

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IN JOHN GRISHAM'S *THE FIRM*:
SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**



RESEARCH PAPER

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by:

Agustina Rizqianti

A 320050324

**SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The Firm is the one of the most popular novel. *The Firm* is the John Grisham's second novel published in 1 February 1991(first edition) and published by Random House(First edition). The genre of this novel is legal thriller and has 432 pages and 41 chapters. The author of *The Firm* is John Grisham. He explored *The Firm* and became a blockbuster and established him as king of the genre.

The Firm tells about intelligent but poor man, Mitchell Y McDeere. He is a fresh graduation from Harvard University and wishing to be a tax lawyer. He comes from broken home and has crazy mother. Besides that, his only one of family is criminal brother.

Mitchell Y McDeere is portrayed as an ambitious person and he has desire to be rich and successful person. Because of his intelligent, he receives a call from several big firms. Job offering also comes from a small but prosperous law firm, namely Bendini Lambert and Locke. He is secure by the money and gifts showered on him and he decides to join the firm. Unfortunately, the firm is illegal business. Mitch also finds a mysterious tragedy strikes the firm and two members get killed in an accident. After about tragedy, Mitch begins investigation and joins with FBI.

Mitchell is appointed to help FBI's mission to get the document of Bendini Lambert and Locke. However, jc¹ with FBI hard risk for him, a mafia

will kill him if he joins with FBI. In other side, if Mitchell joins with illegal business, so he will be sent to the prison. In this case, Mitchell must choose whether work with FBI or stay with the firm.

Mitchell Y McDeere as a recent Harvard law graduate feels that he has morality to expose evils in the firm. Mitchell and his wife, Abby must find to expose the secret behind the high death rate at the firm. As the result, Mitchell try to copy the firm's secret files. Finally, Mitchell and his family is safe in Grand Cayman while FBI finds the secret document in a motel and able to arrest the firm and mafia into the prison.

There are many responses about *The firm* novel. Matt suggest that the firm is a brisk thriller that starts goods and the ends with a rowdy finale. Then again, the supporting characters are all really good as it the pacing of the story (Matt, 2002). Beside that, Pizza also suggest that the novel is the truly amazing Grisham book .The book full of plot twist and suspense. It also starts out simple and fairly easy read (Pizza,2005: <http://www.Amazon.com/>).

The Firm also has a critical from the readers. Shane suggests that the novel giving example a large corporation can deceive and manipulate employees with money and other ways of black mail. This novel shows that deception is everywhere, including the legal system (Shane, 2003:<http://www.Bookrags.com/>). In other side, Bills also suggest that the story of *The Firm* shows that the intricacies of legal and political system that

full of sinister twist and not good sequel (Bills,2008 <http://www.Amazon.com/>).

The Firm becomes bestselling novel of 1991 for spending 47 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list. The market of this novel get fantastic price. It also became a popular novel in America.

The appealing of this novel, are the story tells about a real life of lawyer. The reader gets some knowledge and information that detailed and full of law information. John Grisham uses the major character, Mitchell Y McDeere as a new attorney. He is full of idealism and ethics. However, Mitch faces moral conflict. In one side, the firm where he works demands his loyalty. Beside that, the whole of the story is interesting to be discussed. It is about the condition of law in America at the 1990s period that full of illegal business. In other side, this story also about a person who must decide something when he must decide two choices, a leaves the firm at least no one ever resigns or join with FBI. In this novel, John Grisham makes this novel become interesting and gripping, because in this case, Mitch faces anxiety. And the last, this novel describe about a social justice for us, because of the developing era, there is no social justice in civil society. In the real world, the social justice is not the important things. Sometimes a right justice lost when someone has money or important position.

Social Justice in John Grisham's *The Firm* novel is one aspect to discuss. If we read this novel, we can see that every human need a justice all of the aspect. The aspects are in social, politics, economy, education and any

other things. One of them in social aspect. These are reflected in the sociological aspects.

The writer chooses this novel because the story is very exciting. The writer uses sociological approach in analyzing it. This theory gives stress or underlying the relation between the literary work and the society where the work appears. Then, the writer writes to analyze this novel with the title "*Social Justice in John Grisham's The Firm: Sociological Approach*".

B. Literature Review

In this study, the researcher has read other paper that relevant to the novel entitled *The Firm* by John Grisham. As far as her understanding, the writer finds another different approach in relation with this novel. The writer finds the analysis using psychological approach.

Hesti Ekowati, in her research paper (2006) entitled "Anxiety in John Grisham *The Firm*: Psychoanalytic Approach" analyzed the personality on major character Mitchell Mc Deere. He is reflected as an anxious person and confused when he must solve his problem in his work. Hesti Ekowati's research are useful for the writer who uses different approach to get more information related in John Grisham's *The Firm*. In this study, the researcher tries to analyze the novel from sociological approach.

C. Problem Statement

The problem statement of the study is “How is the social justice reflected in John Grisham’s *The Firm*?”

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the writer only focuses on Social Justice that is found in John Grisham’s *The Firm* by using sociological approach, especially in sociology of society.

E. Objective of the Study

In relation to the problem statement above, the research is intended:

1. To analyze the novel based on its structural elements.
2. To analyze the novel based on sociological approach.

F. Benefit of the Study

The writer finds the benefit that can be taken from this study as follows:

a. Theoretical Benefit

The result of the research can be useful for the readers in giving information and knowledge, especially the literary study on *The Firm* by John Grisham.

b. Practical Benefit

This research has benefit to the readers in order to get better understanding of the novel, particularly from the sociological approach.

G. Research Method

1. Type of Research

The researcher analyzes the data using qualitative method that does not include any calculation and numerating.

2. Object of the Study

The researcher uses the John Grisham's novel entitled *The Firm* as the object of the study.

3. Type of Data and Data Source

There are two data sources namely primary data source and secondary data source.

a. Primary data source

The primary data source of the study is the novel entitled *The Firm* written by John Grisham

b. Secondary data source

The secondary data sources are books and other sources that support the analysis.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

Technique of data collection is library research by collecting and selecting both the primary data and secondary data. The researcher will involve some required steps:

- a. Reading the novel repeatedly to get deep understanding
- b. Determining the character that will be analyzed
- c. Reading some related books to find out the theory, data and information required
- d. Taking notes of important in both primary data and secondary data
- e. Classifying and determining the relevant data
- f. Arranging and developing the selected materials into good unity concerning with the topic of the study

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The method employed in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the relationship between the novel and the sociological theory to show how social justice is reflected in the story and the characters in John Grisham's *The Firm*.

H. Paper Organization

The writer constructs the paper organization into six chapters in order to give understanding to the reader on this research paper. Chapter I is introduction, it deals with background of the study, literature review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of

the study, research method and paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory explaining sociological perspective to analyze the novel. Chapter III is the historical background of American Society in the late of twentieth century with all influenced and happened. Chapter IV is structural analysis, which explains the structural elements and discussion of the novel. Chapter V is sociological analysis and Chapter VI is conclusion and suggestion of the research.