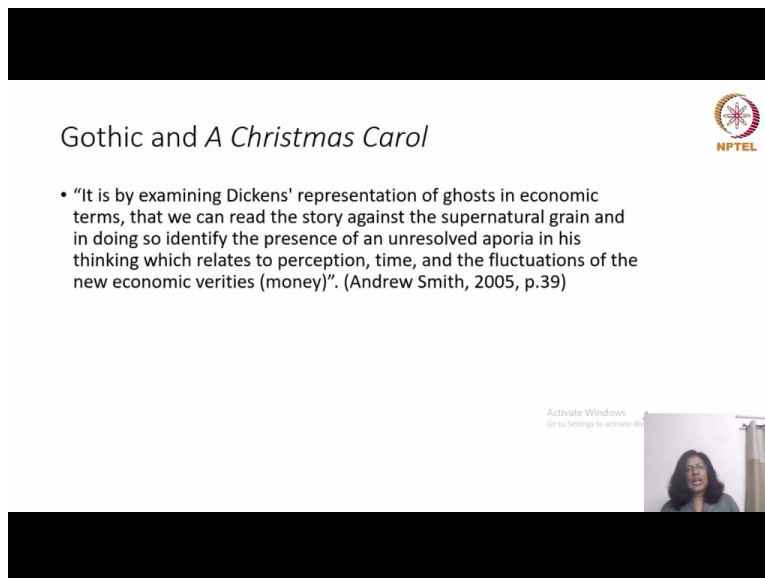
“Tricia Lootens, in a recent reading of Victorian Gothic narratives, has coined the term commodity Gothic as a label for this economic process.” What is interesting to me from this point of view is this phrase ‘Commodity Gothic’. One can use this label, I think, usefully in relation to A Christmas Carol as well. Ebenezer Scrooge is a character who looked at the world from the point of view of the kind of dividends that he can reap out of the society. Bob Cratchit was a figure who brought him money. He saw society as people by individuals who brought money into it and the rest are considered to be surplus creatures who can be ignored or left out to die. So that was the initial assumption that Scrooge had about the world around him. So the phrase ‘Commodity Gothic’ can be useful to read this novella.

“Critics such as Mary Poovey, and John Bowen, amongst others, have astutely examined Dickens’ interest in economic systems and how they relate to the inner lives of his protagonists.

However, what I want to explore in this article is the role that this ‘Commodity Gothic’ played in Dickens’ use of spectrality and some of his Christmas writings, most notably in Christmas Carol.’”

So the eye in that bit of critical perspective is that of Andrew Smith who wants to apply the label ‘Commodity Gothic’ to some of Dickens’ Christmas writings and see the role of spectrality. How Dickens had used spiritual visitations to analyze economic systems in society through his affection. He wants to see what is the relation between the economic systems and the inner lives of his protagonists, such as Ebenezer Scrooge in such writings, which can be described as ‘Commodity Gothic’.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:01)



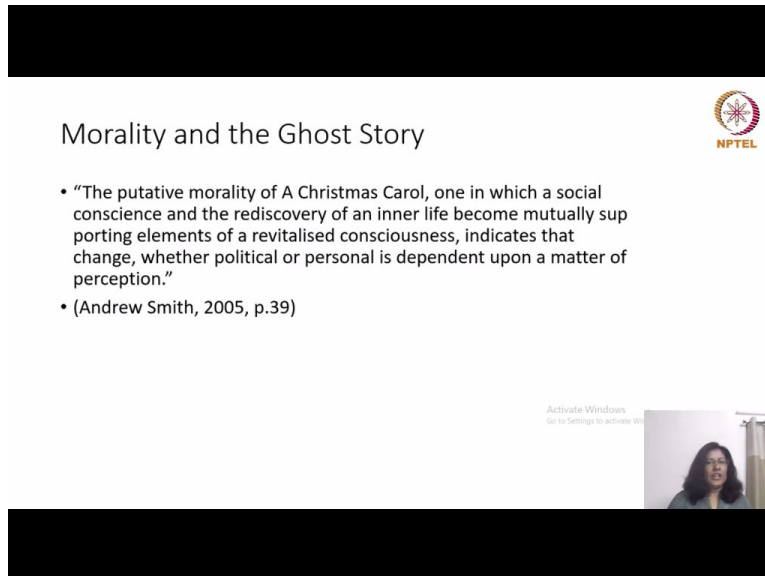
Gothic and *A Christmas Carol*

- “It is by examining Dickens' representation of ghosts in economic terms, that we can read the story against the supernatural grain and in doing so identify the presence of an unresolved aporia in his thinking which relates to perception, time, and the fluctuations of the new economic verities (money)”. (Andrew Smith, 2005, p.39)

“It is by examining Dickens’ representation of ghosts in economic terms that we can read the story against the supernatural grain and in doing so identify the presence of an unresolved aporia in his thinking, which relates to perception, time, and the fluctuations of the new economic verities that is money.”

What Andrew Smith is suggesting here is that the ghosts in A Christmas Carol must be read in economic terms. Only then the unresolved logic in terms of time and the fluctuations of economic systems and individual perception can be cleared up.


(Refer Slide Time: 22:49)



Morality and the Ghost Story

- “The putative morality of A Christmas Carol, one in which a social conscience and the rediscovery of an inner life become mutually supporting elements of a revitalised consciousness, indicates that change, whether political or personal is dependent upon a matter of perception.”
- (Andrew Smith, 2005, p.39)

Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows.

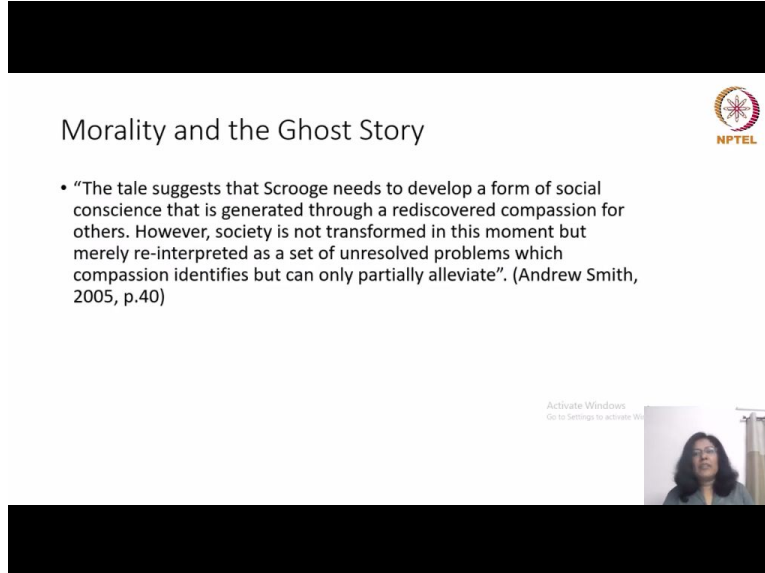


“The putative morality of A Christmas Carol, one in which a social conscience and the rediscovery of an inner life become mutually supportive elements of a revitalized consciousness indicate that change, whether political or personal, is dependent upon a matter of perception.”

The apparent morality of Christmas Carol is this sudden rediscovery of the good inner life, which kind of revitalizes an individual's consciousness and suddenly all kinds of transformations happen in once immediate circumstances, which is the case with Ebenezer Scrooge. So what is suggested in this novella is that, change, whether it is political or personal, becomes a matter of an individual's perception, the changes that one can bring into that perception. And that is what apparently Dickens stages in A Christmas Carol through Ebenezer Scrooge. He suddenly discovers that good inner life.

He is being taken by the ghost to his past, to his childhood, his difficult childhood, and then, he sees moments of happiness through his previous boss, through his fiancée and he sees the misery in unfortunate circumstances, say for example, in Bob Cratchit's life and all these have an impact on him and revitalizes his consciousness, changes his consciousness and his perception and changes that are brought into his society.

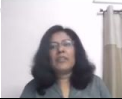
(Refer Slide Time: 24:35)



Morality and the Ghost Story

- “The tale suggests that Scrooge needs to develop a form of social conscience that is generated through a rediscovered compassion for others. However, society is not transformed in this moment but merely re-interpreted as a set of unresolved problems which compassion identifies but can only partially alleviate”. (Andrew Smith, 2005, p.40)

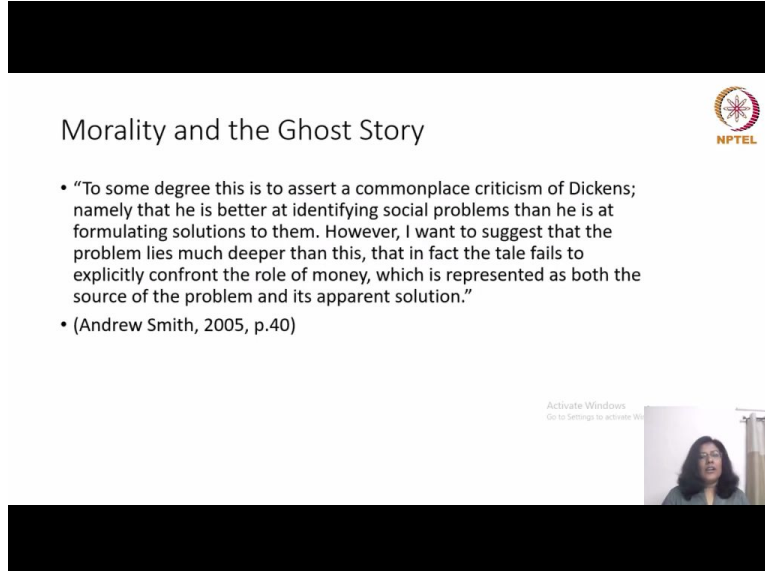
Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows



“The tale suggests that Scrooge needs to develop a form of social conscience that is generated through a rediscovered compassion for others. However, society is not transformed in this moment, but merely re-interpreted as a set of unresolved problems, which compassion identifies, but can only partially alleviate.”

What Smith is arguing here is that even though there is a rediscovered compassion on the part of Ebenezer Scrooge, even though these unresolved problems are to a certain extent resolved by Ebenezer Scrooge by his assurance to Bob Cratchit that he will look after his family and by the pay-rise. By Scrooge’s general change in behaviour, what is ultimately true according to Andrew Smith is that compassion can only partially alleviate the problems in the society, not completely resolve them.

(Refer Slide Time: 25:36)




Morality and the Ghost Story

NPTEL

- “To some degree this is to assert a commonplace criticism of Dickens; namely that he is better at identifying social problems than he is at formulating solutions to them. However, I want to suggest that the problem lies much deeper than this, that in fact the tale fails to explicitly confront the role of money, which is represented as both the source of the problem and its apparent solution.”
- (Andrew Smith, 2005, p.40)

Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows



“To some degree, this is to assert a commonplace criticism of Dickens, namely that he is better at identifying social problems than he is at formulating solutions to them. However, I want to suggest that the problem lies much deeper than this, that in fact, the tale fails to explicitly confront the role of money, which is represented as both the source of the problem and its apparent solution.”

There are two points that Andrew Smith very significantly brings forth here in the context of Dickens and his attempt at social reformation through fiction. One is that Dickens is very good at identifying social progress than he is at offering solutions to those problems. So he is good at spotting them, not at resolving them.

Secondly, what Smith argues here is that the tale fails to really confront the crux of the problem. It very clearly fails as he argues that it fails to confront the role of the money, which is apparently both the source of the problem and its solution. Money is the problem, but the story does not really confront the real nature of money.

So if there is no money in Bob Cratchit’s family, then the solution would be to offer more money. So it kind of gives a quick solution to the apparent problems which is spotted in this tale, but the real solution is not offered by this tale according to Andrew Smith.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:21)



Morality and the Ghost Story



- “Scrooge’s benign, seasonally redistributive capitalism, implies a change at the social periphery (granted to employees, or staged within the family) which does not touch the central mechanisms of economic power.” (Andrew Smith, 2005, p.40)

• Image source: <https://www.economist.com/prospero/2018/12/14/the-economic-sensibilities-of-a-christmas-carol>



“Scrooge’s benign, seasonally redistributive capitalism implies a change at the social periphery, granted to employees or staged within the family, which does not touch the central mechanisms of economic power.”

What Smith suggests here is that there is a benign manner in which Scrooge addresses some of the issues in society. It redistributes money in such a way that the unresolved problems are apparently solved in relation to employees, in relation to a family, but the real mechanisms of economic power are not addressed by this tale. That is very clear.

So Dickens makes use of the Gothic to mildly suggest that the distribution of money is creating certain problems in society. So that is the function of the Gothic nature of the story to point out some of the issues. But what it ultimately does is that it places the emphasis on the individual, on Ebenezer Scrooge, who is shown this cautionary narrative by the three spirits, and because of that cautionary narrative, he mends his ways and attempts resolution that is within his power and transforms himself and his immediate society to the extent that is possible by him.

Thank you for watching. I will continue in the next session.