

IX. KEDUDUKAN TEORI MEDIA DALAM KAJIAN BUDAYA (4)

Bagian ini sebagai bahan pembahasan tentang peta permasalahan dalam kajian budaya dan media, yaitu dalam aspek: perspektif budaya atas realitas media, dan pendekatan atas budaya media.

Teori adalah perangkat kerja dalam kegiatan akademik.

Therefore, I use the term theory in its broadest sense as any organized set of concepts and explanations about a phenomenon. (Litteljohn, 2002: 19)

Mengenai keberadaan teori dapat merujuk pandangan McQuail berikut:

If theory is understood not only as a system of law-like propositions, but as any systematic set of ideas that can help make sense of a phenomenon, guide action or predict a consequence, then one can distinguish at least four kinds of theory which are relevant to mass communication. These can be described as: social scientific, normative, operational and everyday theory. The most obvious kind to be expected in a text Like this consists of *social scientific* theory — general statements about the nature, working and effects of mass communication, based on systematic and objective observation of media and other relevant factors.

The body of such theory is now large, although it is loosely organized and not very clearly formulated or even very consistent. It also covers a very wide spectrum, from broad questions of society to detailed aspects of individual information sending and receiving. Some '*scientific*' theory is concerned with understanding what is going on, some with developing a critique and some with practical applications in processes of public information or persuasion.

A second kind of theory can be described as *normative*, since it is concerned with examining or prescribing how media *ought* to operate if certain social values are to be observed or attained. Such theory usually stems from the broader social philosophy or ideology of a given society. This kind of theory is important because it plays a part in shaping and legitimating media institutions and has considerable influence on the expectations

concerning the media that are held by other social agencies and by the media's own audiences. A good deal of research into mass media has been the result of attempts to apply norms of social and cultural performance. A society's normative theories concerning its own media are usually to be found in laws, regulations, media policies, codes of ethics and the substance of public debate. While normative media theory is not in itself 'objective', it can be studied by the 'objective' methods of the social sciences (McQuail, 1992).

A third kind of knowledge about the media can best be described as *operational* theory, since it refers to the practical ideas assembled and applied by media practitioners in the conduct of their own media work. Similar bodies of accumulated practical wisdom are to be found in most organizational and professional settings. In the case of the media it helps to organize experience on many questions such as how to select news, please audiences, design effective advertising, keep within the limits of what society permits, and relate, effectively to sources and audiences. At some points it may overlap with normative theory, for instance in matters of journalistic ethics.

Such knowledge merits the name of theory because it is usually patterned and persistent, even if never codified, and is influential in respect of behaviour. It comes to light in the study of communicators and their organizations (for example, Elliott, 1972; Tuchman, 1978; Tunstall, 1993). Katz (1977) compared the role of the researcher in relation to media production to that of the theorist of music or philosopher of science who can see regularities which a musician or scientist does not even need to be aware of.

Finally, there is *everyday* or common-sense theory of media use, referring to the knowledge we all have from our own personal experience with media. This enables us to understand what is going on, how a medium fits into our daily lives, how different genres are intended to be 'read', as well as how we like to read it, what the differences are between different media and media genres, and much more. On the basis of such theory is grounded the ability to make consistent choices, develop patterns of taste, construct

life-styles and identities as media consumers. It also supports the ability to make critical judgements. (McQuail, 2000: 7-8)

Teori komunikasi/media dimaksudkan sebagai landasan konseptual dalam menghadapi fenomena komunikasi/media. Sebutan teori komunikasi biasanya mencakup seluruh konsep yang dapat digunakan dalam menghadapi media.

The term *communication theory* can refer to single theory, or it can be used to designate the: collective wisdom found in the entire body of theories related to communication. Much disagreement exists about what constitutes an adequate theory of communication. (Littlejohn, 2002: 3)

Dalam kegiatan akademik kajian media kemudian dikenal teori inti (*core theory*), sebagaimana disebutkan Littlejohn berikut:

Core theory is especially significant because it helps us understand communication in general. Core theories provide insight into processes that operate whenever communication takes place. The following list illustrates the types of elements included in core communication theories.

First, core theories tell us something about the *development of messages*. How do we create what we write, say, and express to others? What mental processes are involved? To what extent and in what ways are messages created in interaction with others? How does the process of message development differ from culture to culture, and what are the cultural mechanisms that enter into the message development process?

Second, core theories address *interpretation and the generation of meaning*. How do humans understand messages, and how does meaning arise in interaction with other people? How does the mind process information and interpret experience? To what extent and in what ways are meaning and understanding products of culture?

Third, core theories discuss *message structure*, which consists of the elements of messages in writings, the spoken word, and nonverbal forms. How are messages put together, and how are they organized? In what ways does the organization of a message create meaning? How are communicators' messages in a dialogue organized, and how do the participants

in a conversation mesh their talk?

The fourth element addressed by core theories is *interactional dynamics*. This involves relationships and interdependency among communicators and the joint creation of discourse and meaning. It addresses the give and take, the production and reception, between parties in a communication transaction, whether those parties are individuals or groups.

Finally, core theories help us understand *institutional and societal dynamics*, or the ways power and resources are distributed in society the ways culture is produced, and the interaction among segments of society. (Littlejohn, 2002: 15)

Dari kerangka pemikiran mengenai teori sebagai diuraikan di atas, kajian dalam perspektif budaya atas media dikembangkan. Untuk itu dapat dimulai dengan dengan titik tolak pandangan Kellner berikut:

...The major tradition of cultural studies combine – at their best – social theory, cultural analysis, history, philosophy, and specific political interventions, thus overcoming the standard academic division of labor by surmounting specialization which bifurcates the field of study of the media, culture, and communications. Cultural studies thus operate with a transdisciplinary conception that draws on social theory, economics, politics, history, communication studies, literary and cultural theory, philosophy, and other theoretical discourses.

Transdisciplinary approach to culture and society transgress borders between various academic disciplines. In particular, they argue that one should not stop at the border of a text, but should see how it fits into system of textual production, and how various texts are thus part of system genres or type of production and have an intertextual construction. (Kellner, 1995: 27 – 28)

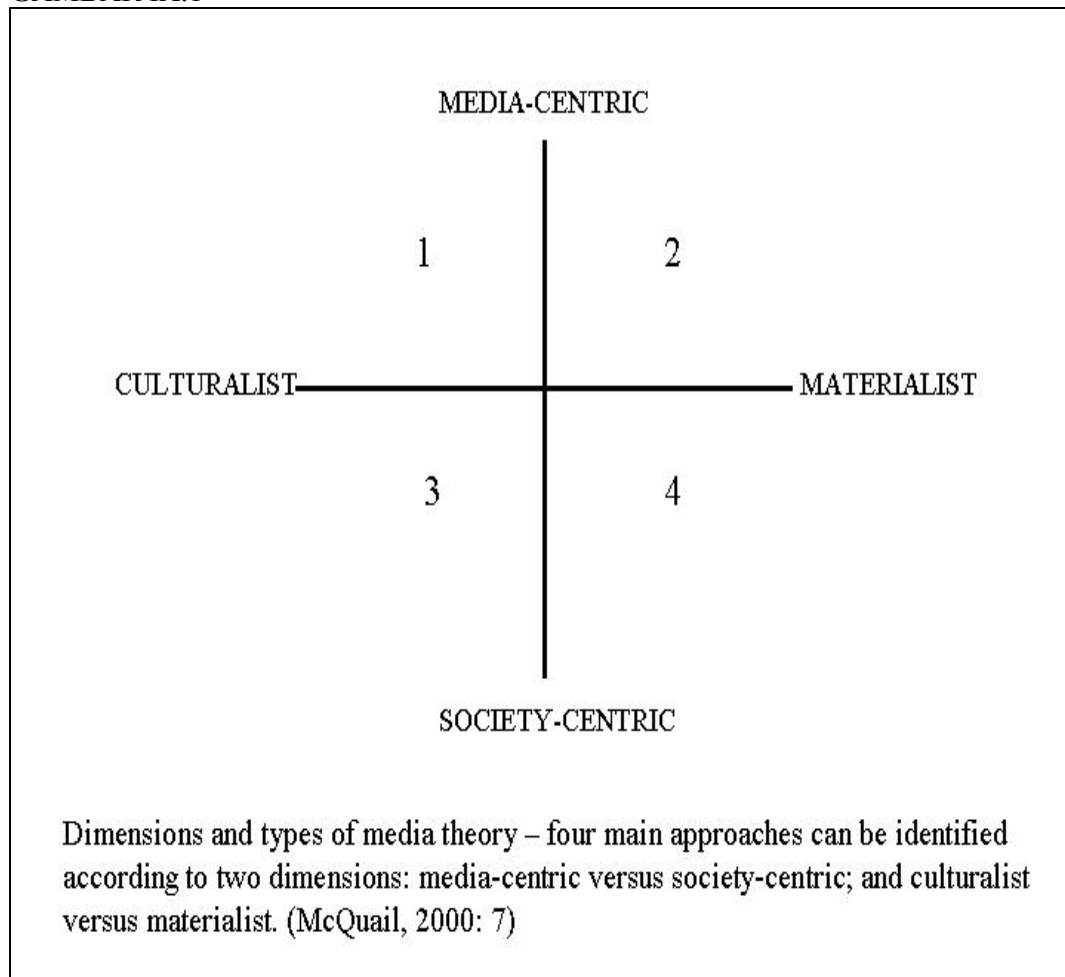
Lebih jauh mengenai keberadaan media sebagai suatu kajian, DeFleur dan Ball-Rokeach menyatakan sebagai berikut:

1. What technological elements or other cultural traits accumulated in what pattern to be combined into new culture complexes such as the

- mass newspaper, film, radio, or television industry?
2. What were the social and cultural condition of the society within which this accumulation took place and how did these conditions create a climate favorable for the emergence and widespread adoption of the innovation?
 3. What have been the patterns of diffusion of the innovations through the society, and what sociological conditions have been related to their rates and patterns of growth? (DeFleur, Ball-Rokeach, 1982: 30)

Kajian media/komunikasi dapat dikembangkan dengan perspektif yang bertolak dari sudut pandang kontekstual sebagai berikut:

GAMBAR IX.1



Dari sini sudut pandang atas kajian komunikasi dapat dikembangkan dalam 4 aspek yang bersifat kontekstual. Lebih jauh McQuail menguraikannya:

1. A media-culturalist perspective involves giving primary attention to content and to the subjective reception of media message as influenced by the immediate personal environment.
2. A media-materialist approach emphasizes the structural and technological aspects of the media.
3. A social-culturalist perspective emphasizes the influence of social factors on media production and reception and the functions of the media in social life.
4. A social-materialist perspective sees media and their contents mainly as a reflection of political-economic and material condition of the society (e.g. class differences) as factors. (McQuail, 2000: 7)

McLuhan, pemikir kefilosofan dalam Ilmu Komunikasi, antara lain menyatakan:

The mass media are extensions of the mechanisms of human perception; they are imitators of the modes of human apprehension and judgment.

(McLuhan, 1960: 180)

Sering pengkaji Ilmu Komunikasi dibikin bingung dalam mencari kejelasan dan konteks pragmatis dari tesis yang dipopulerkan McLuhan. Kalau diingat posisinya sebagai pemikir filsafat sosial, tentunya signifikansi teorinya dapat ditempatkan dengan lebih proporsional. Semangat dari pencariannya adalah tataran humanitas, mencari nilai kehidupan manusia melalui media modern. Seperti juga dinyatakannya pada kesempatan lain:

Let us return to electric light. Whether the light is being used for brain surgery or night baseball is matter of indifference. It could be argued that these activities are in some way the “content” of the electric light, since they could not exist without the electric light. This fact merely underlines the point that “the medium is the message” because it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action. The content or uses of such media are as diverse as they are ineffectual in shaping the form of human association. Indeed, it is only typical that the “content” of any medium blinds us to the character of the medium. It is only today that industries have become aware of the various kinds of business in which they are engaged...

The electric light escapes attention as communication medium just because it has no “content”. And this makes it an invaluable instance of how people fail to study media at all. For it is not till the electric light is used to spell out some brand name that it is noticed as a medium. Then it is not the light but the “content” (or what is really, another medium) that is noticed. The message of the electric power in industry, totally radical, pervasive, and decentralized. For electric light and power are separate from their uses, yet they eliminate time and space factors in human association exactly as do radio, telegraph, telephone, and TV, creating involvement in depth. (McLuhan, 1964: 8 – 9)

Tantangan dalam pengembangan Ilmu Komunikasi adalah dalam menghadapi perkembangan teknologi media yang pesat dan gencar merasuki seluruh tipe media. Pada tingkat analisis karakter media boleh disebut sepenuhnya masih bersifat sebagai Studi Sosial. Tetapi begitu masuk ke dalam media, yang dihadapi bukan lagi hanya pesan yang memiliki konteks sosial, tetapi juga perangkat lunak dan perangkat keras yang berkonteks fisika.

Teori-teori yang dilontarkan oleh McLuhan perlu ditangkap semangatnya, bahwa untuk melakukan kajian media bukan sekadar untuk kepentingan pragmatis, tetapi untuk memahami kemanusiaan dalam kehidupan masyarakat. Ada yang hilang dan ada pula nilai baru yang bertumbuh di masyarakat dengan adanya teknologi media.

Sering dikutip dari McLuhan, khususnya yang menyebutkan terbentuknya “global village” akibat teknologi media. Bagaimana gerangan pola kehidupan masyarakat dalam “global village” tentunya merupakan kajian yang sangat menantang bagi para pengkaji Studi Sosial. Loncatan masyarakat desa yang mengkota, lalu berada di dalam desa dunia, proses perubahan semacam ini tidak dapat didekati dengan model komunikasi konvensional, yang mengasumsikan perubahan alam pikiran khalayak sebagai hasil dari efek pesan media. Model komunikasi dengan menitik-beratkan pada efek pesan kiranya hanya populer bagi pengkaji Ilmu Komunikasi sebelum tahun 60-an, tetapi sudah tidak sesuai untuk menjelaskan fenomena media modern.

Tetapi pandangan McLuhan memang terlalu jauh bagi pengkaji Studi Sosial yang umumnya melakukan kajian positivisme dan bersifat pragmatis. Sementara tesa yang bertolak dari filsafat sosial dan berpretensi menjelaskan proses peradaban, sulit digunakan untuk menjelaskan obyek kajian. Dalam memahami masyarakat, semakin terasa perlunya

pendekatan lintas disiplin. Katakanlah melalui tesa McLuhan, bagaimana pengkaji Ilmu Komunikasi menempatkan diri dalam menangkap fenomena sosial? Media disini dibicarakan untuk menjelaskan tatanan dan nilai kehidupan masyarakat. Pengkaji harus bertolak menggunakan perspektif teori-teori yang berasal dari disiplin studi Studi Sosial (termasuk kultural) lainnya, sehingga fenomena media akan terlihat lebih luas secara kontekstual.

Begitu pula dalam Studi Sosial, spesialisasi diperlukan untuk efisiensi belajar, tetapi saat menghadapi masyarakat, pengkaji pada hakikatnya tidak akan terpaku dengan spesialisasi disiplin studi tersebut. Tujuan seorang pengkaji Studi Sosial adalah mengenali fenomena masyarakat (*polity* dan *society*) dan kemudian berusaha mengungkapkan makna kehidupan manusia dari realitasnya.

Adapun kajian kultural atas media dapat dilihat sebagai media dalam perspektif kultural maupun kultur media. Landasan pertimbangan dalam kajian kultural atas media, dapat disimak dari pendapat berikut:

Traditionally, mass communication research has conceptualized the process of communication in term of circulation circuit or loop. This model has been criticized for its linearity – sender/message/receiver – for its concentration on the level of message exchange and for the absence of structured conception of different moments as a complex structure of relations, But it is also possible (and useful) to think of this process in term of structure produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinction moments – production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction. This would be to think of the process as a ‘complex structure in dominance’, sustained through the articulation of connected practices, each of which, however, retains its distinctiveness and has its own specific modality, its own forms and conditions of existence. (...) It also highlights the specificity of the forms in which the product of the process ‘appears’ in each moment, and thus what distinguishes discursive ‘production’ from other types of production in our society and in modern media system. (Hall, 2001: 166)

Dengan titik tolak dari landasan pertimbangan di atas, perlu dipertegas bahwa pembahasan dalam risalah ini dimaksudkan sebagai suatu upaya eksplorasi untuk mempelajari media yang ditempatkan dalam perspektif kebudayaan/kultural, sebagai upaya untuk pengembangan tradisi kultural dalam kajian atas media. Kajian semacam ini diperlukan sebagai penyeimbang dengan pengembangan Ilmu Komunikasi yang bertolak dengan

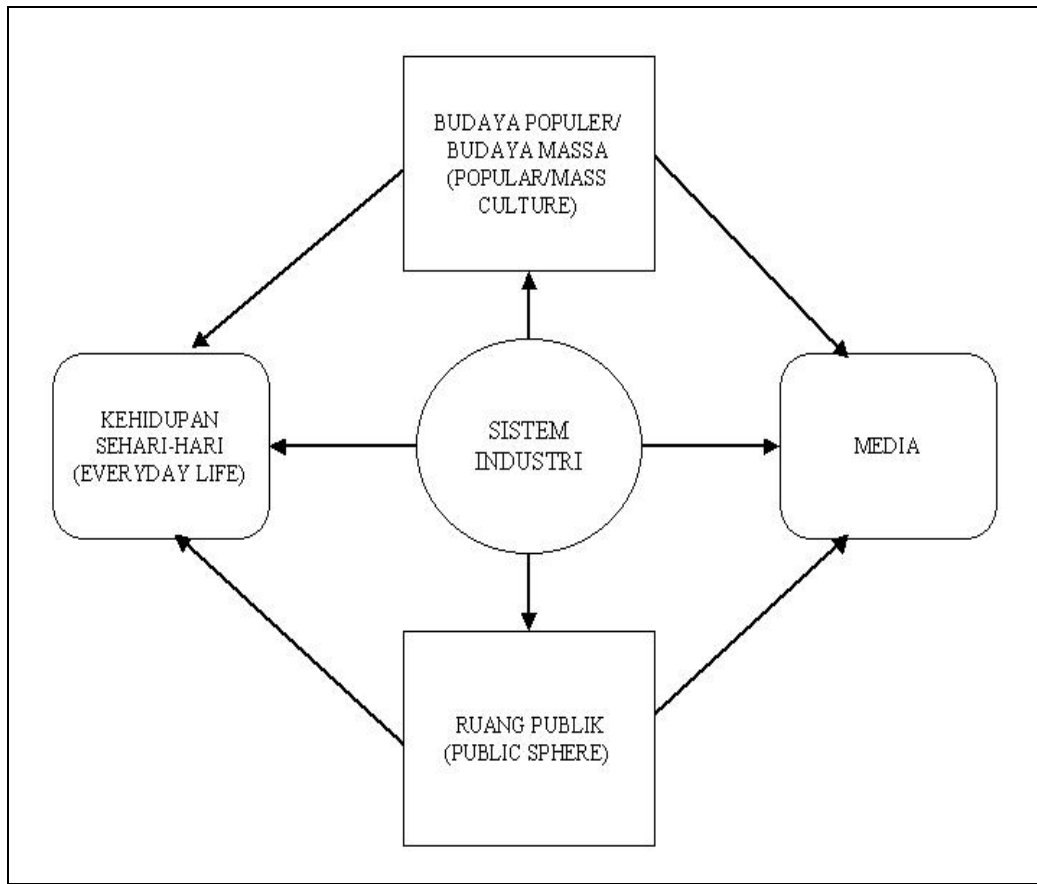
pendekatan empirisme (*logico-empirical*). Terlebih lagi dengan pendidikan Ilmu Komunikasi dengan orientasi pragmatis sehingga Ilmu Komunikasi tereduksi sebagai pengetahuan bersifat teknis (*technicalities*). Akibatnya sekolah Ilmu Komunikasi dikesankan sebagai pendidikan bagi komunikator dalam ruang politik dan ekonomi. Kajian media dengan perspektif kultural membawa konsekuensi dalam cara pandang terhadap media, yaitu hubungan media dengan masyarakat politik dan ekonomi dalam konteks makna kultural/simbolik (*cultures and media*), dan kultur media yang ada dalam masyarakat (*media cultures*).

Kerangka konseptual Hall diilustrasikannya pada media televisi, seperti berikut:

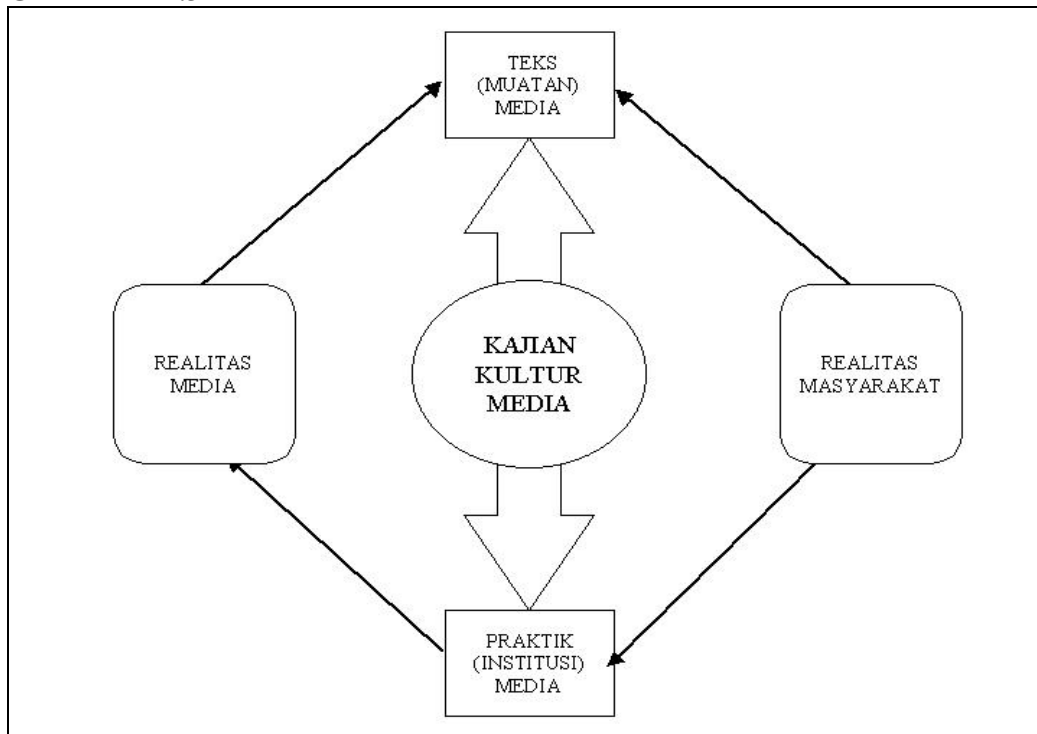
(...) we may crudely characterize the television communication process as follows. The institutional structures of broadcasting, with their practices and networks of production, their organized relations and technical infrastructure, are required to produce a programme.... Production, here, constructs the message. In one sense, then, the circuit begins here. Of course, the production process is not without its 'discursive' aspect: it, too, is framed throughout by meanings and ideas: knowledge-in-use concerning the routines of production, historically defined technical skills, professional ideologies, institutional knowledge, definitions and assumptions, assumptions about the audience and so on frame the constitution of the programme through this production structure. Further, though the production structures of television originate the television discourse, they do not constitute a closed system. They draw topics, treatments, agendas, events, personnel, images of the audience, 'definition of situation' from other sources and other discursive formation within the wider socio-cultural and political structure of which they are differentiated part... (Hall, 2001: 167)

Kajian media dalam perspektif kultural dapat digambarkan dalam 2 gambar berturutan di bawah:

GAMBAR IX.2



GAMBAR IX.3



Keberadaan media dilihat dalam konteks sistem industri yang melingkupi kehidupan sehari-hari melalui ruang publik di satu sisi dan produk industri budaya. Dalam lingkungan konseptual semacam ini maka perspektif yang diterapkan dalam kajian budaya sebagai dasar kajian atas media (GAMBAR IX.2). Pada sisi lain, kerangka konseptual mengenai dinamika yang menggerakkan media melalui perilaku inbstitusional maupun makna kultural teks media yang dihasilkan (GAMBAR IX.3).

Demikianlah bahwa kajian media pada dasarnya bermuara pada 2 tujuan, pertama menjadikan media sebagai sumber untuk mengkaji dimensi-dimensi realitas sosial suatu masyarakat, dan kedua untuk mengenali kecenderungan nilai yang menggerakkan suatu media. Pertimbangan dalam melakukan kajian kultur dan media sebagaimana diuraikan berikut:

There are at least four different kinds of human need that have a relationship with culture and communications: (1) the need for knowledge about the operation of expert cultures; (2) the need for an understanding of the desires, demands and need interpretations of others who are distant in time and space; (3) the need to understand ourselves as a social community; and (4) the need for aesthetic and non-instrumentally defined cultural experiences. (Stevenson, 1995: 198)

Pada sisi lain dinyatakan pula:

...What I intend to communicate by media cultures can be summarised in three senses. The first is the obvious point that much of modern culture is transmitted by the media of mass communication. (...) Secondly, most of the theorist I have discussed within this text build up a picture of the media out of wider analysis of modern cultural processes.(...) a third dimension to media cultures – there are histories of intellectual exchange of those who have theorised about the media to be written... (Stevenson, 1995: 2)

Sebagai perbandingan untuk kajian kultur media dapat dirunut dari pokok pikiran mengenai media televisi dalam perspektif kultural, seperti di bawah ini:

- television (and those who operate the television system) is a part of society and culture, and not a separate entity which impinges on society from ‘without’
- nevertheless, television makers and performers are placed in a special position within society by virtue of their access to television production

- culture and society are largely indistinguishable from one another: social structures and relationships are driven by cultural values, are an expression of these values
- culture is manifested through the artefacts and the behaviours of society: social interaction is a form of cultural behaviour: television is a form of cultural behavior
- we assume meanings, values, ideologies within these artefacts and behaviours
- we construct those meanings under the influence of the very ideologies which we are attempting to define
- therefore critical detachment is a difficult mental feat: it may even be argued that our notions of objectivity are themselves subjective. (Burton, 2000: 15)

Pertimbangan atas kajian kultur media dirasakan pentingnya jika dikaitkan dengan perubahan yang sangat cepat dalam teknologi yang membentuk moda komunikasi. Seperti diuraikan berikut:

Such a transformative venture must also engage the new cultural, political, and social form of the present era. Confronting new technologies, multimedia, and modes of experience such as cyberspace creates a variety of challenges for the media and cultural studies, ranging from the need to chart the emergent cultural trains and experiences to producing new literacies to analyze and evaluate these spheres and their forms. Since media and culture are themselves a type of pedagogy, one needs to create a counterpedagogy to question and critically analyze the often distorted forms of knowledge, misinformation, deceptive images, and seductive spectacles of the media and consumer society. Cultivating critical media literacy to analyze intelligently contemporary forms of culture calls for advancement of a new postmodern pedagogy that takes seriously image, spectacle, and narrative, and thus promotes visual and media literacy, the ability to read, analyze, and evaluate images, stories, and spectacles of media culture. Yet a postmodern pedagogy is concerned to develop multiple literacies, to rethink literacy itself in relation to new technologies and new cultural and practices, extending from popular music to poetry and painting to cyberspace and multimedia such as CD-ROM.

(Durham, Kellner, 2001: 28)

Dalam prakteknya, kajian media dan kultur dilakukan atas 3 fokus seperti diuraikan berikut:

Traditionally, early twentieth century perspectives on ‘mass’ communication tended to emphasize a singular, mechanistic, process model. In this terms, ‘message’ are sent to ‘the mass’. At its crudest, this assumes a central, unitary ‘sender’, technically capable of transmitting message to a large-scale ‘mass’ population, who react, as to common stimulus, with virtually identical responses. The shortcomings of this notion are many, and we will suggest throughout this book that you consider viewing mediated communication as part of set of cultural ‘circuits’, composed of relations between forms of media production, media texts and media reception. In particular, it is important to avoid the tendency to cut the media off from their social, commercial and historical contexts. There are significant social and cultural conditions which surround both the composition of the screen, the page, the programme, the website, and so on, and their reception by diverse audience, their readers, their listeners and viewers. (Sullivan, Brian, Raynes, 2003: 15)

Kajian atas kultur media dengan fokus produksi media, teks media dan resepsi media dengan demikian mengambil obyek kajian pada institusi media, muatan media dan khalayak media. Pendekatan atas ketiga fokus tersebut berdasarkan tradisi kajian kultural sebagaimana sudah diuraikan pada bagian II risalah ini.

Kajian mengenai khalayak media dalam perspektif kultural meninggalkan tradisi dari pendekatan pragmatis sosial dalam konsep *media effect*, biasa disebut sebagai *media reception*. Pokok pikiran dalam metode analisis ini dapat disimak kutipan berikut:

In more general terms, reception analysis has intensified our interest in the ways in which people actively and creatively make their own meanings and create their own culture, rather than passively absorb pre-given meanings imposed upon them. As a result, the question of media consumption as itself a locus of active cultural production has acquired a central place in cultural studies. The thrust of the interest has been ethnographic; while most reception studies were limited to analyzing the specifics of certain text/audience encounters, the methods used were qualitative (in-depth interviewing and/or participant observation), and the emphasis has been overwhelmingly on

detailed description of how audiences negotiate with media texts and technologies. In this sense, reception analysis could very well be called the ethnography of media audiences. (Ien Ang, 1996: 240)

Dari rujukan yang sudah disebutkan mengenai kultur diatas, dapat ditarik untuk pengertian tentang kultur media. Untuk itu dapat dilanjutkan sebagai berikut:

Media culture is also involved in these processes, yet it is something new in human adventure. Individuals spend tremendous amounts of time listening to the radio, watching television, going to see films, experiencing music, going shopping, reading magazines and newspaper, and participating in these and other forms of media culture. Thus media culture has come to dominated everyday life, serving the ubiquitous background and activity, which many argue is undermining human potentiality and creativity (Kellner, 1995: 2-3)

Adapun kajian kultur media terdiri atas konteks internal dari realitas media dan konteks eksternal mengenai realitas masyarakat, membawa karakteristik konseptual sebagai berikut:

First, the media have developed and extended large-scale systems of *public* communication, linked to what has been called the *public sphere*, political and corporate forms of power. At this level, newspapers and print media from the 1850's, followed by photography in the 1880's, cinema in the 1900's, radio in the 1920's, television in the 1950's and the Internet in the 1990's, all represent important developments in, and extensions to, public culture. Key themes here continue to concern questions of power, ideology, access, representation and mediation.

At the same time, these developments have also had important implications for the *private* sphere and everyday life 'at home'. Radio and television for example, have accompanied what one writer has called "withdrawal into inner space", whereby leisure activities have become progressively concentrated in 'the home', the domestic sphere. While important changes might be said to be taking place inside households in the current phase, the private sphere is still 'connected' to the outside world in important and decisive ways via the media and their networks.

Finally, the media and mass communications have interact with pre-existing cultures, form and values in a number of significant ways. Of these,

perhaps the most central has been in the development of *popular* culture, that “site struggle and contest” which, as this discussion has noted, contains a number of contradictory ideas: from ‘liked by many’ to ‘not elite or high culture’; from that of ‘the common people’ to ‘mass-produced’ culture, in postmodern times. (Sullivan, Brian, Raynes, 2003: 18-19)

Pokok-pokok pikiran yang menjadi landasan konseptual kajian media dalam perspektif kultural telah dibahas pada bagian IV risalah ini. Secara umum, budaya/kultur diartikan sebagai praktik dan teks kultural dengan makna simbolik, sebagai proses produksi dan reproduksi secara kolektif penghayatan, makna dan kesadaran, atau pemaknaan dari ruang ekonomi (dunia produksi) dan ruang politik (dunia relasi sosial). Lebih jauh praktik dan teks kultural ditempatkan pada konteks realitas masyarakat dalam perspektif tertentu, seperti perspektif gender, kelas, subaltern, kemiskinan, dan sebagainya.

Dalam konteks Indonesia, terkandung dua permasalahan konseptual, pertama realitas aktual berupa kemajemukan kebudayaan berdasarkan etnisitas/lokalitas di Indonesia, dan kedua proses idealisasi pencitraan (*imaging*) berupa upaya membangun/membentuk kultur nasional atau bangsa. Dengan begitu selalu terjadi proses sentrifugal dari kebudayaan etnis/lokal ke pada kebudayaan nasional/bangsa, atau sebaliknya proses sentripetal pada etnisitas/lokalitas yang menguat sehingga menjauh dari dinamika yang menuju kebudayaan nasional/bangsa. Dalam tarik menarik lingkup entitas domestik yang bersifat sentrifugal atau pun sentripetal ini, berlangsung pula dinamika dari proses global yang menawarkan kebudayaan dengan cara hidup berbasis pada industri kapitalisme dunia dalam kebudayaan massa/populer (*popular culture*).

Kedua, konsep kemajemukan masyarakat (pluralisme) dapat dilihat secara statis sebagai adanya realitas perbedaan dari komunitas etnis/lokal. Ini mengasumsikan bahwa interaksi antar komunitas etnis/lokal berlangsung dalam harmoni. Pada sisi lain disadari bahwa dinamika masyarakat pada hakekatnya tidak dalam harmoni. Dari sini berkembang perspektif konseptual multi-kulturalisme yang bertolak dari asumsi tentang adanya kecenderungan dominasi/hegemoni dari kebudayaan mayoritas/lebih kuat terhadap minoritas/lebih lemah.

Lebih jauh kajian kultural atas media dapat dikembangkan sebagai upaya memahami cara-cara produksi budaya yang diwujudkan dalam praktik dan teks budaya di dalam pertarungan ideologi. Dari sini media di satu sisi dilihat sebagai produk budaya, dan di sisi lain sebagai instrumen dalam memproduksi budaya dalam masyarakat. Untuk itu kajian bersifat lintas disiplin, dengan menggunakan teori sosial serta analisis dan kritik budaya, sebagai titik tolak untuk pengembangan kritisisme secara komprehensif atas kenyataan

budaya dalam masyarakat. Dengan menggunakan perspektif ideologis, keberadaan media dilihat berada dalam dinamika di satu pihak adanya budaya arus utama (*mainstream*), budaya dominan/hegemonis, budaya massa, budaya pusat (*center*), atau label mayor, yang berhadapan di pihak lain dengan budaya alternatif/sub-budaya, budaya tanding (*counter*), budaya oposisi, budaya pinggiran (*periphery*) atau label indie dalam kerangka politik dan ekonomi.

Kajian media dalam perspektif kultural dapat difokuskan pada 2 sisi, pertama institusi media sebagai bagian dalam produksi praktik kultural dalam ekonomi-politik, dan kedua media sebagai teks kultural. Dari orientasi dan fokus semacam ini kritisisme perlu diarahkan kepada transformasi sosial di Indonesia, dengan memfokuskan perhatian pada budaya alternatif yang terkandung dalam media umum atau diwujudkan dalam media alternatif. Dengan kata lain, sudut pandang kajian adalah terhadap proses yang berlangsung dari budaya alternatif pada media dalam menghadapi setiap arus besar budaya, dengan tujuan untuk memahami apa yang menyebabkan budaya alternatif dapat tumbuh atau sebaliknya tidak berdaya dalam arus besar.

Sebagai penutup pada bagian ini, dapat disimak pandangan yang diberikan oleh Douglas Kellner berikut ini:

Theories of the media and culture are, I believe, best developed through specific studies of concrete phenomena contextualized within the vicissitudes of contemporary society and history. Thus, to interrogate contemporary media culture critically involves carrying out studies of how the culture industries produce specific artifacts that reproduce the social discourses which are embedded in the key conflicts and struggles of the day. This involves seeing how popular texts like the Rocky or Rambo films, rap music or Madonna, TV cop shows, or advertising and media news and discussion, all articulate specific ideological position and help reproduce dominant forms of social power, serving the interest of societal domination, or resistance to the dominant forms of culture and society – or have contradictory effects. (Kellner, 1995: 4)