

One Day, One Novel: Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*

Start date 2nd December 2017 **End date** 2nd December 2017

Venue Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge

Tutor Ulrike Horstmann-Guthrie, **Course code** 1718NDX012
MA, MPhil (Oxon)

Director of Programmes Emma Jennings

For further information on this course, please contact Public Programme Coordinator, Clare Kerr
clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk or 01223 746237

To book See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

Ulrike Horstmann-Guthrie received her undergraduate degree in English, American, Russian and German Literature from the University of Hamburg in 1977 and her M.Phil. in General and Comparative Literature from the University of Oxford in 1981. From 1977 she held lecturing posts at Leicester, Oxford, Manchester and Leeds Universities, and since 1985 has taught for the Institute of Continuing Education and the Department of German at the University of Cambridge. While teaching literature from 1700 to the present day, her particular interest centres on 19th-century fiction and she has published on English and German writers in their cultural and historical contexts, exploring connections and mutual influences.

Course programme

09:30	Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee
10:00 – 11:15	Dickens's Life and Writings
11:15	Coffee
11:45 – 13:00	A “punchy tract for the times”: the social context of <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	“Modern fairy story” and “national institution”: <i>A Christmas Carol</i> as a literary work of art
15:15	Tea
15:30 – 16:45	The Afterlife of <i>A Christmas Carol</i> in Film and Popular Culture
16:45	Day-school ends

Course syllabus

Aims:

1. To engage students in the critical appreciation of Dickens's iconic story
2. To increase students' awareness of the way in which this work and its reception was influenced by the social, political and moral preoccupations of the Victorian period.

Content:

Dickens's story *A Christmas Carol*, never out of print since it first appeared in 1843, has long since attained "institutional status" (Philip Collins) and it is widely believed that he virtually invented the English Christmas. While this may be exaggerated, Dickens can be credited with emphasising the concept of Christian charity as part of the celebrations, and it is this element that distinguishes the story from other manifestations of a revival of interest in Christmas traditions from the 1820s onwards. This work also inaugurated his lasting reputation as the purveyor of family values and images of home and hearth. At the same time he tapped into the increasingly popular genre of the ghost story and the custom of such stories being told by the fireside on Christmas Eve.

A Christmas Carol has been adapted in dozens of versions for stage and screen, and almost everyone knows it in some form. All the more reason then, to re-read the text itself and to analyse how Dickens's subject matter and narrative style interact to achieve its effects!

Presentation of the course:

The course will consist of informal lectures and discussion, with some close analysis of key extracts from the text.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- Show a wider knowledge of the subject, its origins and its legacy.
- Demonstrate skills of close reading in response to different passages.

Reading and resources list

***Set text: Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* (many paperback editions, Ebook)**

Students are requested to bring a copy to the class

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Parker, David	Christmas and Charles Dickens	AMS Press, New York, 2005
Tomalin, Claire	Charles Dickens. A Life	Viking, 2012
Waters, Catherine	Dickens and the Politics of the Family	CUP, Cambridge, 1997

Website addresses

<http://www.dickensfellowship.org/dickensian>

www.victorianweb.org

Additional information

Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:

<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

Refreshments

Tea and coffee and lunch will be provided. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746262.

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Information correct as of: 17 October 2017