



**THE OBSESSION OF CONTROL IN THE CHARACTER “EVE
BLACKWELL” IN SIDNEY SHELDON’S *MASTER OF THE GAME***

A THESIS

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Sarjana Degree Majoring American
Cultural Studies in English Department
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PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer honestly confirms that she compiles this thesis by herself and without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3 and diploma degree of any university. The writer ascertains also that she does not quote any material from other publications except from the reference mentioned.

Semarang, September 2011

Nurhidayah Apridita

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“Failure is a blessing in disguise.”

(Devastation and Reform, Relient K)

“Denn gestern war gestern und heut ist alles neu.”

(Because yesterday belongs to the past and today all is new)

(Keine Angst, Silbermond)

“A little bit of faith, a little bit of trust.

A little bit of never giving up.”

(A Little More Us, Stereo Skyline)

“I’d rather forget and not slow down

than gather regret for the what I can't change now.”
(*Forget and Not Slow Down, Relient K*)

*I dedicate this thesis to my family,
friends and people getting in and out of my life*
“Thank you... *for making me who I am today 'cause
somehow I'm proud of myself.”*

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Semarang, September 2011

Nurhidayah Apridita

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ABSTRAKSI

Dalam suatu kelompok masyarakat, terdapat berbagai jenis kepribadian. Meskipun mereka hidup secara berdampingan dalam lingkungan yang sama, kemungkinan akan terjadinya konflik sangatlah terbuka lebar. Dalam skripsi ini, penulis membahas jenis kepribadian narsistik, konflik – konflik yang dihadapi. dengan orang – orang disekitarnya maupun dengan dirinya sendiri, serta berakhirnya obsesi untuk pengendalian dari tokoh bernama Eve Blackwell dalam novel berjudul *Master of the Game* karya Sidney Sheldon. Keinginan si tokoh untuk memenangkan perhatian sang nenek dari saudari kembarnya berkembang menjadi keinginan akan kepuasan lahir dan batin dengan mengendalikan orang – orang disekitarnya termasuk dalam hubungan seks. Tujuan penulisan skripsi ini adalah untuk memaparkan usaha – usaha Eve Blackwell, dalam novel *Master of the Game* karya Sidney Sheldon, untuk mengendalikan orang – orang disekitarnya, konflik – konflik yang dihadapinya dan juga akhir dari obsesi akan kendalinya.

Untuk menganalisis tokoh ini, penulis menggunakan metode pendekatan struktural dan psikologis dengan menggabungkan teori narsisisme dari Joanna M. Ashmun dan teori obsesi dari S. Rachman. Penulis mengumpulkan data – data yang dibutuhkan dengan menggunakan metode penelitian pustaka.

Setelah melakukan analisis yang ditunjang oleh data - data, kita dapat mengetahui bahwa orang berkepribadian narsistik seperti tokoh Eve Blackwell , yang kekuatan utamanya ada pada parasnya yang cantik, dapat menghalalkan segala cara untuk mewujudkan keinginannya. Namun dalam usaha – usahanya tersebut muncul berbagai bentuk perlawanan yang akan berujung pada konflik, baik internal maupun eksternal. Di bagian akhir analisis, kita juga dapat mengetahui bahwa dominasi orang berkepribadian narsistik dapat dihentikan oleh

kemunculan orang yang tepat seperti Keith Webster, yang berprofesi sebagai dokter operasi plastik, di waktu yang tepat.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the Study

Novel is a kind of literary works in the form of fiction which can be used to deliver the author's idea. The idea is generally about love, family, wars, social, political, educational and cultural issues. It usually reflects the actual phenomena which occur in the society. In *Fiction: the Elements of Fiction*, Laurence Perrine states that “Initially, therefore, fiction may be classified into two broad categories: literature of escape and literature of interpretation” (1987: 3).

Literature of escape is written only to entertain the readers. The author has no hidden intention behind the writing of this fictional work. The main purpose of the author is that his work can help the readers to temporarily get over their problems in their real life. Reading it can also refresh their mind. Literature of escape is surely an object of pleasure (Perrine, 1987: 4).

On the contrary, literature of interpretation is created not only to entertain but also to give deeper awareness about many aspects in life to the readers. By reading it, we can be more aware of the social, cultural, political and educational issues. It can also make us understand more about our world. If deeply studied, literature of interpretation not only is pleasing but also can give us more understanding about life (Perrine, 1987: 4).

The object of this thesis is a novel by Sidney Sheldon, entitled *Master of the Game*. The setting of time of this novel ranges from 1883 to 1975 and the setting of place changes from South Africa to the United States. At the beginning, the story is about a Scottish named Jamie McGregor, who comes to South Africa to find diamonds. After going through both physical and psychological sufferings, he finally gets what he wants and establishes Kruger-Brent Ltd. (named after two guards at where he steals diamonds from), which later becomes one of the biggest companies in the world. The story passes to his daughter, Kate, who would do anything to keep the company standing tall. Then there is Tony, Kate's son, who

goes to France to study art, instead of taking part in his family's company. There are also Tony's twin daughters, Eve who is ambitious but evil and Alexandra who is lovely.

According to the previously-mentioned classifications, novel *Master of the Game* by Sidney Sheldon is included to the second classification, literature of interpretation. The first reason is that the story is so complex and there are a lot of things which can be dug out and analyzed. And the second is that this story can give us more understanding about the psychological conditions of various people. From the reason above, this four-generation story can be identified as interpretative literature.

The specific thing which will be analyzed by the writer is the character "Eve Blackwell" who is pretty, ambitious but evil. Her obsession of control is an interesting thing to analyze. The writer will analyze this character by using psychological approach and the combination of theories of narcissism and obsession.

2. Scope of the Study

To be more effective, in writing this thesis, the writer will focus on 3 (three) matters, namely:

1. The characters which exist in *Master of the Game*,
2. The way Eve Blackwell controls the people around her, including her grandmother, her twin sister and her sexual partners, and the conflicts involved in it,
3. The end of Eve Blackwell's obsession of control.

3. Purpose of the Study

1. To analyze the characters in *Master of the Game*
2. To analyze how Eve Blackwell controls her grandmother, her twin sister, and her sexual partners, and the conflicts involved,
3. To analyze the ending of Eve Blackwell's obsession of control.

4. Methods of the Study

1. Methods of Approach

a. Exponential Approach

By using exponential approach, the writer will discuss the characters and conflicts involved in Sidney Sheldon's *Master of the Game*. In *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, Guerin et al. states "We designate this method as the exponential approach because the inclusiveness of that term suggests at once the several meanings of motif, image, symbol, and archetype" (1992: 197).

b. Psychological Approach

According to Guerin et al. "... psychological interpretation can afford many profound clues toward solving a work's thematic and symbolic mysteries, ..." (1992:

117). Thus the writer will analyze the character of “Eve Blackwell” by using the theories of narcissism and obsession.

1. Method of Research

a. Library Research

Through library research method, the writer wishes that it would be easier for her to analyze the matter. The main reference source is a novel by Sidney Sheldon, entitled *Master of the Game*, while the additional reference sources are books and data from the internet which can be used to support the analysis of the topic.

5. Organization of Writing

- CHAPTER 1 : Introduction. This chapter consists of background of the study, scope of the study, purposes of study, methods of study, as well as organization of writing.
- CHAPTER 2 : Summary of novel *Master of the Game* and biography of Sidney Sheldon.
- CHAPTER 3 : Literary review. This chapter consists of the literal explanations of character, conflict, sibling rivalry and the sexual zone which includes female phallic stage, displacement, theory of narcissism and obsession.
- CHAPTER 4 : Analysis. This chapter consists of the characterization of Eve Blackwell as well as the other characters, the explanations of Eve Blackwell’s control on her grandmother, her twin sister and her sexual partners including the conflicts involved, and the end of Eve Blackwell’s obsession of control.
- CHAPTER 5 : Conclusion
- REFERENCES

CHAPTER II

SYNOPSIS OF THE NOVEL AND BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

1. SYNOPSIS OF *MASTER OF THE GAME*

Jamie McGregor leaves his family almost 8000 miles away in Scotland and then, in

Klipdrift, South Africa, he builds his own company (Kruger – Brent, Ltd.) with blood, sweat, betrayals and revenges. He and his wife, Margaret van der Merwe, passes it down to their only daughter, Kate. She makes it grow bigger everyday, even bigger than anyone else can imagine, including her husband, David Blackwell. She wishes that her son, Tony, will take it over someday, but he is not interested at all and ends up in a mental asylum for being homicidal schizophrenic after his wife, Marianne, dies. Now, Kate's only hope for taking care of the company when she is no longer able is Tony's twin daughters

Kate takes the twins home and names them Eve and Alexandra. They are both bright babies but from the beginning it is apparently Eve who is the leader. Because of Alexandra, Eve feels that she is being cheated. She wants everything for herself so every night she prays to God to take Alexandra's life. Her prayer is unanswered so she decides to do it herself. She does whatever it takes to kill Alexandra but it all fails. Not being successful of making Alexandra dead, she makes her a very docile twin sister.

Eve grows as a dominating person and also hypersex. In their second year of school, Eve is pregnant. She tells everyone that it is her English teacher, Mr. Parkinson, who has raped her but Mr. Parkinson tells the opposite. After she does abortion, by their grandmother, she and Alexandra are enrolled to L'Institut Fernwood, Swiss. In that school, she makes love to almost all of the students and instructors of a military school across the valley. In this activity, not only the sexual satisfaction she looks to, but also the feeling of control to all of her sexual partners.

One day, Kate introduces her to a friend named Count Alfred Maurier and his wife, Countess Vivien. Count Alfred is always proud of his loyalty to his wife for almost twenty six years. He admits that he never cheats on his wife. Knowing this fact, Eve feels challenged by Count Alfred. She tries to seduce him and finally Count Alfred Maurier gives up. She feels satisfied for being able to tear down his loyalty to his wife. She thinks that if she can have him, she can have anyone or even the world. Without Eve's knowledge, someone is daring to tell Kate about her granddaughter's meeting with Count Alfred in a hotel. Finding out all her granddaughter's conducts, Kate exiles her and promises not to give her any of her money, except \$250 a week until she is 35 years old.

Eve moves to a small apartment. In a friend's party, Eve meets George Mellis. At first, she is so mesmerized by him. His appearance is perfect and the way he talks is so sweet. On their first night together, Eve finds out that he is masochistic. He does not enjoy sex in a normal way. Besides, she also finds out that he is kicked out of the Mellis family for being sexually abnormal. Feeling of sharing the same fate, she offers him an agreement that will bring them both fortunes. She asks him to marry her sister, Alexandra. She also plans on killing her so that the money will be George's. One day in a sexual moment, George loses his temper so that he hurts Eve. Eve says that she is a victim of a hit and run. Her plastic surgeon, Keith Webster, wants to tell the truth to the police but Eve asks him not to do so because if the police arrest George, her plan will be ruined. He does as she says but George still needs to see a psychiatrist, Peter Templeton. After recovering, for a reason Kate inherits her back so she intends to change the plan, but George refuses. The only way to stop George is by killing him so Eve kills him in Dark Harbor on the night they both plan on killing Alexandra.

Keith knows that George is the person who has previously given Eve serious injuries and that Eve has something to do with George's murder. Then he starts intimidatng Eve by telling her that the police probably will investigate him. He says to Eve that the only way to prevent this is by marrying him. Being so sad because of George's death, Alexandra sees Peter Templeton. They get closer and finally marry. Meanwhile, although Eve is now Keith's wife, she never considers him a husband. One day, on a plastic surgery, he ruins her face.

Because her face, one of her power, has turned ugly, she becomes strongly dependent on Keith.

2. BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

This biography of Sidney Sheldon is compiled from www.thebiographychannel.co.uk/biographies/sidney-sheldon.html (accessed on April 3, 2011) and www.hachettebookgroup.com/features/sidneysheldon/sheldon_bio.html (accessed on April 26, 2011).

Sidney Sheldon was born on 11th February 1917, in Chicago, USA. In the Depression era, Sheldon dropped out from Northwestern University to support his family. He worked as a radio joke-writer and a movie house usher and then, in 1937, he eventually became a script editor in Hollywood.

In 1940 Sidney Sheldon joined the Air Force as a pilot and after a year he was discharged. He started writing for Broadway and produced the revised *Merry Widow*, *Jackpot*, *Dream with Music*, *Alice in Arms* and *Redhead* (for which he won Tony Award in 1959). Then he came back to Hollywood to become a screenwriter for the next 12 years in both MGM Studios and Paramount Pictures. He won Academy Award for *The Bachelor and Bobby Soxer* and Screen Writers' Guild Award for *Easter Parade*. He also wrote some other films including *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Jumbo* and *Anything Goes*.

Leaving MGM, Sidney Sheldon joined ABC to create a show for Patty Duke (*The Patty Duke Show*) and *I Dreamed of Jeannie* for which he got an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Writing Achievement in Comedy. His first novel, *The Naked Face*, brought him an Edgar Award and was described as "the best mystery novel of the year" by *The New York Times*. His next megaselling novels among other were *The Other Side of Midnight*, *A Stranger In The Mirror*, *Bloodline*, *Rage Of Angels*, *Master Of The Game*, *If Tomorrow Comes*, *The Stars Shine Down*, *Nothing Lasts Forever*, and *Are You Afraid Of The Dark?* He also wrote a memoir entitled *The Other Side Of Me*.

Thirty years after Sheldon's books became bestsellers, they were banned, burned and branded as "immoral" by extremists. Refusing all forms of censorship, he became an advocate for freedom of the press and a national spokesperson for the Freedom to Read Foundation. He also participated in charities related to literacy and helping homeless.

On 30th January 2007, Sidney Sheldon died from complication relating to pneumonia, leaving a wife, Alexandra Kostoff, and a daughter (from her first wife, Jorja Sheldon), Mary. He had written over 200 television scripts, 25 motion pictures, six Broadway plays, 18 novels (which have sold over 300 million copies) and a memoir. He was also ranked as one of the world's most prolific writer. His books have been distributed to more than 180 countries and translated to 51 languages including Russian, Turkish, Hungarian, Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, Portuguese, Korean, Hebrew, Greek and Indonesian.

CHAPTER III LITERARY REVIEW

1. Character

In any kind of fiction, there are always fictional people to run the story. The character of these fictional people is different from one another. For the purpose of a further study, the writer needs to know what each of them is like. In showing the characters, an author may use several ways. Laurence Perrine, in her book *Fiction: the Elements of Fiction*, states

Authors may present their characters either directly or indirectly. In **direct presentation** they tell us straight out, by exposition or analysis, what the characters are like, or have someone else in the story tell us what they are like. In **indirect presentation** the authors *show* us the characters in action; we infer what they are like from what they think or say or do (1987: 66).

In the development of character, there are two characterizations. The first is static characterization which presents the same trait from the beginning until the end of the story. The second is dynamic (or developing) characterization which present “a permanent change in some aspect of character, personality, or outlook” (Perrine, 1987: 69).

In plot development, there are major and minor characters. Major character is the one who becomes the center of the story. Most of the story is talking about him (or her), while, minor character is the one whose existence is intended only to support the story of the major character. If there is no involvement to the major character, he (or she) will usually be ignored (Nurgiyantoro, 2010: 176 – 177).

2. Conflict

According to Nurgiyantoro in *Teori Pengkajian Fiksi*, conflict is “*kejadian yang tergolong penting ... merupakan unsur yang esensial dalam pengembangan plot*” (2010: 122). In other words, conflict is an event which is important to the story and is essential in plot development. An author uses it to build the interest of the reader. A story will not be interesting if its characters live their lives ordinarily without any conflicts.

Peristiwa dan konflik biasanya berkaitan erat, dapat saling menyebabkan satu dengan yang lain, bahkan konflik pun hakikatnya merupakan peristiwa. ... Bentuk peristiwa dalam sebuah cerita, sebagaimana telah dikemukakan, dapat berupa peristiwa fisik maupun batin (Nurgiyantoro, 2010: 123).

Conflicts which happen to the characters in a story can be either internal or external. Internal conflict happens in the mind, the soul of the characters so it is a fight between a man and

himself, meanwhile, external conflict happens when there is a clash between a character and his environment (physical conflict) or between a character and the people around him (social conflict). In Chapter IV, the conflicts involved in the efforts of Eve Blackwell to control people will be explained under the extrinsic aspect.

3. Sibling Rivalry

In the Indonesian culture, there is an old Javanese expression saying “*banyak anak, banyak rejeki* (more children, more luck),” which means the more children you give birth to, the more luck you will get in life. This is based on the thought that each man has his own luck. Not only in Indonesia, parents in some parts of the world may want more than one child in their family. Having one child will make it too quiet in the house, so they will have another child, although with two or more children living together in a house, there may be things to fight for between them, e.g. for toys, attentions, etc.

According to Jennifer Shroff Pendley, PhD in an article entitled *Sibling Rivalry* taken from kidshealth.org (accessed on March 31, 2011), there are several factors which cause kids to fight.

1. Evolving Needs

In this article, it is revealed that “toddlers are naturally protective of their toys and belongings, and are learning to assert their will, which they’ll do at every turn” (KidsHealth, 2009: 1).

Since early age, children have naturally realized what thing belongs to them and at every moment they will give their best efforts to keep it theirs. The protectiveness makes it difficult for them to share things with their siblings or friends so it usually ends in fight. This evolving needs is different in every stage of life.

2. Individual Temperaments

The personality of every child born to the world is different from one another. One child can be so nice while the other can be so naughty. We cannot expect them to always do good to each other

3. Special Needs/Sick Kids

Kids with special needs want more attention so the other kids may take this as unfairness. Soon they will start to act out to get attention.

4. Role Model

Children are a great imitator and their first example is their parents. If their parents work everything out through conflicts, they will surely do the same.

4. Sexual Zone: The Female Phallic Stage

During their lives, people are going through several stages, including psychosexual development stage. According to Sigmund Freud in *Teori – Teori Kepribadian* by E. Koswara, “... pada manusia terdapat empat fase atau tahapan perkembangan psikoseksual yang kesemuanya menentukan bagi pembentukan kepribadian, dan masing – masing fase berkaitan dengan daerah erogen tertentu” (Koswara, 1991: 49). In human lives, there are four psychosexual development stages. They are all important factors in personality shaping and each of them relates to certain erogenous zones. These four stages are oral stage, anal stage, phallic stage and genital stage. The stage which will be discussed in this chapter is the phallic stage, especially the female phallic stage.

The phallic stage occurs when the target of libido switches from anus to sexual organs. In this stage, children take a great pleasure of playing with their sexual organs (Koswara, 1991: 51). The process of this stage is different between male and female children.

1. The Male Phallic Stage

In this stage, male children start to love their mother and consider their father a rival. This is called “Oedipus Complex”. As the time goes, this tendency will disappear because of the existence of “castration anxiety” (Hall, 1954: 109). “Castration anxiety” is the anxiety of a male child of being castrated by his father because of his love for his mother.

2. The Female Phallic Stage

Similar to the male phallic stage, in this stage female children start to love their mother, from whom they get their first sexual experience like breast-feeding. After realizing that they do not have the external genitals of the male, they feel castrated. They will consider it their mother’s fault so the cathexis for the mother is weakened (Hall, 1954: 111). Then “... the girl begins to prefer the father, who has the organ that she is missing. The girl’s love for her father is mixed with envy because he possesses something that she does not have. This is known as penis envy” (Hall, 1954: 111).

5. Displacement

In *Master of the Game*, Eve Blackwell is a hyper-sex and this is because there is a displacement. According to Hall (1954), “*The process by which energy is rechanneled from one object to another object is called displacement*” (79).

6. Theory of Narcissism

All human beings in this world have the tendency of self-love (narcissistic). But some of them become exceedingly in love with themselves so that this becomes a disorder. This can be included to personality disorder. According to an article in www.halcyon.com/jmashmun/npd/dsm-iv.html written by Joanna M. Ashmun (accessed on June 10, 2011), Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) is “*a pattern of self-centered or egotistical behavior that shows up in thinking and behavior in a lot of different situations and activities*”. Kernberg in *Narcissism: Theory and Measurement*

... sees narcissism developing as a consequence of parental rejection or abandonment ... because of cold and rejecting parents, the child defensively withdraws and comes to believe that it is only himself or herself that can be trusted and relied on and therefore loved” (Emmons, 1987: 11).

There are several characteristics according to Joanna M. Ashmun which can help us to recognize a narcissist:

1. Self-importance

In doing everything, a narcissist considers himself more important and everyone else is nothing compared to him.

2. Power and Success

A narcissist’s brain is filled up with the illusion that he lives in his own world so he is the only one who has power and will be successful in doing anything.

3. Superiority

A narcissist considers himself superior to others.

4. Lack of empathy

A narcissist never wants to know other people’s feelings and needs. If someone needs to talk to him about his problem, he will not be available.

5. Taking benefits of other people for his own interest

A narcissist usually uses other people to get what he wants.

7. Theory of Obsession

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, obsession is a “fixed idea that occupies one's mind” (Hornby, 1974: 580). Sometimes obsession can be an aspiration for us to chase what we want in life but sometimes we are obsessed in something which is not good. Rachman and Hodgson in Rachman propose that “*obsessions are caused by catastrophic misinterpretations of the significance of one's intrusive thoughts (images, impulses)*” (1997: 793).” He gives several examples to this, among them “A 25-yr-old computer analyst had recurrent thoughts and images of harming the very young children of a close friend, and interpreted this to mean that he is a potential murderer and a fundamentally evil and worthless human being” (1997: 794).

In *Master of the Game*, Eve Blackwell has an obsession of controlling her twin sister and also her sexual partners. In connection with the theory of narcissism which is previously discussed, David Thomas, Ph.D in an article entitled *Narcissistic Personality and Behavior at Work: Is the Narcissistic Personality obsessed with power and control* (accessed on April 5, 2011) states “*The narcissistic defense is addicted to power and control, without which he exposed to his real feelings of inferiority, inadequacy and worthlessness.*”

Having a feeling that he (or she) is far more important, superior and powerful than anyone else around him, a narcissist will seek to control or dominate them. This is the way he (or she) survives. The obsession of control also occurs in the sexual relationship. While a healthy sexual relationship involves two people to respect each other, a narcissist will take part as a leader. During a sexual activity, a narcissist will look to controlling his (or her) sexual partner. This makes the relationship unhealthy.