



**BOOK REVIEW OF *NOTHING LASTS FOREVER***

**WRITTEN BY SIDNEY SHELDON**

**A FINAL PROJECT**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
For S-1 Degree in American Studies  
In English Department, Faculty of Humanities  
Diponegoro University

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**SEMARANG**

**2015**

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer states truthfully that this thesis is compiled by her without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3 and in diploma degree of any universities. In addition, the writer also ascertains that she does not take the material from other publications or someone's work except for the references mentioned.

Semarang, March 2015

Mutia Verdiana

## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

*“Where there is no struggle, there is no strength.”*

(Oprah Winfrey)

*This thesis is dedicated to  
my amazing mother and father*

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise to Allah SWT who has given His mercy, blessing, strength and guidance so this project entitled “Review on Nothing Lasts Forever Novel by Sidney Sheldon” came to a completion. On this occasion, the writer would like to thank all those people who have contributed to the completion of this thesis.

The deepest gratitude and appreciation are extended to Dra. Arida Widyastuti, M.Hum, who has given her continuous guidance, moral support, helpful corrections, advice and suggestions in completion of this thesis.

The writer’s deepest thank also goes to the following:

1. Dr. Rediyanto M. Noor, M.Hum as the Dean of Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University.
2. Sukarni Suryaningsih, S.S, M.Hum, as the Head of English Department
3. The writer’s academic advisor, Drs. Siswo Harsono, M.Hum. for the helpful guidance and moral support during her study.
4. All of the lecturers in the English Department, Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University for their sincere dedication.
5. The entire Library staff and Administrative staff, Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University
6. The writer’s amazing parents and families for their greatest motivations and supports.

7. The writer's best friends, Nabila, Herdiana, and Puji, who always accompany and help her.
8. The writer's best friends, Bunga, Uchay, Nadia, Dessita, Erina, Ayu, and Rezkita for the motivations.
9. All those who give help, advice, and encouragement to the writer who cannot be mentioned one by one.

The writer realizes that this thesis is still far from being perfect. She, therefore, will be glad to receive any constructive criticisms and recommendations to make this thesis better.

Finally, the writer expects that this thesis will be useful to the reader who wishes to learn something about Gender Discrimination.

Semarang, March 2015

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## **ABSTRACT**

A novel entitled *Nothing Lasts Forever* was written by Sidney Sheldon. The novel is about the life and struggle of three woman doctors who work in Embarcadero County Hospital, San Fransisco. The three doctors fought for their positions as doctors, until they fell into terrible incidents. Many people saw these accidents as a proof to women's inability to become doctors, but what they did not know is that actually there were proofs to women's capability to do the men's profession, to become doctors.

This final project is written so that the reader can have a brief explanation of the contents of the novel based on the summary, analysis, strenght, and weaknss of the novel. The contents of the project is expected to be a helpful guidance for the reader.

Keywords: novel, women, prejudice, discrimination



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |      |
|--|------|
| TITLE.....                             | i    |
| PRONOUNCEMENT .....                    | ii   |
| MOTTO AND DEDICATION .....             | iii  |
| APPROVAL.....                          | iv   |
| VALIDATION .....                       | v    |
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....                  | vi   |
| ABSTRACT.....                          | viii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS .....                | ix   |
| INTRODUCTION .....                     | 1    |
| 1.1 Background of the Writing.....     | 1    |
| 1.2 Purpose of the Writing.....        | 2    |
| 1.3 Author’s Review and His Works..... | 3    |
| CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY OF BOOK .....        | 4    |
| CHAPTER 3 REVIEW OF THE BOOK.....      | 6    |
| 3.1 Aspects ofthe Novel .....          | 6    |
| 1 Theme .....                          | 6    |
| 2 Character.....                       | 6    |
| 3 Plot.....                            | 7    |
| 4 Setting.....                         | 8    |
| 5 Style.....                           | 9    |
| 3.2 The Strength .....                 | 9    |
| 3.3 The Weakness.....                  | 10   |
| CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION.....              | 10   |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY .....                     | 11   |

# **Review of Sidney Sheldon's Nothing Lasts Forever**

## **1. Introduction**

Prejudice often leads to discrimination. Literature as one of the elements of cultures is used to express human thought and idea. Literary works usually represent the author's thoughts and sentiments toward society.

Novel is one of the literary work which often used to potray this phenomenom. It is easy to understand because the author usually uses simple words.

### **1.1 Background of the Writing**

Discrimination is often found in society, it is caused by the human being inclination to discriminate the others. Discrimination is treating people differently, in which this treatment is made based on the characteristic which has been represented by the people like race, nation, gender, and more. Women sometimes become an object of discrimination because many people underestimate women, especially women who work in particular job. The descrimination towards women can be seen in many literary works. Literary works usually represent the author's thoughts and sentiments toward society. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren said literature represents "life" and life in large measure, in social reality, even tough the natural world and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been object of the literary imitation (1956:94). In its development, literary works have three genres. The major forms are novel, poem, drama, and short story.

Sometimes several parts in a literary work are written based on the real situation. Novel is one of the literary work which is used by the author to describe, express, and criticize the reality in society. John Peck and Martin Coyle stated novelist frequently focuses on tensions between individuals and the society (1984:102). According to Abrams, its (novel) magnitude permits a great variety of characters, greater complication of plot (1971:110). Because of those reasons, novel is chosen as a learning media.

A novel entitled *Nothing Lasts Forever* was written by Sidney Sheldon. It is an interesting and unpredictable novel, as expected from the author's best-selling books. The novel is about the life of three woman doctors who get a lot of judgments and discriminations in their work life and how they face it and survive from it. The theme of this novel is crime-thrill, but there is also friendship. The novel was first published in 1994. The novel is available in English version and Indonesian version. The novel can also be read in *e(electronic)* format or *e-book* .

## **1.2 Purpose of the Writing**

The purposes of the writing are:

1. To analyze the five aspects (theme, character, setting, plot, and style) in Sidney Sheldon's *Nothing Lasts Forever*.
2. To describe the strength and weakness of Sidney Sheldon's *Nothing Lasts Forever*.

### 1.3 Author's Review and His Works

Sidney Schechtel or known as Sidney Sheldon is an American author. He was born on February 11, 1917 in Chicago, Illinois. His parents were Ascher "Otto" Schechtel (worked as manager of jewelry store) and Natalie Marcus. After graduating from East High School in Denver, he attended Northwestern University and contributed short plays to a drama group.

In 1937 he moved to Hollywood, California and reviewed scripts on a number of B movies.

He was enlisted in military during World War II. After returning from military, he moved to NYC and began writing musicals for the Broadway stage while continuing to write screenplays for both MGM Studios and Paramount Pictures. He gained attention as a productive writer. He had three musicals on Broadway: *The Merry Widow*, *Jackpot*, and *Dream with Music*.

His success on Broadway brought him back to Hollywood. His first project, *The Bachelor and The Bobby-Soxer*, brought him to the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay of 1947. In 1948 he became one of the writers for musical film *Easter Parade* and in 1950 he became sole writer for musical film *Annie Get Your Gun*.

When television became popular, he took part in the industry and produced *The Patty Duke Show* and wrote almost every single episode for seven years. Then he produced *I Dreamed of Jennie* which ended in 1970. During the last year of *I Dreamed of Jennie*, Sheldon decided to write a novel.

His first novel, *The Naked Face*, got nomination for the Edgar Allan Poe Award from the Mystery Writers of American in the Best First Novel category.

From 1970-2004, Sidney wrote various titles of novels, among other things are: *The Naked Face* (1970); *The Other Side of Midnight* (1973); *If Tomorrow Comes* (1985); *The Sands of Time* (1988); *Nothing Lasts Forever* (1994); *Morning, Noon and Night* (1995); *Tell Me Your Dreams* (1998); *Are You Afraid of the Dark ?* (2004). He also published the autobiographical memoirs of him entitled *The Other Side of Me* which was published in 2005 and became his final book.

Sidney Sheldon died on January 30, 2007 from complications arising from pneumonia

## **2. Summary of the Book**

*Nothing Lasts Forever* is a novel telling the struggle of three women who became new doctors in Embarcadero County Hospital, San Francisco. They had to “survive” in the job dominated by men. At that time women doctors were rarely found and their capabilities were highly doubted to the point of extreme underestimation. Paige Taylor was a bright and devoted attractive woman and the only woman resident doctor; Kate Hunter or Kat was a black woman with a traumatic past; and Betty Lou Taft or Honey was a plain daughter who was born into a great family of overachievers. They decided to live together in a rented apartment and developed close friendship as they spent their time together and got to know each other better.

Paige Taylor decided to become a doctor because she wanted to help others like her father did. She always worked hard so she could be a dedicated and skillfull doctor. However, she was not easily acknowledged by people and even doctors around her because they still thought that men were superior than women, especially in the field of medicine. They always tried to find her fault.

Kate Hunter who had been raped by her step father at her early teen promised that she would not let a man touch her again, but everything changed after she met Ken Mallory.

Honey wanted to be a nurse, but her family did not accept a nurse in their competitive overachievers family. It made Honey take medical school. She knew that it would be hard to survive from medical school. In order not to disappoint her family, she did almost everything to graduate from medical school, including using her body. Having graduated with the highest medical school grades and the best recommendations to work in Embarcadero County Hospital, the senior doctors put up a high hope on Honey, but they soon realized that something must have been wrong with her capability.

The three doctors fought for their positions as doctors, until they fell into terrible incidents. Kat was murdered; Honey almost got the entire closed down due to her misdiagnosing; and Paige was accused for a murder of John Cronin. Many people saw these accidents as a proof to women's inability to become doctors, but what they did not know is that actually there were proofs to women's capability to do the men's profession, to become doctors.

The story ended when Lawrence Barker suddenly came to the court and gave testimony.

### **3. Review of the Book**

Novel as a literary work, supported by intrinsic aspects. In this chapter, a brief definition and explanation about the intrinsic aspects in a novel will be given, because they are crucial to support the analysis. The intrinsic aspects that consist of theme, character, plot, setting and style are the aspects that directly form a story in the novel.

#### **3.1 Aspects of the Novel**

The novel *Nothing Lasts Forever* consists of five aspects, there are:

##### 1. Theme

According to Perrine, theme is its controlling idea or its central insight. It is unifying generalization about life stated implied by story (1988:80).

*Nothing Lasts Forever* is a crime-thrill themed novel. It can be seen from the prologue:

District Attorney Carl Andrews was in a fury. "What the hell is going on here?" he demanded. "We have three doctors living together and working at the same hospital. One of them almost gets an entire hospital closed down, the second one kills a patient for a million dollars, and the third one is murdered (1994:9).

There are also friendship and romance in this novel.

##### 2. Character

Based on Perrine, character is much more complex, variable, and ambiguous (1988:65). Main character is a vital part because the plot, conflict,

and resolution of the conflict revolves around the main character. That is why they are shown up in almost every chapter. In this novel the main character are Paige Taylor, Kate Hunter, and Honey Taft.

Round character lives by their very roundness, by many points at which they touch life (Perrine, 1988:67). There are many round characters in *Nothing Lasts Forever*, like Jason Curtis, Paige's boyfriend; Ken Mallory, Kat's murderer; Dr. Lawrence Barker, a surgeon who becomes main witness in Paige's case.

Flat character is the stock character-stereotype figure who has occurred so often in fiction (Perrine, 1988:67). The flat characters in *Nothing Lasts Forever* for example are Alfred, Paige ex-boyfriend; Alan Penn; Paige's lawyer; Gus Venable; Jimmy Ford, the women's friend.

### 3. Plot

According to Perrine, plot is the sequence of incidents or events of which a story is composed (1988:41). The events in the story relate to each other in a pattern or a sequence.

There are five plot elements in the novel. First is introduction. It talks about their life as a doctor in their work place, how busy and stress they are. These parts also tell about the women's past.

Second is rising action. Kat lets Ken Mallory get close to her after knowing that he bets five thousand dollars to take her to bed in order to trick



him back. Honey's misdiagnosis almost gets an entire hospital closed down. Paige almost quits because Dr. Lawrence Barker said she killed his patient.

Third is Climax. Kat is murdered. Paige did euthanasia to John Cronin, because he wanted to. Later, Paige becomes the principal beneficiary of John Cronin's will.

Fourth is falling action. Ken Mallory becomes the culprit of Kat's death. Paige is under arrest for the murder of John Cronin.

Fifth is resolution. Dr. Lawrence Barker comes to the court and testifies. Paige is free from the charges. Paige uses the million dollars John Cronin left her to set up a medical foundation. Barker shares an office with Paige, as a surgical consultant. Honey Taft moves to Ireland with Sean Reilly, and works as a nurse in Dublin.

#### 4. Setting

Based on William Kenney, setting is the element of fiction which reveals to us where and when of events (1966:36). The setting in this novel, both place and time are described clearly. The setting of place is in San Francisco and the setting of time is around 1990-1995, here is the clear example of the setting of place:

Embarcadero County was the oldest hospital in San Francisco, and one of the oldest in the country. During the earthquake of 1989, God had played a joke on the residents of San Francisco and left the hospital standing (1994:47).

Here is the example of the setting of time

"It was New Year's Eve again, and Paige, Kat, and Honey ushered in 1994 at Embarcadero County Hospital (1994:209).

## 5. Style

Based on William Kenney, style is the writer's characteristic way of using language. A writer style can reveal to us his way of perceiving experience and of organizing his perception (1966:). In this novel, the author uses simple and clear words. The readers can easily understand the storyline. He uses dialogue to describe the emotional situation in the novel. For example:

Andrews stopped to take a deep breath. "And they're all women! Three goddam women doctors! The media is treating them like celebrities. They're all over the tube. 60 Minutes did a segment on them. Barbara Walters did a special on them. I can't pick up a newspaper or magazine without seeing their pictures, or reading about them. Two to one, Hollywood is going to make a movie about them, and they'll turn the bitches into some kind of heroines! I wouldn't be surprised if the government put their faces on postage stamps, like Presley. Well, by God, I won't have it!" He slammed a fist down against the photograph of a woman on the cover of Time magazine. The caption read: "Dr. Paige Taylor- Angel of Mercy or the Devil's Disciple?" (1994:9-10).

It can be seen from the example above that words which are chosen by the author can show the anger. Therefore, the reader can feel the emotion.

### **3.2 The Strength**

The beginning part (prologue) of the novel is interesting. The author starts the prologue with the thing that can be admitted as the climax. It does not make the reader able to stop reading the novel. The fact is that the main characters are all women makes the novel more interesting. Then the characters are well-described and all of the characters have a strong characterization. Paige and Jason's love life also becomes an interesting part. It refreshes mind in the middle of reading medical-themed novel. The novel itself has an interesting plot and

emotional story. The author uses many dialogues to show up the emotion. For example:

Andrews stopped to take a deep breath. "And they're all women! Three goddam women doctors! The media is treating them like celebrities. They're all over the tube. 60 Minutes did a segment on them. Barbara Walters did a special on them. I can't pick up a newspaper or magazine without seeing their pictures, or reading about them. Two to one, Hollywood is going to make a movie about them, and they'll turn the bitches into some kind of heroines! I wouldn't be surprised if the government put their faces on postage stamps, like Presley. Well, by God, I won't have it!" He slammed a fist down against the photograph of a woman on the cover of Time magazine. The caption read: "Dr. Paige Taylor- Angel of Mercy or the Devil's Disciple?" (1994:9-10).

It makes the novel more interesting and live.

### **3.3 The Weakness**

The weakness of the novel can be found in the novel itself. The weakness of the novel is in the last chapter. The anti climax is not like what the reader expects. It has no surprise at all. The readers may think that the last chapter should be more complicated and surprising. There are also too many characters that make the readers confused. A few characters will appear as the witnesses in the last part, but the others are really unnecessary. The medical-related words in the novel can also lead to confusion.

### **4. Conclusion**

*Nothing Lasts Forever* is a good novel. Each character has different problem, but somehow it relates one another. The storyline is also interesting. Thrill, romance, friendship can get along very well. Overall, *Nothing Lasts Forever* is recommended to read.

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