

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

*One Second After* is a novel written by William R. Forstchen. The novel is firstly published in 2009 and reprinted in 2011 by Tor Books. It has 528 pages and 12 chapters. A month before the publication, *One Second After* is suggested on the floor of congress as a novel that should be read. The novel is also categorized as rank 11 in New York Times bestseller list. *One Second After* belongs to a futuristic novel because of its view on an attack of electromagnetic pulse (EMP) in the future. It tells a very gruesome condition of America after the attack of EMP that will return America to the middle ages.

William R. Forstchen is the author of *One Second After*. He was born in October 5, 1950 in New Jersey. He is a historian lecturer in Montreat College, North Carolina. He has received doctorate from Purdue University in the study of military history, American civil history and the history of technology. Forstchen has written more than forty books along his career as a writer. Before the publication of *One Second After*, he has won an award with his previous novel entitled *We Look Like Men In War*. Besides that, in 2002, Forstchen and his colleague, Newt Gingrich also write trilogy novel which consist of *Gettysburg*, *Grant Comes East*, and *Never Call Retreat*.

*One Second After* mostly tells the effects of electromagnetic pulse toward the people in America who usually fulfill their need with sophisticated technology. This novel describes the human life and their technology in sustaining their life. The main character named John Matherson. He is a history lecturer and a colonel of American military. He has two daughters and his wife has passed away because of cancer. Matherson must keep their family by his self. One day, there is a bad phenomenon in his hometown, North Carolina. The electricity cannot be functioned. All the things and tools cannot be operated. Matherson tries to find information to the central city. He finds that there is a nuclear explosion that causes the attack of electromagnetic pulse (EMP) and it influences to the network of electricity. This burst is very dangerous to the electronic tools. When EMP attacks the human life, it will cause damage to the tools which provided by electricity.

The American cannot use the electricity to fulfill their needs. It causes many social problems in society such as starvation, poverty, robbing, and violence, even cannibalism. The people do anything to survive in such condition. They try to get foods by robbing and hurting the other. The situation in the city becomes under control. As a military, Matherson tries to protect the people from any threat. He also must protect his little daughter, Jennifer who suffer diabetes stadium 1. There is no refrigerator to pickle the insulin whereas she needs insulin to survive.

The main conflict appears when a gangster named Posse tries to rob the food supply of refugees. Matherson and his troops try to protect the American. It has been a big news that Posse has burned alive some citizens and eat them because of starving. The battle ends when Posse is trapped by the trick of Matherson. They are hanged and burned in the central city. Matherson has been successful to save the American however he must lost his lovely daughter. America becomes a country without technology. It seems like they are back to the middle age. The people must build the country from the beginning.

This novel also gets some responses from the readers. Herschel ([www.survivalistboards.com](http://www.survivalistboards.com)) comments “I read *One Second After* and it was an eye-opener for me. It is, by far, the one item of literature most likely to convince someone else of the need for prepping. It is easy to read, engaging, accurate, and elicits a sharp emotional response”. From the comment above, the reader enjoys in reading *One Second After* because the novel will make the people realize of what will happen in the future while people must prepare it as well.

Don Koenig ([www.thepropheticyears.com](http://www.thepropheticyears.com) ) also comments that “*One Second After*, is not a feel good book. It is not a happy book but it is a very interesting book of 350 pages. I am not going to go into detail about the novel here – you will have to read it”. It is a negative response from Don Koenig. He comments that he does not arrive to the detail on the novel. Therefore, he suggests to everyone to read it.

*One Second After* has negative and positive responses from the readers. However, the writer is interested in analyzing this novel because of four reasons. Firstly, the novel is based on the story of human life in the twenty-first century. Secondly, it is because the interesting life of the characters in this novel. Thirdly, it is because the novel tells us how to live and survive under pressure. Fourthly, it is because the novel tells how the effects of electromagnetic pulse to human life.

Firstly, the novel tells us how the people live in this twenty-first century. People live in the modern era with high technology. They depend their life on the power of technology. Most of the activities can be run by technology. For instance, when we communicate to others, we need phone, computer, gadget and etc. Besides that, people also need electronic tools to fulfill their needs.

Secondly, *One Second After* tells us the life of the main character, named John Matherson. His life is drawn as the hero of his family and his nation. He is a man with two daughters and a wife who has passed away. He works as a lecturer and colonel of American military. When his country is threatened by destruction, He always tries to protect his family and his nation from the threat. It tells how his struggle to save the people from destruction. John Matherson must face bad condition of his country under the battle.

Thirdly, the novel draws the situation how to survive living in bad condition. The people live in simplicity even they have to die because of

starving. There is no food, no money, no water, no electricity and technology has been disappeared.

Fourthly, the novel gives an image how danger the effects of EMP to human life. It is pictured that human will lost their technology because of its burst. People will be back to the middle era which is not provided by technology and electricity.

From the reasons and description above, the writer is interested in analyzing the novel by using sociological approach. The issue of this study is the effects of electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack to human life which relates to the people who live in social life. Therefore, the writer decides to carry out a study entitled: **THE EFFECTS OF ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE (EMP) ATTACK TO HUMAN LIFE REFLECTED IN WILLIAM R. FORSTCHEN'S *ONE SECOND AFTER* (2009) : SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**

## **B. Literature Review**

The writer has tried to find the literature review of the study on the novel, however there is no study on William R. Forstchen's *One Second After*, at least among the students in around Surakarta, Semarang and Jogjakarta. The writer has searched in library and some websites and there is no result of the study of this novel. Therefore, the writer cannot compare this research to the other research. Some websites that the writer has visited are as follows: Proquest.com, ebscohost.com, questia.com, journals.cambridge.org and app.knovel.com. The writer uses sociological

approach to analyze the data while the novel entitled *One Second After* is as the object. The writer tries to analyze **THE EFFECTS OF ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE (EMP) ATTACK TO HUMAN LIFE REFLECTED IN WILLIAM R. FORSTCHEN'S *ONE SECOND AFTER* (2009) : SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH.**

### **C. Problem Statement**

Formulating problem statement is quite significant. It helps the researcher understands the research that will be conducted. Therefore, based on the background of the study, the writer proposes four problems:

1. What are the effects of electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack to human life?
2. What is the relation between *One Second After* novel and the American society in the early of twenty first century?

### **D. Limitation of the Study**

The writer focuses on discussing the topic, it is the effects of electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack to human life based on the novel *One Second After*. The discussion only uses the theory of sociological by Alan Swingewood and Diana Laurenson.

### **E. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of study are as follows:

1. To describe the novel based on structural elements of the novel.
2. To find the relationship between the novel and the American society of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **F. Benefits of the Study**

The result of the study is expected to give benefits as follows:

1. Theoretically, to give the knowledge of the aspects of sociological literary study.
2. Practically, to enlarge knowledge and experience of the writer and another students who have interest in literature.

## **G. Research Method**

1. Type of the study

The type of the study is qualitative research in the library and internet.

2. Type of data and source

The data of the research are text and document. The sources of the data used in this research are categorized into two namely primary data and secondary data:

- a. Primary data

It is taken from the novel *One Second After*.

- b. Secondary data

It is taken from the material and data related to the study. The data are taken from books in library and internet.

3. Data collecting method

The method to collect the data is by note-taking. The researcher involves some required steps:

1. Reading the novel for several times to get deep understanding.
2. Giving underline to the important information in the novel.

3. Determining the main issue of the novel
  4. Determining the characters that will be analyzed.
  5. Reading some related books to find out the theory, data and information needed.
  6. Taking note of important thing both primary and secondary data sources.
  7. Classifying and determining the relevant data.
  8. Classifying the material that has been selected to support in analyzing the novel.
4. Techniques of data analysis

The technique to analyze the data uses descriptive analysis. The writer collects the data which is relevant to analyze the novel. Sociological theory is used to analyze the novel to find the relationship between the issue and the social condition of America in the early of twenty-first century.

#### **H. Paper Organization**

The research paper organization of the effects of electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack to human life reflected in William R. Forstchen's *One Second After* (2011): sociological approach, consists of six chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 is introduction. It consists of background of the study, literary review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, theoretical approach, research method and

paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory. It deals with the notion of sociological theory, major principle of sociological perspective, notion of electromagnetic pulse, attack of EMP, its effects in human life, and structural elements of the novel. Chapter III presents social background of America in the twenty-first century. Chapter IV deals with structural analysis and its discussion of the novel which includes some elements such as, character and characterization, setting, plot, point of view, theme, and style. Chapter V discusses sociological analysis and its discussion. Chapter VI or the last chapter presents discussion and suggestion based on the analysis of the previous chapters.