CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theory of Queer and Performativity

Queer theory is a new branch of study that grows out of gay/lesbian studies, feminist study and feminist theory. This theory emerges in the early 1990 when AIDS and queer activism provoked intellectuals to see them as bringing queerer world into being (Berlant and Warner, 1995, p.343). The realm of investigation of queer theory is broader; it is not only limited to the idea of homosexuality. It includes the issue of political critique of anything that falls into sexual activities and identities. It also helps to understand the way of normal and deviant standard are constructed, enforced and operated.

The word “queer” evokes the idea of homosexuality and queer theory concerns itself with all forms of behavior, sexuality and identity which define what queer it is. As it appears in dictionary, the word “queer” has a primary meaning of strange, odd and suspicious. This word as general is used to define sexual identities which is not suitable with the gender binary system or so called as LGBT (cited in https://internationalspectrum.umich.edu/life/definitions ). LGBT is part of subculture, thus, they become minorities in America and queer theory concerns with their identities. Therefore, the realm of investigation of queer theory is broader than the previous theory because it covers the problem of sex, gender, sexual desire and identity.

In this research, I apply theory by Judith Butler to discuss the issue of sex and gender related to drag queen. Butler (1990) in Gender Trouble says that gender and identity is a construction and sexuality is an essentialist category determined by biological signs or eternal standard of morality and truth. Moreover, Katherine (2005) states that all sexual behaviors, all
concepts linking sexual behaviors to sexual identities, and all categories of normative and deviant sexualities, are social constructions and sets of signifiers which create certain types of social meaning (p.35). Sexuality is a complex array of social codes and forces, forms of individual activity and institutional power which interacts to shape the ideas of what is normative and what is deviant at any particular moment and which then operate under the rubric of what is natural, essential, biological and God-given (ibid). In addition, this theory also affirms that gender is not natural, as well as the obligatory norms related are not truly true.

Identity is social and cultural thing that is expressed through repetition. As a performance, gender is also repetition and it is learned. Queer theory accepts gender expression as not singular but multiple, thus it is much more fluid and unpredictable than categories constructed by society. For instance is the character of Jack Sparrow in Pirates of Caribbean. Jack in his appearance indicates that identity enables to be constructed and it is fluid. He combines the characteristics of man and woman through men outfit he wore and his body language that is feminine.

Theory of performativity and act by Judith Butler is part of queer theory. Both theories explain that it is possible to change and re-construct identity because gender is part of contemporary culture which shifts and changes into different context at different times. Butler says that:

To say that gender is performative is to say that it is a certain kind of enactment; the “appearance” of gender is often mistaken as a sign of its internal or inherent truth; gender is prompted by obligatory norms to be one gender or the other (usually within a strictly binary frame), and the reproduction of gender is thus always a negotiation with power; and finally, there is no gender without this reproduction of norms that risks undoing or redoing the norm in unexpected ways, thus opening up the possibility of a remaking of gendered reality along new lines. (2009, p.1)

Gender is not biological fact but a cultural product. It is historically and anthropologically constructed by society for a long time. Butler (1990) argues that being of gender is an effect;
certain cultural configurations of gender take the place of the real and augment their hegemony through self-naturalization (ibid, p.45).

Identity performativity is constituted by gender expression and society determines it as part of biological sign; body. Butler writes in *Gender Trouble* that both sex and gender are constructed culturally. Therefore, it is perceptible that sex and gender is interconnected. Sex is always already gender. As consequence, the distinction between sex and gender is nothing. Butler explains that:

Gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on a pre-given sex (a juridical conception); gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established. As a result, gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which “sexed nature” or a “natural sex” is produced and established as "pre-discursive", prior to culture, a politically neutral surface on which culture acts (Gender Trouble, 1990, p.7).

Society determines sex as gender and vice versa. Therefore body is historical situation and cultural interpretation. Body appears as passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed or as the instrument through which an appropriateness and interpretation determines as a cultural meaning for itself (ibid, p.8). Body is a construction constituting the domain of gendered subjects. It comes to bear cultural meanings and historical situations. Because of the pre-condition, body defines the gender performativity and act. The performativity and act of gender is constructed and culture becomes its foundation. It creates a series of acts which are renewed, revised and consolidated through time and space. As Beauvoir claims that:

Body suffers a certain cultural construction, not only through conventions that sanction and proscribe how one acts one's body, the 'act' or performance that one's body is, but also in the tacit conventions that structure the way the body is culturally perceived (as cited in Buthler, Judith, p.524).

Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* mentions about drag to explain that gender and identity are socially constructed. Drag is a third gender in America which its existence produces profound perplexities in American society. Therefore, to understand the meaning of drag, it is important to
understand the differences between sex and gender, and how they correspond to produce the meaning of queer.

1. **Queer, Drag and Drag Queen**

   The meaning of sex and gender sometimes is hard to distinguish because sex always determines gender and vice versa. Sex refers to the biological status, reproductive potential and physical identity; male and female. The biological status indicates part of body which is obtained since born, for instance breast for woman and testicles for man. Therefore, male and female is different in term of sex; reproduction. Because of this distinction; male and female have different physiological characteristics. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that sex is genetic and is not socially learned (Marry, 2002).

   Gender is not biological fact, but social ideas. Therefore, the meaning of gender is more complex than sex. If sex is female and male, then gender is feminine and masculine. Gender itself refers to the way of someone looks at himself or herself and the way of someone performs in terms of masculine and feminine tendencies. Gender is not something we born with and not something we have, but something we became – something we perform (West and Zimmerman; 1987 and Butler; 1990).

   Eckert (2003) says that sex is a biological categorization based on reproductive potential, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex. Therefore, sex and gender is interrelated, even though, there is no obvious point when sex leaves off and gender begins. Sex and gender indicates social identity. The identity further determines how someone performs in society that is so called gender expression. For this reason, identity is socially constructed within social interaction and it also embodies some categories including the identity of class, ethnic, and race.
Since it is society construction, identity relates to the construction of social narrative of individual based on one’s category of gender toward his perceptions and experiences of the world (Nagoshi and Bruzzy, 2010, p.432).

Heteronormative society categorizes gender expressions into binary gender system. However, gender expression may or may not be consistent with gender roles and reflect gender identity (American Psychological Association, 2008, p. 28). Queer and abnormal are terms to mention those who perform and act out of binary gender system. Spargo (1999) states that:

The term “queer” describes a diverse range of critical practices and priorities; readings of the representation of same-sex desire in literary texts, films, music, images; analyses of the social and political power relations of sexuality; critiques of the sex gender system; studies of transsexual and transgender identification, of sadomasochism and of transgressives desires (as cited at Debora ,p.48)

In addition, Marry (2005) says that all categories of normative and sexual orientation are social construction; they are only sets of signifiers which create certain types of social meaning. The existence of queer in society opposes family institutions, heterosexuality and system of reproduction. From the point of view of queer, heterosexual is not the true way of life but only a construction. Therefore, there is no truth and normalcy of gender performance and there is no fixed identity for queer.

All kind of sexualities and behaviors which oppose heteronormativity are categorized into queer, including drag. Drag is man who dresses up in women’s clothes, typically for the purposes of entertainment. Therefore, drag does not have fixed and stable identity. Jessica (2011) says that the identity of drag is neither masculine nor feminine, but rather a complex collective of characteristics that challenges society’s traditionally polarized view of gender (p.13). Therefore, the identity of drag is ambiguous and hard to identify. In their performance, drags make a negotiation of dual identity; men and women. By doing this, they perform their role as entertainer.
in gay subculture and challenge gender roles as well as gender boundaries in heteronormative societies. As an entertainer, drags have to entertain audiences by making a joke. Their joke commonly contains critique and protest towards gender binary and sexuality system. In addition, they also challenge heterosexuality as a normal way of life. They break it by dislocating gender from their body then making masculinity and femininity arbitrary at the same time (Entwistle, Joanne, 2007).

There are many terms used to define gender bending such as gender illusionist, female illusionist, drag diva, drag princess, drag performer and drag queen. However, drag queen is the most common term used. Schacht and Underwood, (2004) defines drag queens as men (typical gay-identified men) who publicly perform being women in front of audiences that know they are men, regardless of how compellingly real (i.e. female) they may appear (p.4). Even though most of drag queens are gay, some of them are transsexual and heterosexual. Taylor and Rupp (2003) define people who already received breast implants or started taking hormones to support their performance as drag queens is tity queens (p.31).

Drag queens are artist, entertainer and comedian in the center of gay culture; balls (Hunson, Rebecca, 2014). Beside balls, they are also found easily in gay club, popular media and on fashion runways. Ball is drag’s world; the space where they can be what they want to. Ball is also a space of competition which essence is to impersonate women in the most perfect way. While doing drag, as gay, drag queens position themselves between man and woman; masculinity and feminity. However, their performance will be different from the average gay man. Since they are drag queen, they will be more feminine or hyper-feminine. However, it does not mean they are not masculine anymore, to maintain their masculinity, drag queens usually talk like a vulgar man while taking a physical appearance of hyper-feminine (Hanson, Rebecca, 2014).
Ball is a strategy to empower self as queer. Drag queen obtains power from audiences at ball. John (1999) says that to take attention from audiences, drag queen talks with men’s voice, make a joke and interact with audience aggressively in sexual way that is more masculine than feminine (p.83). In addition, they also embody their appearance with women physical appearance. They wear feminine clothing, make-up, wig, panty-hose, jewelry, nail polish, and sometimes they do breast and butt implants to achieve women looks (Hanson, Rebecca, 2014, p.11). As Wesely states that body technologies play important role in supporting drag queen performance, it helps drag queen to fulfill the essence of being drag queen.

These body technologies are used to change or balter our physical performance...technologies of femininity refer to those knowledge, practices, and strategies that manufacture and normalize the feminine body: those techniques, actions, and structures deployed to sculpt, fashion, and secure bodily shapes, gestures, and adornments that are recognizably female (pp. 86-87).

Most of drag queens as well as Trans-sexual female performers have begun their career as gay identified before they become drag queen (John Jacob, 1999). In addition, Newton (1972) states that same sex desire play important role in the process of becoming drag queens. The desire further encourages a man to mask his identity with femaleness. To mask his identity, first thing to do by drag queen is dressing in feminine, experimenting with make-up and playing with what would conventionally be seen as girl toys (ibid). In this first stage, drag queens tend to give illusion of having feminine genital rather than having body surgery. To manipulate their body, they use material for example garment to hide their penis. Nixon (2009) says:

They can purchase a garment called a gaff which has a built in pocket for tucking penis between their legs. They can also wear tight men’s or women’s undergarments and pushing their testicles up into the inguinal canal and their penis back between their legs. To make sure that their penis does not become tuck, they can duct tape their genitals in place. (p.9)
Besides garment, they can wear foam padding to create the illusions of wide hip and big buttock (ibid). Furthermore, they can use make up such as foundation, powder, false eyelashes and mascara to create the illusion of a women face. To make their performance better, they also have to shave their entire body by using a liquid foundation placed on the arms, legs, back and chest. The last step is body surgery. This is the biggest portions in the process of becoming drag queens. In this step, drag queens will replace the temporary materials with the permanent one. They do breast implant and penis operation. In this last step, the drag queen is already a transgender.

The existence of drag queen does not only challenge the binary gender system but also the concept of body that have been understood by heteronormative society. Post human body theory is developed by various cultural theorists in reaction to the problems in humanistic and enlightenment thought. Drag queen body is post human body because he/she replaces his/her natural body with any kind of technology. To investigate the queer body, this research applies the post human body theory.

2. Post Human Body Theory

We are entering the new phase of humanity that is referred to Post-Human phase. This phase shows there are no clear differences between body and computer simulation, cybernetic mechanism and biological organism, robot teleology and human goal (Katherine, 1991.p3). In this phase of humanity, the nature of body is challenged, thus body no longer bounds to the history. Technology explores body and makes the grand narrative of body dies. Some theorist such as Kroker and Baudrillard argue:

The natural body is already obsolete; “indeed, why the concern over the body today if not to emphasize the fact that the (natural) body in the post-modern condition has already disappeared, and what we experience as the body is only a fantastic simulacra of body rhetoric (as cited in Bissell, Laura, 2007.p.37).
Stefan (2013) argues that technology has been imagined as a way to release human body from culture. Body is no longer bound to traditional belief in cultural constraints of race, gender and sexuality. Moreover, Laura (2007) says that technology helps to heighten the experience of body which was obsolete to be alive. Technology makes body only as a contemporary culture that can be re-constructed. It erases the natural of body and replaces them with machine.

The technology body is well known as post human body or cyborg. The Term of cyborg coined in 1950s as an abbreviation of cybernetic-organism. Cyborg is the situation when a body is both human and machine. As part of machine, body is possibly manipulated and transformed by breaking the boundaries between natural and artificial as well as human and animal (Harraway, Donna, 2013.p.57). Therefore, body is the fusion of two disparate elements; human and machine, live and un-live, and the natural and man-made. In this reason, identity and the essence of human becomes not stable and clear.

Post human body make humans possible to explore and construct new identity. Victoria Pitts (2003) says that;

Relatedly, technology has also been imagined as freeing us of cultural constraints, so that the postmodern body appears as a highly flexible, unmapped frontier upon which an ontologically freed subject might explore and shift identities. The body is theoretically freed then from its traditional miredness in the cultural constructions of race, gender, and sexuality, among others (2003, p.186).

In this reason, post human body polarizes body into two competing ideological positions between body and history, power and pleasure, and reality and virtual. People becomes not pure human again but part of machine. As consequences, humans are trapped between reality and imaginary. Their identity is no longer singular, stable and fixed, but multiple and ambiguous.

Post human body is called as queer body. It represents body, subject and identity of queer by the new way of thinking about sexual identity that goes beyond differences (Pallazani,
There is no natural body because in the beginning all bodies are gendered. Therefore, in the concept of post human body, it is possible for humans to reconstruct their body by technology body. Donna Harraway in *Work, Simians, Cyborgs and Women* says:

> Late twentieth century machines have made thoroughly ambiguous the difference between natural and artificial, mind and body, self-developing and externally designed, and many other distinctions that used to apply to organisms and machines. Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert (1991, p.152).

Based on the Harraway statement, machine makes body only a performativity. As performativity, body bears cultural meaning and post human body comes to make the concept of body flexible. In addition, it also releases human body from society construction.

### B. The House and Ball Complexities

Gender performance or known as drag queen is the center of gay subcultures. American society starts to know drag queen since a famous drag queen named RuPaul Charles appears on the logo Channel. The contemporary drag culture then moves from underground gay bars to concert halls and broadways stages. If it is compared to the era when the tragedy of Stonewall Riots happens, the society perception towards drag queen has changed ((http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/06/28/feature-how-the-stonewall-riots-started-the-gay-rights-movement/)). As Schacht & Underwood (2004) say, today both heterosexual and queer communities regard drag queen as a celebrity. They start to give high rewards to drag queen whenever they appear in media such as magazine and TV shows. There are some famous drag queens who often appear in media such as Harris Glen Milstead (Divine), RuPaul Charles, Alex Heimberg (Miss Understood), John Ingle (Lady Bunny) and Sander den Baas(Lady Galore). In addition, American serves a reality show which aims to look for America’s next drag superstar.
entitled *RuPaul’s Drag Race* that is broadcasted for seven years in a number of countries around the world.

Drag community is well-known of its show; Balls. Drag show or ball is party, event, competition and community. Ball belongs to “House” which is a community and network of gay, transgender, bisexual and straight. House is family with its social configuration similar with biological family. It consists of fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles, prince and princes. In the house, the leader of the community can be a gay man or transgender (MTF) who are drag queen. For the father, it can be a lesbian or transgender (FTM) who is a drag king. The houseparent further are responsible for guidance and life skills of all members (children) that come from various ages, races, ethnicities, genders, sexualities and regions.

Beside as family, house also acts as agent. It helps the members to prepare for competition at balls. It also organizes the ball shows and makes the categorization of competition. As Bailey (2005) mentions, the categorization of competition at balls consist of Face (best face), School boy (best look/performance of a school kid), Thug (most real presentation of a straight gangster), Runway (best walk up and down a runway, given a theme), Vogue (best dancer of vogue), Butch Queen up in Drag (best gay man in real life, dressed as a woman in the ball) and Femme Queen Woman Realness (best ability for a male to female transgender person to pass as a woman, here and out in the real world).

Ball room consists of three spaces that are space of performers, space of audiences and space of commentators. Space of performers is ball stage. This is drag queen territory; the space for drag queen to perform. Space of audiences is space for audiences or visitors. Similar with runaway show in straight world and in this space, the audiences can see the overall performance of drag queen on the stage. Space which consists of table, chair and microphone is space of juries.
The commentator is in charge to rate the participants’ performance and further decide the winner. They are also responsible for music beats and rhythm that functions as guidance of vogue’s choreography via verbal clues voguing (Hanson, Rebecca, 2014, p.21).

Another important thing about drag community besides ball is identity categorization. Different from social category of heteronormative society, identity categories in drag community is malleable. Marlon (2007) says that the categories are made of three inextricable dimensions: sex, gender, and sexuality (p.369). The sex categories consist of three subcategories that are female (one born with anatomical female sex characteristics), male (one born with male anatomical sex characteristics), and intersex or transsexual (one born with both female and male, or indeterminate anatomical sex characteristics) (ibid). For this reason, sex is considered as an open and unfinished identity because they believe that body can be altered through various meaning, such as reconstructive surgery and hormonal therapy.

The gender categorizes consist of six parts gender system. The categories are butch queen (one biologically born male but identify as gay or bisexual men and can be masculine, hyper-feminine or feminine), femme queen/ MTF (transgender woman or people at various stages of gender reassignment through hormonal and surgical process), butch queen (gay men who perform drag but do not take hormones and not live as woman), butches FTM (transgender men or people at various stages of gender reassignment or masculine lesbians or women appearing as men regardless of sexual orientation; some butches use hormones and have surgical procedures to modify their bodies), women (biologically born as female but identify as lesbian, straight or queer) and men/trade (biologically born as male but straight-identified). These gender categorizations are the symbol of sex, gender and sexual fluidity. The categories are not created based on biological facts, but the preference identity selected by all members of the house.
The sexual categories in drag community are made out of the fluid, contingent and relational of sex and gender. The practitioners of ballroom culture reject the boundaries of gender and sexuality related to romantic relation which is constructed by heteronormative societies. Therefore, there is no rigid categorizes for romantic relation in drag community. For instance; if a femme queen dates or has sex with men, she may identify as straight. Yet, in this sense, the straight is determined as queer rather than heteronormative. Although Femme queen has lived as woman, but some of them still has romantic relation with woman. Although it is not common, the gender system in ballroom culture allows this thing happens.

The ball is space for gender impersonators to deliver critiques about sex, gender and sexual categories of heteronormative societies. Therefore, ball show politically is not merely a kind of theatre, comedy and stage. The meaning of ball itself is deeper than farcical entertainment and performances. Even though the essence of drag queen performance is to entertain audiences, it is a critique, protest and resistance. While they are performing at balls, drag queens bring issues about politics, race, gender, class and social values as their joke. Rebecca (2014) states that drag queen performance are a form of protest against the natural of binary gender and sexuality system (p.2). Through their performance, drag queens show that gender and sex are social construction thus it is situational. As West and Zimmerman (1987) and Hausman (2000) states that Being a man or a woman is not something that comes from nature but is something we are taught to do, and the prevalence of heterosexuality is something we learn and not something that comes naturally (as cited Rebecca, 2014.p.7).

The base of drag queen performance at balls is realness. Realness functions to guide drag queen to fulfill the categories race at balls. The realness refers to self-presentations and embodiments related to particular gender and sexual identities (ibid). Realness signifies the
deception and illusions brought by drags at balls. It breaks boundary between real word and fantasy world. Therefore, a drag queen has to perform as real as possible. It is not only to win the competition but also to obtain power in both real world and fantasy world.

Realness as the base of drag queen performance is problematic. Edgar (2011) says that the essence of realness in ballroom refers to the image of White femininity. It makes the performance of Black drag queen in trouble. As cited in Kate (2013), a famous Black drag queen named RuPaul Charles explains that drag queens can only obtain high reward if they successfully actualize the looks of White feminine. Based on RuPaul statement, the issue of whiteness exists in the contemporary ballroom culture. The skin color of Black drag queen definitely becomes problem in fulfill the realness. Therefore, to overcome the problem, the black drag queens endeavor to emulate White feminine. As consequences, they have to manipulate their performances by wearing blonde wig, expensive clothes and accessories and also make up. Some of them even do plastic surgery to achieve the perfect looks of White feminine. The Black drag queens even try to erase their ethnicity through the process of skin whitening. For this reason, race segregation exists in contemporary drag culture. Therefore, I conclude that the existence of whiteness in drag community makes its community highly racist.

Both White and Black drag queen performance have to reflect to the characteristic of hyper-feminine. This requires drag queen to perform in sensual way. In this case, Black drag queens have different opportunity from White drag queen. Garber (1992) says that White drag queens are free to imitate a more sexualized form of hyper femininity whilst still reinforcing their masculinity through phallic imagery (p.96). On the contrary, as minority in White subculture, Black drag queens have to deny their masculinity as Black man. As consequences, Black drag queens lose
their masculinity and become hypothetically castrated as a way to reinforces ideas of white supremacy (Wray, 2013.p.3).

C. The Social Construction of Reality

Reality exists in everyday of social interaction in society. It is the embodiment of social knowledge taken from human societies. Society accepts the social knowledge as a social consciousness. The consciousness incarnates into natural attitude and further penetrates in every social interaction. For this reason, reality and social knowledge are interrelated. Reality is socially constructed and the process of construction can be analyzed by the sociology of knowledge (Berger and Luckman, 1966). Based on the Berger and Luckman’s statement, it can be concluded that the sociology of knowledge can be used to investigate the process of knowledge comes to be socially constructed as reality. Furthermore, Berger and Luckman states that:

The sociology of knowledge must first . . . concern itself with what people know as reality in their everyday . . . lives. In other words, commonsense knowledge . . . must be the central focus for the sociology of knowledge. It is precisely this ‘knowledge’ that constitutes the fabric of meanings without which no society could exist. The sociology of knowledge therefore, must concern itself with the social construction of reality. (ibid, p.15)

Sociology of knowledge is a study of the relationship between human thought and the social context which it arises. Social knowledge and reality are constructed. They are formed through the array of social interaction. Karl Marx argues that the sociology of knowledge derives its root proposition that man’s consciousness is determined by his social being (as cited in Kroner, 1953.p.225). Moreover, Scheler states that;

Human knowledge is ordered by society. Human knowledge is given in society as an a priori to individual experience, providing the latter with its order of meaning. This order, although it is relative to particular socio-historical situation, appears to the individual as the natural way of looking at the world (as cited in Berger and Luckman, 1976, p.6).
Reality is common-sense and consists of innumerable pre- and quasi-scientific interpretations about everyday reality, which it takes for granted (ibid, p.14). Common sense is self-consciousness of human being received from experience of life. Human consciousness determines respond and stimulus that comes from external and internal, and further defines action. Therefore, the process of investigation in the scope of sociology of knowledge needs interpretation ability and critical thinking. The process of investigation should be supported by knowledge that can be obtained from beliefs and backgrounds.

The social construction of reality initiated by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman is theory of knowledge in sociology and theory of communication. This theory is used to understand the world’s construction that becomes basis for shared- assumptions about reality. The construction is formed through social process where action and interaction in the same pattern are performed continuously as a reality. The reality is not singular but multiple and can be categorized into subjective and objective. The objective of reality is a reality which comes from outer human being while subjective reality comes from inner human beings.

Reality understood by both individual and community depends on knowledge and the social environment (social context). The specific agglomerations of reality and knowledge pertain to the specific social context, and the relationship is included in an adequate sociological analysis of the context (ibid). For instance is reality of criminologist and reality of doctor in understanding homicides are different. These two societies have different logic and social environment, thus they have different consciousness. Therefore, it can be concluded that the sociology of knowledge should be concerned with the analysis of the social construction of reality to understand the differences.
Among the multiple realities hold by societies, there is a reality that is impossible to be ignored and weaken. Society accepts the reality as normal and self-evident things. The attitude of society towards the reality is natural. The reality is called as the reality of everyday life. This reality originates in human thoughts and actions, and society understands it as a belief. It is an inter-subjective word that means it is a commonsense shared with others in the normal and self-evident of everyday life. The inter-subjectivity later distinguishes the reality of everyday life from other realities which out of consciousness.

The theory of social construction of reality brings a crucial question when it is used to analyze the relation between White and people of colour. It is clear that White is not merely an identity but also a norm and an ideology. Therefore, the theory of social construction of reality questioned the way of whiteness become social reality and social knowledge for people of colour. The social construction of race and whiteness begins with a definition of the situation or context in which these ideas are used to define social interaction patterns. These social interactions result a social consequences that become real situations in American society. The social construction of race and their social significance intimately link to the history of America. The history produces White privilege that produce social norms and beliefs. The social norms and beliefs are followed and replied for a long time until they become social reality.

D. Identity and the Post Modernism Theory

Identity is important thing to define the social status of both individual and group in society. Society used to define identity based on perspective referring to the skin color, gender and, ethnicity, and achievement tendencies. Identity is society’s product. Since it is a cultural product, it influences life experiences, oppressions, privileges and treatments people achieve in society.
Hook says that for the minorities, identity implies an acceptance of roles that have been defined by oppression while organizing around identities repeats the exclusionary and devises practices of dominant culture (as cited in Stone, 2000). Even though people nowadays are free to release themselves from grand-narrative, they are not truly free though. Since they are surrounded by dominant culture, they still bear society construction, thus they are oppressed.

Culture and history establish the meaning of identity. However, the definition of identity is not always stable but dynamic and fluid. Nowadays, humans experience revolution, so does their knowledge. Societies start to leave ancient thinking and live in modern era. Societies always proceed; they start to question whether a reality is always a truth or not. For this reason, it is possible to maintain, rethink and reduplicate identity. Societies are allowed to construct their identity in the grand-narrative or liberate from it. The situation where people are free to decide their identity is post modernism. In its relation to identity, post modernism brings flexibility and instability. It presents access, liberty and fairness. Shari Stones (2002) in Postmodernism, Realism, and the Problem of Identity argues that

Postmodernism speaks to our sense of the contingency of seemingly “universal” truths, our exposure to a plurality of perspectives on ethnic and history, and our experience of not quite fitting into any single identity (Stones,p.2).

Postmodernism is not a theory, it is a work of intellectual, architecture, freestanding and well-founded (Brann, Eva, 1992). It is an object of thought, thus it cannot be defined as an era. It more emphasizes to the number of people thinking and following it. Postmodernism is a form of society dissatisfaction towards modernism. Modernism itself is the mindset of people who follow enlightenment project of universal truth to solve every problem. While postmodernism is mode of skepticism seeing modernism as ignoring multiple experiences of human kind (as cited in Pradana, 2014, p.24). Moreover, Terry (1997) says that postmodernism emphasizes that facts are simply
interpretations, that truth is not absolute but merely the construction of individual and groups, and that all knowledge is mediated by culture and language.

Postmodernism confess human as subject that is free and undetermined. It places human at the center of universe. Therefore, human will have opportunity to change and to be creative. Postmodernism offers a wider and more dynamic understanding of contemporary representation. It claims liberation for all peoples and challenges the narrowness of society’s structure by assuming the society construction as imaginary. As consequence, people enable themselves to liberate from society construction and establish their own reality. Reality becomes plural because postmodernism makes tangible connections between the general conditions of life and the practice of cultural analysis. Furthermore, reality becomes vague because there are more interpretations towards the truth of society construction. There is no grand narrative because postmodernism tries to break it.

Postmodernism thought is well known of its sensibilities across the boundaries of class, gender and race. Many people believe that postmodernism can cross the boundaries of class, gender and race. Indeed it is unable to represent the voice of otherness especially Black. The sensibility of identity in postmodernism thought still generate the identities of Black that actually are multiples and not singular. Bell Hooks in *Postmodern Blackness* criticizes that the identity of African American in mass media still relates to the colonization and domination. Moreover, Hooks argues that postmodernist thought should be the way for African American to reformulate the notions of their identity. The identity of African American that is socially constructed under the White supremacy should be renewed into a new identity. The identity should relate to the uniqueness of Black itself.
Postmodernism thought can be used to challenge the notions of universality and static over-determined identity within mass culture and mass consciousness can open up new possibilities for the construction of the self and the assertion of agency (Hooks, 1990).

For this reason, it will be possible for Blacks to liberate from the grand-narrative which often represented them in one-dimensional ways.

Meanwhile, Bell Hooks states that postmodernism thought makes African American lose sight of the specific history and the experience of Blacks. It makes Black lose their sensibilities culture. As consequences, Black live into two categories; essentialist or nationalist; Black identified or White identified. In the Essentialist or Black-identified category, the specific history and heritage influences the Black identity. It makes Black identity separates from other races in United States. In the Nationalist or White identified category, African American have to undertake everything to assimilate into American society through homogeneity. Therefore, African-Americans lose their heritage and history as well as their subculture. About these categories, Hooks suggests African Americans to acknowledge that their identity is multiple. The various experiences of African American cannot be generated into single identities. Therefore, hooks hopes postmodernism thought can represent the voice of marginalized, exploited and oppressed groups so they can live out of their stereotypes.

The representation of African American in Media frequently relates to the Western perspective or colonial experiences. They are subject of dominant regime. It is the effect of critical exercise of cultural power and normalization. Stuart Halls in Theory of Cultural Identity and Diaspora states that history and culture always constitute the representation of Black. Therefore, identity should be thought in two ways; one shared culture and culture identity. One shared culture codes Blacks to share history and ancestry in general. It makes identity stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of actual
history (ibid, p.6). The cultural identity codes that identity is practically a production which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation (ibid).

The essence of cultural identity is not fixed, but it still involves to histories. The histories speak about the fast and the future. In this reason, Stuart Halls elaborates the meaning of colonial experience with cultural identity to understand the image of Blacks in media. He makes questions “what they are” and “what they have become”. Halls argues that Black identity in media constructed base on colonial experience. Therefore the representation should be understood as myth, memory, fantasy and narrative.

Jameson (1984) says that Postmodernism is a critique of capitalism, positivism, and the assumption that reality is somehow represented in the symbol we use. The symbol is part of text. It defines a sign that does not have inherent meaning. Every text is object analysis and postmodernism analysis tries to find the way of text is constructed. It analyzes the relation between one sign to other signs. It focuses more on cultural representations and drag conclusion from culture to society, social interaction and self (Kennet, 1997, P.2). Therefore, postmodernism thought can be used as a way to criticize every narrative hide behind in every verbal inflection.

E. SEMIOTIC THEORY

Semiotic is the study of symbol, sign and signification. The idea comes from a linguist from Switzerland named Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913). The term semiotic comes from Greek word “semeion: that its meaning is sign becomes fundamental object. Ferdinand de Saussure (1916) in Course de Linguistic General states:

“A science that studies the life of signs within society is conceivable; it would be a part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology. I shall call it semiology (from
the Greek Semeion ‘sign’). Semiology would show what constitutes signs, what laws govern them. Since the science does not exist, no one can say what it would be, but it has a right to existence, a place stalked out in advance. Linguistic is only part of the general science or semiology. The laws discovered by semiology will applicable to linguistic, and the latter will be circumscribing a well-defined area with themas anthropological facts.” (as cited in Pondrafi, 2012, p.35).

A sign is anything, thus everything that is used, invented and adopted by human produce meaning. Danesi (2004) says that sign can be a word, a color, a gesture, a wink, an object, a mathematical equation, a photograph, a sound, an image on a screen, a musical note, an item of clothing, art forms, advertising, rituals, narratives, myths (p.4).

This research applies semiotic theory by Roland Barthes which refers to the concept of sign by Saussurean. Sign is composed of signified and signifier. The signifier is a material concept and signified is a mental concept (as cited in Murnita, 2010, p.13). Signifier is the pointing finger, the word and the sound image. While signified is the concept, signifier is the meaning and the thing indicated. The relation between signifier and signified is arbitrary. The combination of signifier and signified is made out of sign. Thwaites (1994) says that the correlation of signified and signifier is called as signification in which a sound impression invokes an abstract concept (as cited in Pondrafi, 20012, p.35).

Every sign has meaning and it is constructed. The sign is constructed in every process of communication that involves the sender and the receiver. To deliver meaning successfully, it requires same language and background knowledge between sender and receiver. When the sender sends message to the receiver, the receiver enable to process the signs into a meaning.

Sender ————> Receiver

Message
The process of understanding meaning requires the ability of receiver to interpret the sign. The accuracy interpretation of receiver depends on his/her background knowledge and intelligence. Moreover, the meaning of the signs usually relates to the social practice and culture. Since sign is society’s product, it is constructed. Therefore, a sign should be analyzed critically.

Signification is a thing in our mind when we interpret a sign. It unfolds into two ways; denotation and connotation. Denotation tends to be described as the deviational, literal, obvious or common sense meaning of sign. It allows us to determine whether an object is real or imaginary. Connotation refers to the socio-cultural and personal associations (ideological, emotional etc.) of the sign. It allows human to expand the application of signs creatively. Connotation meaning is cultural settings. Therefore, any interpretation of culture-specific concepts such as gender, race, ethnic etc always is involved with connotation. Moreover, Wilden (1987) says that denotation is sometimes regarded as digital code and connotation as an analogue code (p. 224).

Denotation and connotation are the first and second level of signification. The first level of signification is condition in which the signifier is acoustic image, and signified be the concept. The relation between the acoustic image and the concept produce a code/sign. In this first level, the meaning obtained bases on the meaning of word or language. While in the second level of signification, the meaning which is obtained bases on the global signs is a part of the construction of language. The global signs relate to the myth and social condition. Hence, denotation and connotation meaning is interrelated.

A message may have more than one meaning, and several messages may have same meaning. How many messages received by brains depends on the interpretations. Danesi (1946) says that the brain’s capacity to produce and understand a sign is called semiosis, while the knowledge-making activity allows all human beings to carry out is knows a representation (p.18).
Interpretation is a crucial aspect to understand the meaning of a sign. All the meaning of sign is proceed in the brain through interpretation.

Thwaites (1994) argues that sign is anything; it produces meanings in the form of sound or voices, written form, and virtual image (p. 7). Documentary contains signs. In general, documentary records culture and society’s experiences. As part of construction, documentary delivers meaning in the form of sign. Therefore, it needs interpretation to understand meaning delivered in documentary. However, it needs more than one interpretation to find the fixed meaning of object. In other words, Barthes calls it as polysemic signs. Hence, it is important to connect culture with all codes in documentary so that denotative and connotative meaning can be understood. It is important to know the cultural context which relates to a certain language or social group where a signification objects belongs to.

**F. Documentary As Construction**

William Rohtman in Flaherty’s film Grierson states that the meaning of term “documentary” moves from modern meaning back to its Latin etymological root “decore” that has meaning “to teach”. Term of documentary used for the first time by John Grierson in The New York Sun on February 8, 1926. Grierson is the founder of classic British documentary Movement in 1930s. In its movement, he introduces documentary as creative treatment of actuality (as cited in Raskin, 2006, p.9). Documentary is a form of social political, thus it is a mechanism of social reform. In addition, it is also a tool to promote education. Roberta (2011) states that:

The documentary is the branch of film production which goes to the actual, and photographs it and edits it and shapes it. It attempts to give form and pattern to the complex of direct observation. Documentary relates to educational purpose that intrinsically serves through the application of refine rhetorical devices to images drawn from the actual, documentary film imposes itself as an authoritative voice, and at the same time it gives the illusion to serve as a window open on the world (p. 4).
The root of documentary is reality. Documentary is about life but not real life. It is even not a way onto real life. Aufderheide (2007) says that documentary is the portraits of real life because it uses real life as its raw material. It is constructed by artist and technicians who make myriad decisions about what story tell to whom and for what purpose (ibid). Moreover, David Chaney (1993) in *Fictions of Collective Life: Public Drama in Late Modern Culture* also states that documentary is the representation of reality. He further states that documentary can be seen as a form of democratic of culture, as it represents real people (often belonging to the lower part of society), raises social discussion, addresses a public belonging to all spheres, and imposes itself as a form of mass communication. Documentary carries fragments of social reality from one place or one group or one time to another, then transports and translates them from a local dialect to a lingua franca (ibid).

Grierson says that documentary is a form of creativity of film maker who manipulates it through the process of selection and association in order to go beyond the boundaries of direct observation, and to give it a precise, often politically-oriented meaning (as cited in Roberta, 2011, p.4). To analyze documentary film, Grierson sets out three guiding principles for documentary. First, documentary should be understood as a new and vital art form in which living scene and living story are captured in photograph. Second, the characters and scenes taken from reality provide better opportunities to interpret the modern world. It means, there is election and editing sections in documentary. Third, the material taken from the world can reflect the essence of reality, and capture spontaneous gestures and further perform movements. From three principles set by Grierson, it can be concluded that the documentary is nothing more than a creative treatment of actuality. Even though it rises a phenomenon happens in society, it still needs kind of creativity
from film makers. Therefore, the editing of sequences must include description, rhythm, comment and dialogue (Grierson, 1996:37-37).

Since documentary is a form of creativity of film maker, documentary is construction. Because it is a construction, sometimes it needs critical interpretation and analysis to understand message delivered by film maker. Therefore, it is necessary to observe this film genre not only from its technical peculiarities, but also on issue raised in the film. In order to get conclusion and deeper understanding about the whole contains of the film, it needs to look at the use of lighting, costume, color, props, space, action and performance. Therefore, *mis en scene* is important in documentary film. John Gibbs (2002) defines *mis en scene* as the contents of the frame and the way that they are organized (Gibbs, p.5). *Mis en scene* consists of setting, costume, make up, lighting, figure, behavior and cinematography. Setting gives a sense of place and time. It provides important clues about the nature of film including where and when the action takes place. In addition, setting also can be fiction and real. Therefore, to create perfect setting, properties are used. Costume and make up can be considered as part of *mise en scene*, because they indicate the period, the state of society, social class, and cultural background. Character traits figure, expression and movement, body language, appearance and facial expressions. Lightning functions to set mood of the films. It will determine audience perception of documentary. The last is cinematography or the movement of camera. Cinematography includes framing, camera angle, camera moves and shot sizes.

**G. Previous Researches on Drag Queen**

Research about drag queen has been conducted until today. There are two researches about drag queen that I would like to discuss. The First research is *Why It Gotta Be Black? – How Race
Impacts the Representation of Black Drag Queens by Kate Wray. In the research, Kate investigates how race impacts to the representation of Black drag queen and how they are different from White drag queen. In addition, she also identifies how blackness acts as a marker to the drag queen identity and causes issue of masculinity. To answer the research question, Kate investigates RuPaul Andre Charles and applies textual analysis. To answer the first question, Kate Wray compares the appearance of White drag queen named Alaska Thunderfuck 5000 (Justin Honard). She further says that Alaska portrays a femininity that imitates stereotypical notions of an unintelligent, blonde, and sexualised woman. In the music video Nails, Kate finds that the camera often shoots Alaska’s crotch and then suddenly moves the camera to his arm which decorated with jewel and false nails. In addition, the shot type used is close up technique aiming to show the sexuality of Alaska. Different from Alaska, the performance of RuPaul tends to be safe. While he performs in a runway, RuPaul wears long floor length gowns to cover his legs and breast. In addition, his jokes are always very safe and rarely sexual.

There is still inequality within the hierarchy’s of White subculture. Black and White drag queens have different chances while they perform in drag. Both drag queens basically present themselves in similar way. They imitate the image of hyper-feminine. However, they just can hold power if their performance have already contained by whiteness. In this case, White drag queens are free to imitate a more sexualised form of hyper-feminity whilst still reinforcing their masculinity through phallic imager (Garber, 1992, p.96 as cited in Wray, Kate, 2015). It is different from Black drag queen. To achieve power from his performance, RuPaul states that he must imitate portrayal of White hyper-feminity. Moreover, he cannot maintain any power of his Black masculinity. The Black drag queens ultimately lose their masculinity and become hypothetically castrated as a way to reinforce ideas of White supremacy. Moreover, while performing in balls,
Black drag queen is less sexual than White drag queens. They are presented as passive figure and as emasculated. The emasculating image is intentionally presented to create the characterization of “coon” as described by Donald Bogle (Wray, Kate 2015). This character presents the Negro as an amusement object and a Black buffoon (ibid). The image is purely designed to entertain White audiences, which aims to stress the inferiority of Black man.

The second research is *Doing Drag; From Subordinate Queers to Fabulous Queens, Drag as an Empowerment Strategy for Gay Men* by Sven Oostrik. In the research, Sven examines how drag can serve as a strategy empowerment for homosexual men. To answer the research question, he conducts interviews with four Dutch queens that are gay. Sven applies the McNeal’s theory by taking information in paper written by McNeal entitled *Behind the Make-Up: Gender Ambivalence and the Double-Bind of Gay Selfhood in Drag Performance* (1999). By this theory, Sven explains how the marginalized position of gay men in the Western world can lead to a double-bind. In this case, they are feminine because of their sexual orientation, and at the same time they are also masculine because of their biological facts. To explain why homosexuality is marginalized, Sven applies the theory of masculinities and their governing power relations. He further applies Judith Butler theory of performativity to show that the drag queen mocks the system of gender essentialism. Furthermore, he analyses the different aspect of every performances of interviewees, and then highlighting the similarities and differences in which of those aspects makes the performances empowering. The interview aims to let the drag queens speak and to gain insight in the scope of his research.

Drag is a gay prerogative, however not all drag queens are gay. Sven further makes some conclusions. First, that being drags are about entertaining audience, therefore they need audience. One of qualities of drag is decided by audiences. Whenever they receive positive attention from
audiences, they feel power. Second, Sven claims that drag relates to male homosexuality. Drags embody two identities; feminine and masculine. Therefore, drag queens challenge the notion of gender system when they can perform feminity better than women do. Third, basically drag queens realize that their feminity is rejected. However, while embracing feminity by doing drag, the drag queens transform their queerness from something suppressing into something empowering by getting attention from audiences.

Even though both of these researches work on the issue of drag queen, each of them actually has differences. Kate Wray focuses more on Black drag queen by investigating the impact of race towards the image of Black drag queen. Sven Oostrick explores drag queens as general without specific race identity. Because Kate’s concentration is on the representation of drag queen, she compares and analyses two drag queens that are White queens and Black queens in media to find how race affects their image. It is different from Sven Oostrick’s research. Sven uses data obtained from interview to find out how drag becomes an empowerment strategy for gay men. Both researches use theory of masculinities and Judith Butler theory of performativity. The difference is Kate uses theory of race and racism because she specifically investigates Black drag queen.

Both researches agreed that doing drag is the way to obtain power as queer. Kate says that in order to become successful as a drag, the Black drag queen must adhere themselves to the White feminity construction (p.2). In addition, Sven states that drag queens realize that their feminity is rejected, thus they embrace their feminity, i.e. by doing drag, they transform it from something suppressing into something empowering” (p.50). In conclusion, Kate’s research is the continuation of Sven research. Sven’s research explains how to be fabulous drag queen in order to obtain power as queer. Because his interviewers are White drag queen, the image of fabulous drag queen
is those who successfully adheres feminine construction that is White womanhood. In Kate research, she just mentions that Black drag queen should adhere White womanhood and not Black womanhood to be a successful drag queen. It is because gay community is believed as White domination; therefore Black queen image is very influenced by norms that are White construction.