women in media construction

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Women in Media Construction: Modernization or Consumerism?

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The purpose of this study is to describe how the media constructs the business interest to women. This study examine texts produced by two popular news sites in Indonesia, which has a special section of women. The results showed that the media do some labels to the business interests of women as objects, which is labeled as a modern woman, trendy woman, a beautiful woman, and attractive woman.

Keywords: Gender, Media Construction, Modernization, Consumerism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Media and communication technology developments brought great changes in the life of mankind, not least women. The media presence, it also makes the role and duties of women expanded and penetrated in all spheres of life. To support these changes, the online news media also do not want to fall behind to provide a special section for women. Based on author searches for the most popular online media in Indonesia, unfortunately there are only two major media put special attention in the form of a special section of women, namely kompas.com with female rubric, and detik.com with wolipop rubric.

The presence of both section, give enough space for female expression. Few articles in female rubric published on 03/11/2015 are: Hair Color Trends 2016 Typical Contour Techniques for Makeup: Apppear Fresh and Beautiful While Driving (Ride & Beauty); Hairstyle Trends 2016 is more flexible; Scavenger's Daughter in Thailand Became Beauty Queen, and others. While the discussion in wolipop on the same day, Survey shows 77% of Women Willing her Legs to bear Pain for Wearing Stylish Shoes; Show Style with Latest Trends Earrings: Jumbo Size Earring; and others. Based on the articles in both section, the discussion for women is more about consumption patterns that lead to lifestyle, in addition there is also a healthy lifestyle campaign. Accordingly, this research want to focus on the consumption patterns of women in the media construction.

To get an overview of the analysis of the phenomenon, researchers studying to develop a theory of ecofeminism, which arise because of dissatisfaction with the direction of development ecological world is getting worse. This theory has a contradictory concept back to the theory of modern feminism. Feminist modern theory assume that individuals are autonomous beings who escape from the influence the environment and the right to determine his own destiny. Meanwhile, theories ecofeminism more comprehensive look at the individual, namely as a creature bound and interact with the environment (Ratna Megawangi, 2005). According to this theory, what happens after the women entered the world masculine, which had been dominated by men, women are changing the character and no longer includes feminine qualities, but precisely into a male clone and enter the trap of masculine hierarchical system. The entry of women into the world masculine or public world, has led to modern civilization increasingly colored by the dominant masculine qualities. As a result, the look is competition, self-centered, domination, and exploitation. This is evident in the number of servings a text, written in a special section, on the women's online media sites. To that end, researchers are interested in studying the phenomenon.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the introduction to Freidman on Consumption and Identity, consumption is usually seen as an economic event, rather than be seen as an autonomous social phenomenon. Even though consumption is a social phenomenon that comes from the expansion of domestic consumers which is determined by the status of social and economic needs of a person. Consumption as a social phenomenon in modern society, is also supported by the expansion of wage sectors connected with the demand factor. Critical thinkers see consumption as a social phenomenon, and as a result of deceit, if there is consumption that is not a requirement. This critical thinkers see the non-necessity consumption as a result of psychological manipulation by market researchers and advertisers, that manufacturers increase production due to consumer demand. Capitalism makes a false system to keep
the needs of consumers never end, because of the importance of capital accumulation. This conclusion can be from simple models of economic premise, the economic reproduction, which states that all non-productive consumption is a product of false consciousness and behavior of compensation. The emergence of luxury goods carry a negative thing, because it is defined as things that are not important and is not necessary for survival.

Differences in definition between necessities and luxuries are in the category of consumption of discussion in all the social sciences. In the twentieth century, the consumption function discussed among neo-classical economists, namely that people buy what they want, the relationship between income, savings and consumption. Later, it was found the motivation to consume, which is associated with what is needed, as a function of the increase in revenue. The phenomenon of consumption then becomes subject of study and research of its nature that can be viewed from various branches of science. In recent years there has been a large increase in the literature on consumption. Among them, the economists introduce external variables, such as life cycle (Modigliani 1986) and the structure of the household (Becker 1986) in the analysis of the classical rational choice model. But the theory of consumption in a modern economy still tend to refer to the theory of utility demand, which is to say people buy what they want, manufacturers generally produce what is demanded, consumption is a function asymptotically production, the source of the request entirely is the subject of an individual and is not affected by the social context and culture.

Meanwhile, critical theory states, that the consumer desires is also based on false consciousness outside the field of economics, such as treating consumption as a lifestyle that is influenced by many factors, such as emotional organization formed by a form of social identity. As expressed by Baudrillard, that consumption at the end of the modern period is manifest in the commodity that is transformed into a sign. Brands commodity is the result of production excess combined with production of information. Resulted in the drawing of meaning of consumption in social life, which drive consumption merely based on information from media. The world of fantasy provided by media is brought into reality. Meanwhile, the consumption phenomenon Bourdieu focuses on the relationship between group identity as a lifestyle and consumption strategy, the relationship between consumption, social context, and habits. Method for explaining the relationship between the social conditions of existence, the formation and consumption practices as the construction of the living world.

3. METHODS

The methodology in this study is qualitative approach to investigate the text on new media, namely kompas.com with female rubric, and detik.com with wappop rubric, and analyzed by the method of critical discourse. A qualitative approach, according Sumanto (1995), is a method that emphasizes the aspects in depth understanding of an issue. This research method using the technique of in-depth analysis (in-depth analysis), which examines the problems case by case. In a qualitative methodology, the nature of a problem one will be different in nature from other problems.

4. FINDING AND ANALYSIS

Women in this modern era, live with all the freedom of expression, but it is not entirely free. Unconsciously, there is a media construction she should follow, if she want to be labeled as modern woman. We can trace the contents of the web that author mentioned above. In one main female rubric on kompas.com, there’s a writing titled “Hair Color Trends 2016 Typical Contour Techniques for Makeup”. The following news excerpt:

KOMPAS.com - makeup lovers certainly familiar with the contours of the face or contouring techniques. Makeup techniques popularized by Kim Kardashian is indeed quite magical. Therefore, contouring can hide flaws and highlight the advantages of facial features that exist on the facial features.

The key is a game of color of foundation shades darker or lighter in the face.

Now, contouring growing techniques. Not only in the face, contouring techniques can also be found in the world of hairdressing.

Inspired by these trends, L’Oreal Professionnel introduces IT Looks Fall Winter 2015/2016 at Atrium Senayan City, Jakarta 929/10/2015.

One hair trend that displayed the Wild Cooper Contouring, is a blend of copper or reddish hair color with long hair. As a supporter, waning techniques contouring done with the aim of highlighting the advantages of hair. Indra Tanudarma, Education Manager of L’Oreal Professionnel Indonesia said, “We are inspired by the phenomenon contouring makeup to create a near-perfect hair.”

More specifically, Indra gave an example: “Suppose that inverted triangle-shaped face (narrow at the bottom), in order to face more proportional then given a lighter touch of color on the hair left right near the top of the forehead,” said Indra.

To identify the color and layout suitable contouring, Indra suggested, for prior consultation with a professional hair stylist. “Never been to a salon that no advance consultation beforehand,” advises Indra.

The article suggest that to be modern and beautiful, a woman should follow contemporary trend. Based on the article, a modern woman should have adequate cognition about the contour technique of the face. It is also tell that the technique was popularized by Kim Kardashian, which is perceived as a beautiful woman. Interestingly, in the article there is a sentence that said contour technique can hide flaws and highlight extra facial features. In this sentence, there is recognition that there is no perfect beauty, there is always part of woman’s face to hide. Which parts are to be hidden, is

based on the construction of the media thinking, not the thought of the woman herself. Then, the article also give suggestions that face contour technique can be used for hair. Interestingly, this article is based on an interview with a male stylist. This indicates that the construction of a perfect hair beauty is the result of the construction of another person, not the woman herself. In addition, other construction is the inducement to buy products unconsciously, because these products can make a woman beautiful and follow contemporary trends. This article ends with a purchase advice, as if a modern woman needs these products. Awareness about products and product trends are also a must-have knowledge for modern women.

The article published in woplop, is more narrative in constructing the modern woman as a woman consumer. One of them, titled: Survey shows 77% of women willing her legs to endure pain for the sake wearing stylish shoes. Here is an excerpt of the writings:

Jakarta - "Beauty is pain," it seemed appropriate expression addressed to the women. Deni look beautiful and attractive, not a few women who are willing to 'suffer' by using products that make part of his body ache even to the day. One thing that makes women willing to be sick it is shoes. Yes, many women who do not have to bear the pain problem in their legs to look elegant and beautiful on every occasion by wearing high heels.

A survey in the UK, as quoted by Female First revealed that 77 percent of women experience wear uncomfortable shoes. In fact, 62 percent of women admitted to still buy shoes because the model is good, even though they know that the shoes would make her feet hurt when worn.

Recognition of the respondents is in contrast to the previous questionnaire answers. From the results of the survey conducted SlimBoots, brand shoe insole products, 82 percent of women choose comfort as a major factor in selecting shoes. While 67 percent consider the price, 48 percent and 40 percent color high heels. But in practice, they prefer the models rather than comfort.

The survey also revealed that the average woman has at least 26 pairs of shoes of different models. Ranging from boots, sneakers to sandals. In average, 1 in 10 women have 30 pairs of shoes with a total value of 500 pounds, or about USD 10.4 million.

Although it had a lot of shoes, not all collections are used every day. Nine out of 10 women say they wear the same shoes two days in a row. How about you? Including women who prioritize comfort or stylish appearance? (HST / HST)

From the article, the author of the text is agreed that a woman's beauty is a pain. Modern women today, many of them are willing to 'suffer' for wearing products that make part of his body hurt all day, just to be looked beautiful and attractive. High heels are one of the things that make women willing to suffer. Then, the author tells a survey in the United Kingdom, where 77% of women suffer in wearing uncomfortable shoes, 62% of women admitted to buy shoes for a good model, despite making his foot hurt. The survey also mentioned that the average British woman has 25 pairs of

shoes of different models, and also mentioned the woman's spending budget to buy shoes. The article illustrated how modern women are so eager to consume beauty in the form of products. And the product is purchased not for the need to protect the foot, it gives pain in the feet.

From the media's frame, originally expected to provide space for a woman's freedom of expression, but in the displayed text, media did a number of constructions that confine women in modern labels, trends, beautiful and attractive look. Whereas this label is intend to build the consumption behavior of female beauty, with buying products, so that woman can hide flaws and highlight her advantages.

Based ecofeminist theory, that article, also showed a capitalist-patriarchal perspective in interpreting the beauty that is uniform as a prerequisite for the label as a modern woman. Many women in the special section online media sites that express beauty and image of modern women, but in fact the article in the female section, also not out of the economic practices dominated capitalist-patriarchal perspective.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The presence of media that provides the rubric of women, is appreciated. However, if the rubrics, are intended only to make women as objects of mere business interests, it must be criticized. In fact, the findings of this research, media still makes woman as the object of business interests with various labels. Label of beautiful woman with various knickknacks makeup, still dominate the contents. Even to be able to get a pretty label, woman is willing to suffer. Though she has been spending a lot of money and endure the pain, only to be labeled as beautiful woman or resemble some figures labeled as beautiful woman, as shown in the female section.

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