

# Chapter 12

## The Tale of Fabled Creatures: *Penny Dreadful*

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Violence has been a part of daily life in both traditional and digital media. Consequently, neither the existence of violence in the media nor the debates on this subject are new. On the other hand, the presentation of violence in fictional content should be viewed from a different point of view, especially in the context of aestheticization. Within this context, in this chapter, the serial of Penny Dreadful is analyzed. As analyzing method, Tahsin Yücel's model of the "space/time coordinates of narrative" is used. And the subject of "aestheticization of violence" is analyzed through a serial with the elements of person, space, and time. Thus, the role of not only physical beauty but also different components in the aestheticization of violence is examined.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The phenomenon of violence in mass media has always been a popular discussion topic for the academics who studies in communication science field. However, the existence of discussions on violence in media is not old as the existence of violence. The pages of history is full with the documents which has demonstrated of the violence behaviors of human being that have done to other people, societies and / or any other species. In other words, the violence always has showed itself in daily life from ancient times to today's world. But obviously, most visible and prevalent status of violence has arisen in the 21st century. And there is no doubt, reason of this situation is the developments in the communication technologies. This kind of developments have led to the spread of a large number of fictional or real violent media content. More over, this is a unconcerned spreading and violence contents have brought about the accusation of media by many scientist. Especially in the critical studies of communication field, the unconcerned attitudes of media institutions and publishing / broadcasting politics of violence content as a result of these attitudes have become a focus point of many debates. Media institutions give time and place to publishing / broadcasting of violence content without hesitation and without thinking

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about public interest in their many different channels, with only worrying about ratings and circulations, -and even, this kind of behavior can be evaluated even as a method of political inspection mechanism to keep away the audiences from the real agenda. On the other hand, the audiences who have the ability to choose of many other contents from the wide media pool, use their choices for the violence content. In other words, the media displays violence in almost all kinds of content, particularly due to a track-record and / or circulation concern resulting from commercially profit-making purposes; and the viewer does not turn his / her gaze from this kind of content and approaches it with interest.

At this point, it can be mentioned about two kinds of representation of violence in the both traditional and digital media: pornography of violence and aesthetics of violence. The pornography of violence includes the visualisation of the body that as a victim of violence and the exposure of the act of violence and its background; besides the pleasure of audiences in the face of this exposure. The pornographic presentation or reception of violence has come up in different ways since ancient times and continues to emerge. The fine line that separates the present from the past is primarily the magnitude of the mass achieved and secondly the transition from reality to fictionality. But humankind always sees the violence of his own kind with a sense of pleasure mixed with interest and disgust. In other words, the audiences can neither prevent themselves from watching violent content, nor can they avoid critical seeing.

The subject of aesthetic of violence can be evaluated from this perspective, too. Despite the fact that the concept of “aesthetics” is a field of science, which includes the evaluating of beauty and art within the universal codes; it is also used for everything which has accepted as beautiful and give pleasure to people. This is also the case in the presentation of violence in the media. As discussed in the scope of the study, visuals that convey the disruption of the integrity of the human body in the media or the narratives created in this context are presented by aestheticizing. One of the main reasons for such an approach seems to lie in the audience’s inclination to the content of violence. Human beings are very interested in witnessing violence against their own species, -even with a Freudian point of view, they instigates their instinctive tendencies with this testimony. However, there are also some consequences of this testimony. First of all, the human being is not successful about to face with the consequences of violence that he / she resorted himself / herself; or the violence among the human beings. The individual avoids the act of violence because of sometimes to avoid this feeling, and sometimes to avoid punishment legally; or with other reasons. In spite the fact that, the media violence can trigger the acts of violence in real life, the audience usually settled with the act of watching. Because, audiences know the media violence is fictional, and they do not have to worry about the real consequences. Aestheticization of violence makes easy to watch violence content, though. But the aim of this chapter is not to put forth of neither the reasons nor reactions of audience who watch violence contents.

The aim of this chapter is analyzing the aestheticizing of fictional violence in media content. Especially via serials. Approximately last decade can be described as a golden age for the violence visuals. In the news, reality shows, documentaries, movies and doubtless in the serials, the violence can be seen very spread. On the other hand, developments in communication technologies have led to spread this kind of content. These developments has allowed to reach many kind of content -included also violence- for audience. Great interest of the audience paved the way of new productions at the same time and this situation has raised the competition among media institutions. Hereby, sexual and violence content have been characteristic form of 21st century’s media productions. As a consequence of this nuncupative agreement between media and audience, these kind of visuals have taken a place in especially most watched serials and movies.

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