





H.G Wells's The Country of The Blind A Science Fiction Novel

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Abstract

The research led to the fact that science fiction is fully imagined, and well research can provide us with a road map for the future. It can become a kind of “testing ground” where innovations and their implications can be explored ahead of time. Science fiction is one of the forms of invention found in ancient mythology and started from that time. It has been called the “literature of ideas”. It’s writing an imaginative novel, short story or play scientifically. In addition, Science fiction discusses how to deal with human reactions to science and technological change. There are many critics of science fiction. One of them was H.G. Wells, who was the most important in this at that time, even called “Shakespeare of science fiction” (Wagar, W. Warren (2004), p. 7). In the 1950s, science fiction and television were closely related because the writers mentioned television in their works before it became available. Companion to science fiction is a group of international scholars gathered to discuss the contexts, themes and methods used in the works of science fiction writers. One of the authors and editors “Lester del Rey” has written many books in science fiction along with his wife “Judy-Lynn del Rey”, Arthur C. Clarke and Star Trek Others, such as H.G. Wells’s The Time Machine and Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World, warn about possible negative consequences.

Keywords Science fiction ,H.G Wells , Disability , The Country of The Blind

1.Introduction

For many people, especially those with a strong interest in the sciences, the mention of science fiction sometimes brings up memories of awful popular movies and TV shows they have seen — with scripts that defy logic or subvert the rules of nature. Public members sometimes confuse science fiction with fantasy (as many literary critics tend to do) and lump serious science fiction in with stories of unicorns and magical adventures. Yet, when you choose carefully, science fiction can be a remarkable tool for illuminating some of science's most exciting ideas and discoveries for a much wider audience.

2.Science fiction

Space travel, time travel, faster-than-light travel, parallel universes, and extraterrestrial

life are only a few examples of the innovative topics covered by science fiction. It typically avoids the supernatural, and unlike the closely related fantasy genre, its fantastical components are mostly believable within the context of the plot, which is based on fact. Science fiction is a “literature of ideas” since it frequently examines the possible effects of scientific and other advancements.

Science fiction is difficult to define, as it includes many subgenres and themes. Author and editor Damon Knight summed up the difficulty, saying, “Science fiction is what we point to when we say it” According to science fiction writer Robert A. Heinlein, “a handy short definition of almost all science fiction might read realistic speculation about possible future events, based sol-

idly on adequate knowledge of the real world, past and present, and on a thorough understanding of the nature and significance of the scientific method.” Rod Serling’s definition is “fantasy is the impossible made probable. Science fiction is the improbable made possible.” Lester del Rey wrote, «Even the devoted aficionado—or fan—has a hard time trying to explain what science fiction is», and that the reason for there not being a «full satisfactory definition» is that «there are no easily delineated limits to science fiction.»

Science fiction is primarily built on writing logically about hypothetical alternate scenarios or planets. It resembles fantasy but differs from it in that within the confines of the plot; its fantastical aspects are mostly conceivable

within the bounds of physical principles that have been scientifically proven or posited. (though some elements in a story might still be pure imaginative speculation). Science fiction frequently takes place in surroundings that conflict with accepted reality. Even still, much science fiction relies on the reader’s ability to suspend disbelief, which is made more accessible by the reader’s ability to imagine possible scientific explanations or solutions for specific fictitious components. A. A time is set in the future, in other timelines, or in a historical past that conflicts with accepted historical truths or the available archaeological evidence.

a. A setting or scenes in space (such as space travel), on alien worlds, or underground on the surface of the earth.

b. Characters that represent various forms of future human evolution, such as aliens, mutants, androids, humanoid robots, and others.

c. Science fiction-inspired or realistic technology, including ray guns, teleportation devices, and humanoid computers.

d. Scientific theories that are novel or defy established physical rules, such as time travel, wormholes, or communication or travel faster than the speed of light.

e. New and unique political or social systems, such as post-apocalyptic, dystopian, or post-scarcity.

f. Extrasensory faculties, including telepathy, telekinesis, and teleportation. And Between them, other universes or dimensions can exist.

3.Victorian Age

The Victorian era saw a surge in literary activity, with poets, writers, novelists, essayists, and philosophers all contributing. Many works dealt with issues originating from the industrial revolution, such as the effect of evolutionary theory, political science fiction movements, and social change (J. A. Cuddon1976, p.744). As a result, during this period, there was friction between science and religion, particularly in the second half, and religion was not progressing at the same rate as science. During this age of fast technological growth, social instability and scientific discovery of innovative concepts and theories developed, upsetting previously held beliefs. Victorian poetry was marked by moral dilemmas, emotional sadness, and perplexity about life and the

human condition (Sara Thorne, 2006, p.217).

The Victorian period, which spanned roughly from 1830 to 1900, was distinguished by massive social, economic, and intellectual transformations, massive wealth accumulation and, ironically, a wider social separation between the affluent and people experiencing poverty (Burke, L. M.: 2019). As a result, Victorian authors were more socially conscious than previous generations. Rather than seeking refuge in fiction or nature, as the Romantics did, they decided to address current social concerns directly. During this time, the short story took primacy over poetry, reversing the situation in the earlier Romantic literary tradition (Mandler, P., 1997: 155-175). Works published during Queen Victoria's

reign (1837–1901) are considered Victorian literature. England was undergoing a huge cultural transition at the time; established literary forms, Victorian architecture, and music had all experienced dramatic changes (Purchase, S.: 2006). As evidenced by Well's writings (Brantlinger, P., 1985:166-203), the Romantic Movement, which anticipated the Victorian Renaissance, portrayed the acquisition of wisdom, science fiction, and influence as a joyful endeavour (Brantlinger, P., 1985:166-203).

A rising number of individuals began to consider them as locations where they may uncover new chances throughout the Victorian period. During the reign of Queen Victoria, millions of individuals permanently left the United Kingdom in quest of a better life (Mur-

phy, J. H.: 2001). Many other Victorian authors continued to write on social issues and science fiction. Carlyle, for example, primarily attacked the laissez-faire approach in his books *The French Revolution* (1837) and *Past and Present* (1843). (Carter, R. and McRae, J., 1996).

As a result, many Victorian literary works expressed this state of inconsistency.

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) is regarded as one of the most distinguished authors of the late nineteenth century who wrote about the struggles of Victorians. Hardy deals with the tension between conventional and contemporary ideals and science fiction in each of his novels (ibid.). As far as the present research is concerned, there are many motives behind choosing the Victorian novel

and short story as a corpus. In several respects, the Victorians tend to be British people's contemporaries: national, educational, religious, and cultural challenges are similar to the difficulties that British people face today. Furthermore, during the Victorian era, many literary works were produced, concise stories dealing with social realities and science fiction during the Industrial Revolution (Cuddon, J. A: 1992). On these premises, the Victorian short story has been chosen as a subject of the present inquiry.

4.H.G Wells (1866-1946)

One of the most prolific authors of the modern age, H. G. Wells (1866–1946), produced thirty novels, an equal number of scientific romances, seventy short stories, a sizable body of non-fiction publications, and a

tonne of journalism over the course of fifty years. The most well-known of his exceptional works, *Kipps*, *Tono-Bungay*, and *The History of Mr. Polly*, are among those written in the English radical tradition of Dickens and Thackeray.

He developed into more than just a novelist; he was also a journalist, a social activist, and a superb teacher and communicator. In his tireless efforts to eradicate all traces of Victorian social, moral, and religious attitudes from 20th-century life, he was an inventive social thinker. He was a positivist in a world that was getting more and more pessimistic about the complexities of modern existence. Wells made a significant effort to accurately and critically depict daily life in his era. He included the clear-eyed acceptance

of facts and the in-depth research of contemporary circumstances into his books.¹¹ He rose to prominence as a renowned iconoclast and futurist, one of his time's moral opponents, and a remarkable foreteller of events to come. He had a significant impact on the social and intellectual landscape of the 20th century. The last of the great utopians, he was. ¹² L. G. Wells: Literary Achievements Wells' interest in social reform was largely inspired by his own experiences as a youngster and a poor student.

The Victorian era was marked by a number of uncomfortable societal changes that more than any other time prompted writers to express their opinions on the pressing concerns influencing the rest of society. As a result, lit-

erature and writers' attention were focused on the social issues that were erupting all around them.¹ They focused on issues like mass education, the expansion of industry and the emergence of materialistic philosophy, as well as the hardship of the newly industrialised worker. Numerous authors improved literature for societal gain. Particularly in the works of Arnold Bennet, John Galsworthy, and H. G. Wells, realism seemed to be intensifying. These novelists made a concerted effort to accurately and somewhat propagandistically depict daily life in their day. The majority of social life was illiterate and archaic. The average social life was as silent as the crops that were still standing; it was seasonal and cyclical like nature herself, and it only hinted at the future by

repeating itself over and over again. As a result, they came up with a number of ideas about how to make English society better. Galsworthy criticised the state of the world from the perspective of The novel has been a potent tool for social commentary during the entirety of the 14th century. and social reform.

H. G. Wells (1477-1987) was one of the writers who sought a better, or in other words, a perfect society through his writings. Wells was pretty much a man of the world, at home in the world at all social levels, with a keen eye for the follies and pretences of the foolish and pretentious people of all classes. He believed implicitly in the power of literature to change society, and he acted accordingly, in private, with a presumed peer. He attempt-

ed to shed light on life in England in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. The period which Wells reflects is distinguished in the history of England. The nation has gained the upper hand in Europe due to the industrial revolution, whereas severe social inequality has been devastating English society deep inside. It exists in the form of inequality between the rich and the poor, miserable working conditions, an unjust system, and double standard treatment of women. Some of Wells's novels are critiques of the world's distribution of wealth criticizing the upper class sharply. Some criticize the system and concentrate on feminist issues.

5.His works

His famous scientific romances are *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Stolen Bacillus*

and *Other Stories* (1895), *The Wonderful Visit* (1895), *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897), *The War of the Worlds* (1898), *The First Man in the Moon* (1901), and *The Food of the Gods* (1904). The first novel was named "*The Time Machine*", and it was the first science fiction novella; the work is generally credited with the popularization of the concept of time travel through using a vehicle or device to travel purposely and selectively forward or backwards through the term "time".

The second novel was named "*The Wonderful Visit*". It was a famous novel about an angel creature which is unlike an angel of religion, that worked as a protagonist of contemporary England. It was classified into contemporary fantasy. The true greatness of

Wells lies in his sociological novels Kipps (1905), Tono-Bungay (1909), The History of Mr Polly (1910), The New Machiavelli (1911) and The World of Mr Clissold (1926).

These novels are noticeable for presenting vivid, realistic pictures of contemporary society, especially of the lower middle classes with which Wells was well acquainted. Marriage (1912) and The Passionate Friends (1913) begin a series of novels in which Wells' interest in social problems outweighs considerations of story and character. He also wrote several pamphlets and treatises. His The Outline of History (1920), A Short History of the World (1922) and Experiments in Autobiography deserve mention. The novels of his maturity are The Autocracy of Mr. Parham (1930), Brynhild (1937), Apro-

pos of Dolores (1938) and The Holy Terror (1939).

His books offer a sober perspective on life. Wells frequently employed fiction for instructional objectives. In his writings, he has introduced a variety of characters. His best characters are from the lower middle class, which he humorously and sympathetically analysed.. His great novels "have a spontaneous vitality and unfailing good humour, a warmth of human understanding and a natural style which entitle them to a high place in twentieth-century fiction".

H.G. Wells wrote the science fiction novel "The Country of the Blind." It was first

published in 1904 in The Strand. The narrative follows Nunez, a climber who falls down a mountain and enters the Country of the Blind, a

small, lonely valley in

Ecuador, by mistake. He believes that because he can see, the valley's blind residents

will follow his leadership. Instead, they assume he is delusional and is as blind as they are. (C. L. Gale, 2016).

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6.The Country of The Blind

One of H.G. Wells' most powerful short stories is The Blind Country. It was initially published in April 1904, along with other noteworthy collections that dealt with defining characteristics of blinds or blindness. English author Herbert George Wells was born in 1946. Numerous novels, short stories, works of social commentary, history, biography, and autobiography were also written by him. In addition, he wrote a lot of novels, including science fiction and books about fun games. He was a well-known person during his existence.

He was able to advance his literary talent to a broad, progressive view of the entire world. He gave his writing



credibility by incorporating familiar elements around a single unusual assumption per work. His first novel, *The Time Machine*, was published in 1895. Other notable works by him include *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897), and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). Because of his interest in military science fiction, such as *War in the Air* (1907), he was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature four times. (Hollywood, 2022,10). Throughout his life, he was also highly interested in biology, and his perspective on ethical issues emerged within the context of his unique and essential drawing. (Longmans, Green, 1951,p.99). A mountaineer named Nuez trips and tumbles down the far side while attempting to scale Parascotopetl, a fictional moun-

tain in Ecuador. He finds a valley wholly sealed off from the outside world by sheer cliffs at the bottom of his descent, down a snow-slope under the mountain's shadow. Nuez is unaware he has found the famous "Country of the Blind." Before an earthquake permanently sealed off the valley from future explorers by reshaping the surrounding mountains, the valley had been a shelter for inhabitants fleeing the oppression of Spanish authorities.

The isolated tribe thrived throughout time despite an illness that struck them early and left all babies blind. The residual senses of the populace heightened as the blindness gradually spread over several generations. Hamlet had become accustomed to life without sight when the last person

in the picture passed away.

7. Blindness in The Country of The Blind

In H. G. Wells's *The Country of the Blind*, blindness is the centre of the plot and can be interpreted as a symbol of ignorance; finally, in graphic design, blindness could only focus on the aesthetic part of designing and forget the practical aspect of the design. Blindness is a form of disability. By definition, disability refers to being physically incapacitated to an extent where one lacks the normal five senses. In the story, blindness is the form of disability that the members of the isolated community in Ecuador face. (Bolt, David, the metanarrative of *Blindness*, 2013)

The story unusually showcases blindness. Usually, people with disability are perceived to be unable. However,

from reading the story, one is exposed to a different perspective of thinking, which gives insight into the lives of people with disabilities. The depiction of blindness takes a straightforward disability-as-tragedy narrative, depicting both individual devastation and the disintegration of society that results from blindness. However, it does challenge the attachment of moral value to sightedness. The story starts with a hiker falling into an enclosed valley. He finds out that not only is the valley inhabited, but its inhabitants are also all blind. (Wells, 1997:21)

From the start, the hiker, Nuñez, is certain he's superior to all the blind villagers. He repeats in his head, "In the Country of the Blind, the One-Eyed Man is King". As much as Nuez tries to persuade the peas-

ants of the beauty of sight, it is clear that they find it difficult to do so. When people refer to eyes as “irritating bodies” The villagers’ lack of open-mindedness is immensely upsetting, as seen by their impatience and irritation with his continuous praise of his sight. By referring to eyes as “queer things,” something that is not normal or odd, shows the communities unwillingness to acknowledge an outsider. (Fernando Nuñez de Guzmán (1578)

Isolation in The Country of The Blind

The term isolation and seclusion means the state of “one who is alone. Solitude may imply being apart from all human beings or being cut off by wishes or circumstances from one’s usual associates. A few quiet hours of solitude and isolation stress detachment

from others, often involuntarily”. (Searles, The Wellsian 1991, pp. 29–33)

The people in this story (the villagers) reflect how society has been constructed around particular assumptions of ability and how that might differ in another community, be it an isolated village or a world changed by infection or Cold War-era weapons. They isolated not only from people but from the outside world; they even had their doctors, farmers and other handcraft people in South America, where a community grew up, separated from the rest of civilisation. A disease struck the community, which meant that people went blind until each new generation was born entirely sightless. Lance St. John Butler. Guide to Short Fiction 2019 On the other hand, Nunez, an

expert mountain climber, falls into this strange and isolated society of “non-seeing” people - claimed to have existed for fifteen generations and cut off from the rest of the world. Nunez decides quickly that “in the country of blind people, the one-eyed man is king “because he thinks that they do not have the same knowledge and view of the world as he does. He fails in his efforts to be their king and gets trapped instead, and they think that he is going mad, so the village doctor suggests taking his eye out; Nunez ends the story by running away from the people he sought to colonise so this is what we view the story as representing, his imperial venture is a resounding failure. - Adapted from the 1904 story of H. G. Wells of the same name. Pedro de la Vega (1602).

8.Disability in The Country Of The Blind

A condition or function assessed to be significantly diminished compared to an individual's or groups norm qualifies as a handicap. The phrase is used to describe a person's functionality, including physical limitations, sensory limitations, cognitive limitations, intellectual limitations, mental illnesses, and different chronic health conditions. So “Disability is conceptualized as being a multidimensional experience for the person involved. There may be effects on organs or body parts, and there may be effects on a person's participation in areas of life”. Reindal ,SM. Disability Journal of Medical Ethics2000;26:89–94).

Since the concept of disability in the nation of blind people utilises the condescending

term “regular,” it presents extra difficulties. If this is applied statistically, then having eyes is abnormal and not having eyes is normal in H G Wells’s Valley. Bourse makes an effort to get around this issue, even if he does so while discussing disease and illness rather than disability. “the single unifying property of all recognized diseases . . . appears to be this: that they interfere with one or more functions typically performed within members of the species”, and that what would make the anophthalmia abnormal is that it is “unnatural . . . by being atypical”. (Boorse C. , 1981, p11-13.

In the country of blind people, disability takes a prominent place in this village; they have been blind for a few generations, completely sightless; they got used to their situa-

tion, and they had no issue living like that until an outsider came to their valley and tried to convene and talk to them about the importance of the sight so he can rule them or be their king. Still, eventually, he failed and ran away. Science fiction studies 44(2), 396-2017.

9.Science Fiction in The Country of The Blind

One of H.C. Wells’ most well-known short stories, The Blind Country, initially appeared in a newspaper in 1904 and was collected in a collection in 1911. In the story, a village that was cut off from the rest of civilization rose up in a strange valley in South America. People in the town began to go blind as a result of a disease, and each new generation was born completely blind. Nun-ez, an Ecuadorian, fell while serving as a mountain guide

for several Englishmen, and he wound up in this situation. 'country of the blind'. He has heard the legends about them and regards the whole thing as an adventure. He recalls the old proverb, 'In the Country of the Blind, the One-Eyed Man is King', and thinks he will 'teach' them about the world beyond their village (Gorge,1862; P317).

"In the Country of the Blind, the One-Eyed Man is King". (H.G.Wells , p:11)

This quotation is said in Nunez's head after the three men found him near the rocks. The three blind men stood side by side, not looking at him but with their ears directed towards him, judging him by his unfamiliar steps. Nunez was sure that they were blind and then remembered the legends and the stories of the Valley

of the Country of the Blind and kept repeating in his head this quotation. Thinking by his sight, he can be their king.

"Out of the world. Over mountains and glaciers; right over above there, half-way to the sun. Out of the great, big world that goes down, twelve days' journey to the sea." (H.G.Wells, p:13)

Nunez here was trying to explain where he came from after Pedro asked him, and none of the three men who found Pedro near the rock seemed to understand what he was trying to say or even explain; at some point, they thought he was a strange creature after that Pedro suggest that they should take him to their elders thinking they could know what he is.

"Those queer things that are called the eyes and which exist

to make an agreeable depression in the face are diseased, in the case of Nunez, in such a way as to affect his brain. They are greatly distended, he has eye-lashes, and his eyelids move, and consequently, his brain is in a state of constant irritation and distraction”(H.G.Wells, p: 40)

After taking Nunez to the doctor, thinking he was going mad because he was trying to convince them about the importance of sight, here comes the quotation, the doctor said that his eyes are the reason. It's distracting him from reality, so it should be removed.

“It is these eyes of mine you won, these eyes that hold me to you, that these idiots seek. Instead, I must touch you, hear you, and never see you again. I must come under that roof of rock and stone and darkness,

that horrible roof under which your imaginations stoop . . . no; you would not have me do that?” (H.G.Wells, p:37)

After taking Nunez to the doctor, thinking he was going mad because he was trying to convince them about the importance of sight, here comes the quotation , the doctor said that his eyes are the reason and it's distracting him from reality , so it should be removed.

“There is no such word as see,” said the blind man after a pause. “Cease this folly and follow the sound of my feet.” (H.G.Wells , p: 20)

One of the villagers was calling out to Nunez; he stood up, smiling. He would show these people once and for all what sight would do for a man. They would seek him but not find him. The blind man called him again, but instead of that, Nun-

ez started laughing loudly; the man heard his voice and came running toward the path of his voice; the man kept complaining about why he did not come when he called or even just made a sound ,Nunez replied by saying he does need to follow his sound he could see the way by his on , the man said there is no such a thing as see . Nunez felt a little annoyed, but he had no choice to follow the blind man.

Conclusion

In The Country of the Blind is concluded first, Nuñez is a colonial person that wants everything for himself, including the blind's village, but everything changed when he lives with them , And he hates it for two reasons they wanted him blind too and the kind of life they were living. He wants to adventure more, searching

for a better life . After all of this , Finding That all Nuñez was looking for its to live away from corruption, unawareness and intolerance. Furthermore , The blind people were an ignorant , arrogant, envious and hateful society. For example, when Nuñez tries to tell them about life outside, and there are people can see, they call him mad, and try to take off his last eye finding these people just want to believe what they think and don't trust another person if they had to kill anyone want to change their belief . which there is care about what they take from it and not what they offer it. Also finding, symbolism in the country of the blind one of this symbol is blindness, which represents unawareness, and the one-eyed king represents the differences. Colonialism was also mentioned



before with Nuñez.

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