

Bah Humbug to The Christmas Carol

December's finally here and I've been waiting to post this. We're all familiar with the classic story *The Christmas Carol*, and how "evil" Ebenezer Scrooge is. 2 years ago I shared on my Truth blog an essay by Butler Shaffer that completely changed my opinion of this story. Here's what I posted then:

I couldn't believe it when I saw it. A defense of that universally-loathed villain Ebenezer Scrooge. I recently came across this exceptionally written piece and absolutely must share it. I should warn you, however, that reading this may well destroy for you what is regarded as a well-beloved Christmas story. It did for me. No more do I have the same opinions of Scrooge or even Bob Cratchit. Actually, although it's caused me to remove this story from favorites list, I'm glad I've read this piece as it has connected my study of economics with my childhood.

What I didn't pay too much attention to at the time was this part:

The morally culpable wrongdoers in this shakedown of my client (Scrooge), though, have to be the spirits, who trespass, at night, upon the quiet enjoyment of my client's premises to terrify him with previews of his own demise should he not succumb to their demands to part with his money. No more blatant act of criminal extortion could be imagined than that visited upon my client by these spirits.

Much more could be said about this. Their methods, based as they are on violence, should be abhorrent to a civilized person. They kidnap Scrooge's mind and force him against his will to witness several terrifying episodes. When considering that the entire story is premised on a violence-induced and coerced change of heart, it becomes a horrible piece of literature. I absolutely hate this story. It's disgusting and deserving of a place inside a garbage heap among it's fellow refuse.

Wait to show it to your children until they're old enough to understand how evil and garbage-filled it is. It contains important lessons in this regard. And really, I can't

recommend highly enough a reading of this sobering essay by Shaffer.

Skyler.