

**Rachel's Struggle to Reveal Political Conspiracy through the
Conflict in Dan Brown's *Deception Point***

THESIS

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DECLARATION

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I, hereby certify that the thesis I wrote to fulfill the requirement for Sarjana Degree of English Department Faculty of Letters and Humanities UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya entitled **“Rachel’s Struggle to Reveal Political Conspiracy through the Conflict in Dan Brown’s Deception Point”** is truly my original works. It does not incorporate any materials previously written or published by another person, except those indicated in quotation and bibliography. Due to this fact, I am the only person responsible for the thesis if there are any objections or claims from others.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

The 20th century literary theory gets a very rapid development. Various theories have sprung up, from the view of structuralism, semiotics, sociology and psychoanalysis (Zaimar 29). The development of the emerging theories is inseparable from the research of literature.

In literature, there are many ways to express ideas, especially in a literary work. Literary works are created based on the creativity and imagination. Imagination and creativity are materials to make literary works such as drama, poetry, and prose, as Luken says that literature is traditionally described as the corpus that exists because of inherent imaginative artistic qualities (3)

One of the kinds of literary works is novel. Novel is normally a prose work of quite some length and complexity which attempts to reflect and express something of the equality or value of human experience or conduct (Taylor 46). Kenney states that novel is generally thought of as containing about forty five thousand words or more (103).

Reading a novel is the action to assume the general realization. This action is similar as the action of audiences watching unveiled screen in a theatre. An audience is ready to find an overall world, but it is not perceptual world.

Besides, the world is mental imaginations well. Reading is to analyze a meeting with unreal world to sign (Sartre 146). It means when reading a novel the readers will be able to describe it in their minds. We have our own concept about story when reading the novel.

There are some elements in novel including plot, character, theme, characterization, setting and conflict. Plot is the sequence of events showing characters in conflict (Luken 97). As Abrams says that through the plot, every event is described and the characters involve in there because plot and character are interdependent (224). So, every event happening in the story, especially novel, occurs in a plot.

Dan Brown's *Deception Point* is a mystery and suspense thriller that combines in depth knowledge of classified intelligence with high tech weaponry and presidential politics in a very fast paced, suspenseful novel. There are many plot twists and surprises throughout the story and a wealth of interesting conflict (<http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-deception-point/#gsc.tab=0>).

Conflict in this novel begins when the new satellite NASA found evidence of an object which is very rare buried in permafrost Arctic. The space agency found difficulties to announce the victory they desperately need. This victory will have great impact on the space policy for the United States and the presidential election which will come. To verify the correctness of the invention, the president sent an intelligence agent of the White House, Rachel Sexton.

This novel contains many interesting issues to discuss. One of them is the political conspiracy. The conspiracy in the story is created to protect one of the institutions owned by the government, namely NASA. In the end, the readers will be surprised by the presence of antagonist mysterious figures, the mastermind behind all the conspiracies that happened.

Conspiracy was an aspect of the long standing populist strain in American political culture, an especially intense strain, to be sure, and one that can have violent, racist, and anti democratic effects (as well as salutary and democracy enhancing ones) on the political and social order, but a strain that was neither independent from nor necessarily threatening to the country's political institutions and political culture (Fenster 9). It means these aspects have long existed in the American political culture. Political culture in the wake of conspiracy occasionally has a violent impact between the two parties. Do not deny if it could threaten the existing institutions within the government.

Belief in conspiracy theories is more than just the belief in an occasional underhand plot. It is a belief system that asserts that world events are being governed in secret by a group of ultra powerful puppeteers behind the scenes. While little may be done about this sorry state of affairs, at least we can have the satisfaction of having worked out what is going on (Kate Tuckett 9).

Two propositions dominated to discussions of conspiracy theory. The first maintains that conspiracy as the conviction is a secret, omnipotent individual or group covertly controls the political and social order or some parts thereof,

1.4. Scope and limitation

In order to make this research focused, the researcher gives the scope and limitation for the discussion. The scope of this discussion concerns with conflicts that happen in the novel. The novel *Deception Point* has a very interesting conflict, especially external conflicts. Conflicts generally are divided into two types, they are the internal conflict and the external conflict. In this research, the researcher will only discuss about the external conflict.

There are several characters involved in the conflict, but Rachel's character becomes the researcher's center of discussion. The main character is Rachel that struggles to reveal the conspiracy created by William Pickering. William Pickering is NRO's director. Rachel works under Pickering and she is very honor. Pickering is known as an expert in intelligent strategy.

1.5. Significance of the study

Since the research must have significance, the researcher hopes that this kind of research will give the readers significance that is useful. Here the researcher divides the significance into two categories practically and theoretically.

Practically, the researcher hopes that this research can give understanding to the readers about literature and how the story reflects some thoughts on conflict in the story. It is also hoped that readers will understand the novel after reading about of the conflict that happens in the novel.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

The second chapter consists of the theories used to analyze the novel, Dan Brown's *Deception point*. This study tries to reveal mostly about the conspiracy through the conflict in the novel, so the researcher uses some theories: new criticism theories, conflict, and secondary theory about conspiracy. Those are explained as follows:

2.1. New Criticism

The New Criticism is an Anglo-American variety of Formalism that emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century and dominated teaching and scholarship until the early 1960s (Castle 122). New Criticism is introduced to America and called "close reading" has been a standard method of high school and college that used in literary studies for the past several decades (Tyson 135). New criticism is one of the theories that have been used by scholars since long time ago for analyzing literary work. The most important concepts of this theory are concerning the nature and importance of textual evidence (135). It means that it emphasizes on the text as sole evidence which its language that is organized in literary work. Tyson says that the way to know the author's intention or reader's interpretation is by examining carefully the formal elements of text such as characterization, setting of the time and place, point of view, plot, images, metaphor and symbols so that it can find the theme (137). As formal

conflict is defined as a situation in which the actor uses behavioral conflict with each other to achieve goals that are incompatible or to express their hostility and this situation not only for individuals but also groups (13). According to Robert and Jacobs says that the conflict is the opposition between two characters, between large group of people, or between protagonist and larger parts such as natural objects, ideas, modes of behavior, public opinion, and the like (1694). However, conflict here is not always involved fighting or some overt fight because there are some conflicts are “latent” and not involve overt fighting.

There are three main causes of social conflict such as incompatible goal, hostility, and conflict action or behavior. First cause is incompatible goal which has two approaches to determine reliably whether goals are in fact incompatible. Second is hostility which has the differentiation with incompatible, what makes it different is rational and non rational behavior in hostility. Third is conflict action or behavior which has three important parts such as coercive action, non coercive conflict action, and degree of coerciveness (Syifa’ 20).

Conflict generally is divided into two types, they are the internal conflict and the external conflict. Internal conflict is the condition facing the character within her/his character and also giving the impact to the character. Internal conflict is the war against oneself. It is a struggle between elements within the characters of personality what the dominance is. It is a battle needing

profoundly useful idea to attack one's political foes. After all, conspiracies are hidden and undercover with so lack of evidence is not necessarily a problem, especially if the idea is heavily promoted by enemies with an agenda. In the court of public opinion, the case for conspiracy can be made as easily with innuendo as evidence and on many occasions it (B. Arnold 2).

After World War II, fears of conspiracy became more prominent. This gradually attracted the notice of writers interested in understanding current impulses in American society. After the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963, the conspiracy theory worldview seemed to be increasing. Pondering this phenomenon, historian Richard J. Hofstadter published a groundbreaking study of the topic the following year "The Paranoid Style in American Politics" (6).

Hofstadter noticed that the tendency toward a conspiracy theory world view was often found among people with extreme right-wing views, but he realized that this impulse was much broader than that. Indeed, what was true when he wrote his essay is even truer today; the conspiracy theory mindset is distributed across American life. Equally at home among liberals, conservatives, and political agnostics, it knows no bounds. Although widely dispersed, conspiracy theory still draws. To the extent that they are sympathetic to this outlook, most people seem to identify with only part of what conspiracy theories say. And so while many Americans may believe, as public opinion polls suggest, that a conspiracy was involved in the assassination of John F. Kennedy, they do not necessarily believe that a vast conspiracy is controlling

character, that is Bourne's life based on the reflection with the Quran. In this study, the researcher focuses on the conflict in the story. The researcher analyses how conflicts are described in this novel and how the main character reveals political conspiracy that happens.

Based on that previous study, the researcher wants to analyze the conflicts which are underground by the main character. The researcher chooses *Deception Point* to be the object of the study entitled *Rachel's Struggle to Reveal Political Conspiracy in the Conflict in Dan Brown's Deception Point*.

CHAPTER III

Rachel's Struggle to Reveal Political Conspiracy through the conflict in Dan Brown's *Deception Point*

In this chapter the researcher analyzes the conflict as seen through *Deception Point*. The analysis is in accordance with the formulation of the problems which is the focus of the research. The researcher will verify clearly on how the main character participates in a conflict. Furthermore, the researcher hopes to gain profound knowledge about that way clearly of the author's depiction of a conflict in the story. After having had a basic background of the main character, the more intensive study is intended to reveal a political conspiracy by the main character. Inside this analysis process, the researcher uses Conspiracy and Conflict theories to support the analysis in order to expose the way the main character participates in political conspiracy.

3.1. The depiction of Rachel's participation in the conflict

The story opens with a prologue that shows the beginning of the conspiracy made. This story tells about a political conspiracy in which Rachel is dragged into it. Rachel is an intelligent member who works under the United States government-owned institution. She is send by the president to verify the truth of the NASA's discovery. NASA's satellite found evidence of a meteorite-like object buried in Arctic ice cover. NASA's discovery impact is so great for the United States space policy and the impending presidential election. To

From the previous quotations, belief in conspiracy theories is more than just the belief in an occasional underhand plot. It is a belief system that asserts that world events are being governed in secret by a group of ultra powerful puppeteers behind the scenes (Tukket 9). This means that conspiracy happens through something that is public. Political Conspiracy is possible to use against the opponent who is winning an attention of the public. Every step taken by conspirators should be covered to keep the complex strategy and as good as their calculation. Conspirator uses secrecy as their main tool to implement the strategy. By running an exit strategy from public attention, it makes the strategy works without getting any obstruction from the opposition because no one knows where the plan.

Rachel agrees with the president in giving her the mission to go to the North Pole. Rachel goes to there with a fighter plane that belongs to NASA's space agency. Rachel does not know what mission she should do. She just feels that if this journey will be slightly different. The President does not tell clearly the task of what she should do. President Harney only says that Rachel will immediately know after she arrives.

“You're now off-the-grid,” the President said. “All your responsibilities at work have been covered. You will not speak to anyone else today without express permission from myself or the NASA administrator. Do you understand?”

Rachel stared. *Did the President just steal my cell-phone?*

“After the administrator briefs you on the discovery, he will put you in contact with me via secure channels. I’ll talk to you soon. Good luck.”

Rachel looked at the hangar door and felt a growing uneasiness. President Harney put a reassuring hand on her shoulder and nodded toward the door. “I assure you, Rachel, you will not regret assisting me in this matter.” (31)

From the previous quotations, it can be seen when Rachel agreed to accept the task of the president. Although Rachel did not know what the president task given to her, she tried to stay calm. All she did was to focus on the task and try to run with the best. Rachel situation above implies covert activities that become the president’s hidden plan. Talking about covert activities in conspiracy means that there is a correlation between conspiracy and secrecy. Yet conspiracy beliefs involve two distinguishable forms of secrecy such as a group may be secret or known, and its activities may be open or hidden (Barkun, “Culture of Conspiracy” 3).

NASA became very hot issue for the public talk. At the present, NASA is an institution associated with the outer space. NASA became the object of political discussion in every debate in the TV show. It is because this space agency was considered never given any useful contribution toward the nation. That fact makes Sedgwick Sexton that is Rachel's father want to make the NASA’s issue in order to gain political support from the American people.

administrator named Lawrence Ekstrom. Ekstrom was the leader of NASA, he was known as a former aerospace strategist and operation adviser at the Pentagon. Ekstrom looked at Rachel with a look that was not so friendly. It was because her father was one of the most people who want to disband NASA. However, He invited Rachel to see the NASA's discovery.

The NASA's administrator tells if the NASA's system had discovered something. The President gave a task to the administrator to inform about the findings to Rachel. NASA discovered a huge meteorite buried in the ice. At first, Rachel thinks that is not an exceptional discovery because NASA often found meteorites before. However, this meteorite was a little different from the other meteorites ever found by NASA, because there are fossils of insects in it. Rachel thought if this was an issue that deliberately exaggerated by NASA and the White House to win back the NASA's good image.

“That is the nature of the game. All anyone needs to do is cast a faint doubt, saying that this discovery is some kind of political fraud concocted by NASA and the White House, and all of a sudden, I'm facing an inquiry. The newspapers forget NASA has found proof of extraterrestrial life, and the media starts focusing on uncovering evidence of a conspiracy. Sadly, any innuendo of conspiracy with respect to this discovery will be bad for science, bad for the White House, bad for NASA, and, quite frankly, bad for the country.” (75)

From that quotation, according to Gordon, he says that the conspiracy could be everywhere and could be planted for everyone. In our

daily lives, conspiracy could disguise the attention of the public in order to lead them to the purpose of the conspirators wanted, primarily through entertainment media, such as a political thriller, murder mystery, science fiction and other genres and for audiences of all ages (5). In this case, the issue became a NASA's political conspiracy for a particular purpose. NASA's meteorite discovery was a scientific thing wrapped up with a plan behind it.

NASA's discovery becomes the issue to gain support for president Harney to regain the presidency. NASA greatly contributed the public support at this institution. As it was known, NASA's image in public opinion was now being bad. NASA was considered as an institution that can only be a waste of money. Many NASA's programs are failed.

To know the scientific truth about the meteorite, Rachel was helped by the experts appointed by the president. They consist of various experts in their respective scientific fields. Rachel met one of the people whose were recruited by president to her accompanies. As in the quote "Mr. Tolland will take it from here, "(50). Tolland is one of the famous scientists in America today. Tolland is an expert in documentary whose documentation event often shown on television.

Shortly after Rachel and Tolland talking about the discovery of the meteorite, Tolland invites Rachel to his office. Tolland introduces Rachel

NASA brought the meteorite out of the ice sheet. Everyone gathered at the ice floor in the middle of NASA's hemisphere. NASA's officials were worked under the leadership of Norah, one of the four civilian scientists sent by the president.

The NASA's agents soon lift the meteorite using a large pulley. Rachel immediately can see the meteorite which contains fossils of insects raised in front of him. Underneath it, there is a big hole from the melting ice.

The discovery of the meteorite becomes something of a great pride for all parties, especially NASA and the president. Incidentally, NASA discovers something important when the president is experiencing a lack of support from the American people. Shortly after the appointment of a meteorite, Rachel finally gets a call from the president. President wants to tell Rachel about her task. The president spoke through digital connections which are directly connected to the White House.

“As I'm sure you will agree,” Herney said, his voice growing more serious now, “in a perfect world, the ramifications of this discovery would be purely scientific in nature.” He paused, leaning forward, his face filling the screen. “Unfortunately, we don't live in a perfect world, and this NASA triumph is going to be a political football the moment I announce it.” (75)

In that statement, the president tried to convince Rachel to verify the data which acquired from civil-scientists. Rachel gave a good

assessment of NASA's discovery. Rachel considered the request of the president and said "And you think your opposition will cry conspiracy simply for political reasons?" (164). Rachel knew if she was in a position to connect this message to the White House.

"That is the nature of the game. All anyone needs to do is cast a faint doubt, saying that this discovery is some kind of political fraud concocted by NASA and the White House, and all of a sudden, I'm facing an inquiry. The newspapers forget NASA has found proof of extraterrestrial life, and the media starts focusing on uncovering evidence of a conspiracy. Sadly, any innuendo of conspiracy with respect to this discovery will be bad for science, bad for the White House, bad for NASA, and, quite frankly, bad for the country." (75)

In that statement, the president explained that NASA's meteorite discovery would be published. President sent Rachel and four other scientists only to prove the truth of this. President pointed Rachel to explain it to his staff at the White House. Appropriately, Rachel's position in the NRO was a liaison whose job is to verify data to the White House. The President was sure if Rachel was the right person to announce this discovery to the White House staff. President knew that this case would be a political fight for him.

A conspiracy can be used in every aspect of life. A political conspiracy can be as a tool to drive a common concern to distance from the truth. In this case, NASA is an ace card for the president. Rachel's statement that NASA has found evidence of extraterrestrial life would cause a public outcry that could have an impact on science. The

uncovered. This makes the lives of Rachel and her groups threatened. They struggle to escape from the attacks that they get from the Delta Force.

After Rachel know about the falsity of meteorite and fossils were actually planted in it. This all is a conspiracy that has been created by someone, but Rachel does not know who does this. At first she wanted to preach this lie to Pickering. She is a member of the intelligence agent to know if this is a huge scandal that is highly confidential. So, the person who first gets to know about this news is her director. Rachel does not have sufficient evidence that can explain this lie but she is sure if she will soon find it.

Rachel tries to survive in a wounded state after coming under attack from the Delta Force. Having survived from the Delta Force Rachel was rescued by a submarine defense agency. After they recover from faint, Rachel tries to contact the president to explain the truth which she gained about the meteorite. Rachel thinks that the president does not know about this. Rachel wants to reveal the truth to the president about the meteorite before president releases the discovery to the public.

My God! she thought, stunned. It's only 7:51 p.m.? Rachel had the impression hours had passed since she passed out. It was not even past eight o'clock? The President has not yet gone public about the meteorite! I still have time to stop him! She immediately slid down off the bed, wrapping the blanket around her. Her legs felt shaky. "I need to speak to the President right away."

The captain looked confused. "The president of what?"
"Of the United States!"

continuously rebuffed the idea as an assault on pure science. *Shortsighted idealism.* With the rising popularity of Sexton's anti-NASA rhetoric, Pickering and his band of military powerbrokers knew time was running short. They decided that capturing the imagination of taxpayers and Congress was the only remaining way to salvage NASA's image and save it from the auction block. If the space agency was to survive, it would need an infusion of grandeur—something to remind the taxpayers of NASA's *Apollo* glory days. And if Zach Herney was going to defeat Senator Sexton, he was going to need help.

I tried to help him, Pickering told himself, recalling all the damaging evidence he had sent Marjorie Tench. Unfortunately, Herney had forbidden its use, leaving Pickering no choice but to take drastic measures. (253)

The secret strategy that consists of the information relating to the objectives and strategies fits enough to be called a conspiracy. There are three principles that are found in the conspiracy, the first is nothing happens by accident, the second is nothing happens as it seems, and the latter are all are connected (Barkun, "Culture of Conspiracy" 8). Conspiracy of those three principles above indicates that each strategy Pickering does consists of principles. First, Pickering makes the meteorite discovery occurs naturally. NASA discovers a very hard rock in the ice. Secondly, all seem to fit to what has happened. All such plans made by Pickering are about the meteorite discovery. Unfortunately, Rachel knows that the meteorite is fake. And lastly, all are interconnected that the purpose of Pickering create such a conspiracy is to help president Harney win the presidential election and to protect NASA as a national institution.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This chapter draws a conclusion based on the discussion in the previous chapters. The researcher wants to give the conclusion of this study that was written from the starting until finishing. According to the theme, the researcher chosen a novel *Deception Point* as the subject of the thesis entitled *Rachel's Struggle to Reveal Political Conspiracy in the Conflict in Dan Brown's Deception Point*. Selection of this theme because there are many plots twists and surprises throughout the story and interesting conflict.

The researcher concluded that there are some conflicts that happened to the main character. Being in the midst of Several times conflict makes Rachel almost lost her life. Firstly is Rachel's Conflict with the President. She did not want to tell about meteorite's discovery but the president continued to urge Rachel to report to the White House staff. Rachel does not have another option to accept assignments from the president. President had planned Rachel participation in this mission very well. Secondly is Rachel's conflict with Delta force. The Delta force was assigned to kill Rachel and her friends in a confidential manner. Conflict that Rachel faced was the struggle for survival of the attack to her. Thirdly is Rachel's conflict with William Pickering. This conflict was very unpredictable in this story. Pickering was the person who made the conspiracy of the meteorite.

Rachel's struggle trying to reveal the political conspiracy is not easy. She tries to uncover the truth of meteorite with her friends. Rachel's first actions in uncovering irregularities meteorites are shown in collecting evidences that exist. There are some problems occur in Rachel's life when she is revealing political conspiracy. First, Rachel struggles to collect evidence more clearly about the truth of meteorite, although she got an attack from Delta Force who made her life in danger. Second, Rachel's struggle against the Delta Force, Delta Force is the squad sent by the conspirator to kill Rachel and her friends. Delta Force consists of a group of well trained assassins. Rachel tries to survive in wounded a state after coming under attacked from the Delta force. Third, Rachel's struggle against William Pickering, Pickering is a man who planned the conspiracy. He is NRO's director. Pickering wants to kill Rachel because she knows about Pickering's plan. Pickering sent Delta Force to kill Rachel.

Finally, it is concluded that Rachel fight to reveal political conspiracy in the conflict that occur. Rachel's struggle requires a combination of confidential strategies and activities to uncover the conspiracy of William Pickering. This shows that Rachel struggles to survive all the attacks that she face is the way to uncover the truth.

