

# The Case of Science Abuse: Science for Crime in Well's *The Invisible Man*

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**Abstract:- Science is important knowledge that beneficial to human life. It is helpful, but also destructive depends on who is use it. This article explores the science abuse in *The Invisible Man* and describes the kind of crime using science conveyed in H. G. Wells's *The Invisible Man*. This article uses the qualitative method. The result of this study shows that the main character abused the power of his science knowledge and discovery to commit crime such as robbery, violations, terrorization, and murder to satisfy his personal greed.**

**Keywords:-** Science, Abuse, Crime, *The Invisible Man*, Wells.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Science is much too grand to be defined in a few words. According to Ziman (1984), the objective of science is to decipher myths and blind beliefs also provide unbiased knowledge base for all. Science has a huge contribution to human, it bring many benefits and make our life easier. Throughout civilization, science has played an important role in human lives. The origin may be based on curiosity and out of necessity but the intentions are mostly noble, to improve human life quality. It makes man's life easier and gives the chance to pursue various concerns such as education, ethics, create culture, and improve human conditions (Burke, J, Bergman, J, & Asimov, I, 1983).

In some cases, few science great discoveries are kept confidential and inaccessible to public. One of the reasons is to minimize the possibility of science abuse by irresponsible people who might take advantage and using it to harm others (Tudge, 1999). Science is very versatile. It can create medicine to deathly disease, but on the other hand it also can create the deathly disease itself. It is helpful, but also destructive depends on who is use it. Tudge (1999) argued that despite that fact science should be value-free, the idea might be corrupted in many different ways. When the science knowledge flow into human lives and manipulated by certain values, then it would become dangerous.

In the preface of his book, *Dangerous Science*, Rozell (2020) stated that few people would argue that scientists bear absolute no responsibility for how their work is used. Yet the potential use of research can be difficult to predict. Regardless the benefits human gained from science, it is important to acknowledge how scientific creativity can lead into destruction. It can be swayed by colleagues, military forces, and even ideology to utilize non-ethical choices (Thomas, 2013). The power without moral control is

dangerous and irresponsible (Donghaile, 2012). Because of its versatility, science can be abused by certain people in order to fulfil their own benefit. In his book *The Republican War of Science*, Mooney (2005) identified science abuse as an act of manipulating science to meet one personal interest, not only done by one particular person, but also can be in a massive scenario. At their best, scientists represent the best in humanity. They are an epitome of human intelligence and curiosity. However, they are still humans and can use their knowledge to the wrong way.

*The Invisible Man* (1897) is one of Wells's remarkable novel. It given numerous film adaptations since it was released, *The Invisible Man* (1933), *Abbott and Costello Meet the Invisible Man* (1951), *Memoirs of an Invisible Man* (1992), *Hollow Man* (2009), and *The Invisible Man* (2020). Wells modernized the idea of Plato's Ring of Gyges about the invisibility (Williams, 2010). This novel tells about a great invention discovered by a man named Griffin, a talented scientist. He did research in physiology and found a way to make his body invisible. Feeling superior after obtain such power, Griffin, driven by his fierce ambitions, grows to become violent and homicidal (Bergonzi, 1961). Griffin taking advantage of his invisibility and used it to commit many crimes like breaking people's home to rob money and also casually murder people who against him. The most obvious meaning of this novel is its moral warning about one's individual desire to go beyond human boundaries with science as a tool (Sirabian, 2001).

The purpose of this research is to identify the science abuse and the crimes as reflected in *The Invisible Man*, a scientific romance novel written by H. G. Wells. It elaborates how a scientific discovery corrupted by harmful intentions and lead to disaster for the inventor.

## II. WELLS AND HIS WORKS

Herbert George Wells or widely known as H. G. Wells was an English author, journalist, sociologist and historian. He was born in 1866, Bromley, England. At eighteenth, he won a scholarship to the Royal College of Science which he attended during the 1880s. This formal training in science linked with Wells's great works of science fiction (McDonnell et al, 1982). Wells's first published novel was *The Time Machine* (1895), the novel was successful and he began the series of science fiction novels that marked him as "Father of Modern Science Fiction". After his first significant breakthrough with *The Time Machine* in 1895, Wells continue with *War of The Worlds* serialized by a popular magazine *Pearson's* in 1898 (McLean, 2019).

Wells himself have a degree in biology, he has published scientific essay, and educational journalism in prestigious journals such as *Saturday Review* and *Nature* in the early 1890s. Wells in his interview with the Weekly Sun Literary Supplement in December 1895, Wells said that he is a simply a story-teller who happens to be a student of science (McLean, 2019).

These are his several famous works; *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897) and *War of The Worlds* (1898). Wells nominated several times for the Nobel Prize in Literature. He is a writer marked with originality and immense creative ideas, and wrote ahead of time. His works tells about alien invasions, aircraft, space, a time machine, new super intelligent race, and biological experiment that can turn human body to be invisible. Wells died, August 13 1946 in London. His legacy as “The Father of Science Fiction” still remains and often adapted into films and different works.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This research employed qualitative research. Qualitative research is an exploratory research (Arafah and Hasyim, 2020). The data were gathered from text and collected by using library research. The researcher collected data through the novel *The Invisible Man* by H. G Wells as the primary source, and from books, journals, and other material related to the topic of research. After that, the data in this research were deeply analyzed by applying descriptive method.

### IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Well's *The Invisible Man* regarded as one of privileged works of science fiction in the Victorian literature (Gahatraj, 2021). This novel explores the horrible potential when science fell into the wrong hand. In this novel, the main character named Griffin succeed transform himself into the Invisible Man after countless experiments and with the new ability he obtained with science knowledge he had, he commits many crime to satisfy his personal greed.

Griffin already had harmful intentions since day one he become an Invisible Man. He was well aware that the invisibility really gave him extraordinary advantages.

“My head was already teeming with plans of all the wild and wonderful things I had now impunity to do” (Wells, 2019: 142).

The narrative above implied Griffin's undesirable plans to abuse his invisibility. I can be sensed the growing feeling of self-importance and perverted intentions (Singh, 1984). Griffin committed several crimes such as robbery, violations, terrorization, and murder. “Developing science is vital but it needs to consider its implications on society” (Sekar V, 2018).

#### A. Robbery

Griffin described asa young tall albino man who won the medal in chemistry (Wells, 2019:110). In the story, he is a brilliant and clever, yet a secretive man who teaching in

Provincial College. A “shabby, poverty-struck” man (Wells, 2019:128). As a poor teacher who often struggle financially, Griffin obsession with wealth grew strong. Just like how he robbed his father to fund his research, he also robbed money from other people using his invisible ability.

“The story of flying money was true. And all about that neighbourhood, even from the august London and Country Banking Company, from the tills of shops and inns-doors standing that sunny weather entirely open-money had been quietly and dexterously making off that day in handfuls and rouleaux, floating quietly along the walls and shady places, dodging quickly from the approaching eyes of men” (Wells, 2019:94-95).

The narrative above contains the description about Griffin's robbery. The phrase “*flying money*” implied that the kind of thing happened often, people already aware and named the phenomenon. Cantor (1999) argued that the phrase describes the difficulty of tracing the movement of money. The narrative also tells about the places he robbed, from bank, shops, and inns. He robbed every place he can as long as the door is wide open. He used the advantage of invisibility very well so he could go in and out unnoticed and stealing money.

#### B. Violation and Terrorization

In the novel *The Invisible Man*, Griffin portrayed as ambitious man who always anxious about his research. Griffin had an ill temper and it seems doubled up when he turn into invisible since he aware of his ability. As the Invisible Man he abusing science to scare people and create a terror. He fired a whole house to cover his trail, destroying things around for fun, and commit violence to people. He enjoyed destroying things and scared people casually for the mere satisfaction of hurting (Wells, 2019: 83).

“Attention,” said the Voice, and then fiercely, “Don't try any games. Remember I can see your face if you can't see mine. You've got to go back to the house” (Wells, 2019:191).

This narrative above tells about Griffin's threat towards to Colonel Adye. The sentence “*Remember I can see your face if can't see mine*” implied the notion of superiority with his ability to be invisible, which is benefit him in combat since he cannot be seen by the opponent. Not only violations, Griffin also using his ability to spread terror and destroying things and shops in the street. The people call the terror he did as “The Raging Unseen” (Wells, 2019:83).

#### C. Murder

The first time Griffin told Kemp about his plan to establish a Reign of Terror, he stated that he did not hesitate to kill people. For him, killing is necessary to set example if people happened to against his will. In the story Griffin committed many violations and at least two murder. His first victim was an old man named Mr. Wicksteed. Mr. Wicksteed was killed by Griffin on his way home, he saw the old man walking alone and thought that it was a perfect

chance to prove his worthiness as something that people should fear. Mr. Wicksteed was the very last person to likely provoke danger himself, thus Griffin killed an innocent man only for his satisfaction to warn people about things he capable to do (Wells, 2019:183).

The second victim was Colonel Adye, a police officer who allied with Kemp to hunt Griffin. In his way to Kemp house to kill him Griffin encounter Colonel Adye and involved in fight which caused Adye killed. Griffin killed Adye with the revolver he snatched from the colonel and rushed in rage towards Kemp's house to kill him too (Wells, 2019:195). Griffin called his act of murder as “*judicious slaying*” as if he had right to judge people.

“Not wanton killing, but a judicious slaying. The point is, they know there is an Invisible Man-as well as we know there is an Invisible Man” (Wells, 2019: 174).

The phrase “*judicious slaying*” is ironic because he hurt and killed innocent people only to reach his goals and did not show any single remorse or regret at all. Griffin showed his aggressive tendency to abuse his power and create A Reign of Terror to establish power. He did not hesitate to killing innocent people as long as he reached his goal to be The Invisible Man who must be feared and complied with (Wells, 2019:173-174).

## V. CONCLUSSION

Science is very versatile, so far as the well-being of humanity is concerned science need guidance from other sources. Science itself is not enough, it may contain any corruption. Science may facilitate man to steal, abuse, kill or any crimes. The science works well in accordance to its goals if the scientists are concerned with the morality in creating and applying the scientific invention. Indeed, the morality is the foundation of any disciplines including science. It would prevent us become slaves to our own creation. In *The Invisible Man* it showed that Griffin used the benefit of his knowledge for harmful intentions and abused it to commit crime such as robbery, violation, terrorization, and murder. He is a parable of the dangerous power of science when it fell to wrong hands.

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