

How does Dickens contradict Malthus with his portrayal of the Cratchit family Christmas?

Quotation	Analysis
<p>"Crathit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice turned gown, but brave in ribbons."</p>	<p>Provides an image of a hardworking, stoic woman who is cheerful despite the hardship. It depicts the resilience of poor Victorian women in general. The fact that she re designed her gown, although it was tatty shows the pride she had in herself despite the limited means. She is not defeated by the poverty and appalling working conditions that typified poor people. Therefore she was indeed 'brave' and 'brave in ribbons' determined to make Christmas a memorable celebration for her family.</p>
<p>"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night, and had to clear away this morning mother!"</p>	<p>Another illustration of the harsh working conditions. Martha is late and poorly paid, but she stays uncomplaining because she is accepting of her role in life. The idea that she worked late contradicts Malthus' theory that the poor are 'idle' and unworthy as these are the people who worked in the hardest conditions, for little pay and for very long hours.</p>
<p>"...he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it may be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see." (Here, you may want to focus on Christian belief at the time and hypocrisy of the middle and upper classes).</p>	<p>This quote relates directly to Christians and the hypocrisy of the rich, who declare themselves good Christians and attend church, but turn a blind eye to the needy. The quote refers to the bible and contradicts the way in which rich people treated the poor, despite their Christian disposition.</p>
<p>"...nobody thought at all that it was a small pudding for a large family. It would have been flat heresy to do so."</p>	<p>The Cratchits will make the most of any small offering and despite the fact that the pudding was barely large enough for their family, they were grateful of it.</p>
<p>"deliberating what particular investments he should favour when he came into receipt of that bewildering amount."</p>	<p>This is a sad representation of the poor and is almost sarcastic in its tone. 'bewildering' should infer a large sum, but it does in fact stress the meagre wage given to young poor workers. However, having never had any wages before, it seems like a large sum to</p>

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	the young Cratchit. Sadly he will soon realise that it is very little for the work he will be expected to do in order to earn it.
"If these shadows remain unaltered" (You should focus on the need for intervention from the wealthy to aid the poor).	'unaltered' is the key word here and refer mainly to the changing attitude of those who are in a position to change the destiny of poor people. The way in which rich people provided aid to the poor needed to be revised in order to ensure that these people were given the dignity they deserved and not left to rot in terrible living conditions, with appalling working regimes, which left in no position to ever alter their own destiny.