

# Earning Doctorate After Studying Gay Character on TV Series

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Rudy, Lecturer of English Literature and Linguistic Education in Universitas Prima Indonesia (UNPRI), graduated from American Study Doctoral Programme at Faculty of Cultural Sciences UGM. His dissertation was entitled *Conceptualizing Gays in American Culture: A Representation Study on American Television Series in the 2000s* and he passed *cum laude*.

In his dissertation, Rudy focused on researching gay representation in American television series. By collecting and observing American television series in the 2000s, he analyzed what was represented on television of the gay theme.

“We observe gay character by watching American television series in the 2000s. In this dissertation, we try to find the efforts which are done by gay community to mingling in heteronormative society in America,” said Rudy at Faculty of Cultural Sciences UGM on Wednesday (17/5).

According to Rudy, there are several factors which encourage the appearance of television series with a gay as the main character. Being the media with family orientation, it raises pros and cons after showing gay theme in its television series.



However, according to Rudy, this can be an opportunity to see what have been presented by television series in America, how someone does something, and there are cultural values we can acquire from it indirectly.

Through these television series, the society can recognize and study the characteristics and cultures of people who appear on American television with a gay theme which can be watched by all of the family members through a family television channel.

“It turns out that the most interesting point is there is tolerance in there and this sparks the stance which shows the actual reality in society. The society thinks it is a part of them and the gay character on the television series represents the real gay community who live along with them,” he explained.

Rudy admitted in the 60s and 70s era, America prohibited any television series with gay theme, except the news. However, in line with the development, the first movies and television series with gay theme appeared in the 90s.

“I realize people started to change their principle in the 2000s, exactly in June 2015 when President Barack Obama stated in the U.S. Supreme Court that the United State legalizes homo sex marriage. Many people used this chance to show the gay character and it was a part of the fact and reality in the American society,” said Rudy.

Studying seven television series in the United States, Rudy said those television series were always mentioned when talking about issues regarding homosexuality. Through their liberal culture, American society emphasizes the importance of expressing individual freedom which raises tolerance towards different people.

“Indonesia is not a liberal country, thus television series with a gay theme will never be shown, unlike America. Once an Indonesian television series presents a gay character, it tends to show a feminine man that plays a role as a person who is not accepted by the society or does not have a significant role in those television series,” he added.

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