

Abstract

This dissertation is written based on an analytical qualitative research conducted under the American Studies with the final objective to understand how American women deal with and their experiences are colored by substantial efforts to sustain the ideologies of femininity embodied in the representation of female detective in American police procedural drama series *The Closer* (TNT, 2005-2012). The research was conducted to answer three research problems about the poetics and politics of representation: how the main female detective character of *The Closer* is represented in the professional sphere; how she is represented in the domestic sphere; and how the politics of the representation is. The main data and secondary data were analyzed using Barthes' concepts of denotative and connotative and Foucault's concepts of discourse and power/knowledge. The analysis shows that the main female detective character of *The Closer* is represented in multiple roles both in the professional and domestic spheres. The combination of the development of the characters, the narration of the sequence of events, and the juxtaposition of the scenes prevent the representation of the female detective as a very capable detective interrogator and a highly effective team leader from being seen as constructed and motivated to produce certain ideas about female detective and female leader and leadership that by doing a man's job and moreover assuming a top position in the men's sphere, women are seen as becoming too masculine for refusing "to know their place" and prone to getting social problems for attempting to excel in the place they do not belong to. In this way, the symbolic power of television is purified. The analysis also shows that that politics or the effect or the consequence of the representation of female detective in *The Closer* extends the view that TNT has made use of its institutional power to articulate and reinforce the continuation of the discursive formations about television police procedural drama series, female detective, and female leader and leadership by making a main female detective character as a female team leader visible and by allowing it to become a spectacle. Through the representation of its female detective as a team leader, *The Closer* performs its significant role in the production of social knowledge that it is crucial for women to always "know their place" because there are consequences for transgressing male space, identity, and narrative. The social knowledge is to reinforce the traditional notion of women's private or domestic sphere and complimentary roles. The secured need to reinforce the traditional notion of women's sphere and roles has served the fact that despite the significant advancements they have obtained, American women, especially those who put effort to move up to or are already in top leadership positions in the American workplace, still have to face and deal with the persistent challenges produced by the subtle, yet pervasive masculine bias of thinking in the early twenty-first century American society.

Keywords: female detective, American police procedural drama series, poetics of representation, politics of representation

Intisari

Disertasi ini disusun berdasarkan penelitian kualitatif analitis di bawah Pengkajian Amerika dengan tujuan akhir untuk memahami bagaimana perempuan Amerika menghadapi dan pengalaman mereka diwarnai oleh usaha-usaha substansial untuk mempertahankan ideologi-ideologi femininitas yang mengejaukan dalam representasi detektif perempuan dalam seri drama prosedural kepolisian televisi Amerika *The Closer* (TNT, 2005-2012). Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menjawab tiga permasalahan mengenai poetika dan politik representasi, yaitu bagaimana tokoh utama detektif perempuan dalam *The Closer* direpresentasikan dalam ranah kerja; bagaimana tokoh utama detektif perempuan tersebut direpresentasikan dalam ranah domestik; dan bagaimana politik representasi tokoh utama detektif perempuan tersebut. Data utama dan data sekunder dianalisis dengan menggunakan konsep denotasi dan konotasi dari Barthes dan konsep diskursus dan kuasa/pengetahuan dari Foucault. Analisis data menunjukkan bahwa tokoh utama detektif perempuan *The Closer* direpresentasikan dalam berbagai peran baik di ranah kerja maupun di ranah domestik. Kombinasi pengembangan karakter, narasi plot, dan penjajaran adegan menyebabkan representasi detektif perempuan sebagai interogator handal dan pemimpin tim yang efektif tidak dipandang sebagai konstruksi dan bermotivasi untuk memproduksi ide-ide bahwa perempuan akan dipandang terlalu maskulin dan dianggap bisa mendapat masalah-masalah sosial bila melakukan pekerjaan laki-laki dan lebih-lebih bila menduduki posisi pemimpin di ranah laki-laki. Analisis data juga menunjukkan bahwa efek atau konsekuensi representasi detektif perempuan dalam *The Closer* menunjukkan bahwa TNT telah menggunakan kekuatan institusinya untuk mengartikulasikan dan memperkuat keberlanjutan formasi diskursif tentang seri televisi prosedural kepolisian, detektif perempuan, dan pemimpin dan kepemimpinan perempuan dengan menampilkan representasi detektif perempuan sebagai pemimpin tim dan menjadikannya sebagai sebuah tontonan. Melalui representasi tokoh utama detektif perempuannya, *The Closer* memproduksi pengetahuan sosial bahwa perempuan harus selalu “menyadari tempatnya” dan memahami bahwa akan ada konsekuensi-konsekuensi bila mereka melanggar ranah, identitas, dan naratif laki-laki. Pengetahuan sosial tersebut diproduksi untuk menegaskan pandangan tradisional tentang ranah pribadi atau domestik perempuan dan peran pelengkap mereka. Terpenuhinya kebutuhan untuk menegaskan pandangan tradisional tersebut menunjukkan fakta bahwa meskipun telah banyak kemajuan yang mereka capai, perempuan Amerika, utamanya mereka yang berupaya masuk atau yang sudah berada dalam posisi kepemimpinan di ranah kerja Amerika, masih harus terus menerus menghadapi dan mengatasi tantangan-tantangan yang merupakan hasil dari bias pemikiran maskulin yang tidak kentara, tetapi meresap dalam berbagai aspek kehidupan dalam masyarakat Amerika awal abad dua puluh satu.

Kata kunci: detektif perempuan, seri drama procedural kepolisian televisi Amerika, poetika representasi, politik representasi