

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

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Over the past forty years, Johan Galtung has extensively employed a broad definition of peace that incorporates the notion of structural violence. Roughly, structural violence is violence that results in harm but is not caused by a clearly identifiable actor, and positive peace is the absence of structural violence. Galtung's account of structural violence, while highly influential, has recently been subjected to a surprisingly hostile critique by C. A. J. Coady in his 2008 study, *Morality and Political Violence*. In this paper I show how a careful reading of Galtung's work undercuts each of Coady's criticisms. I conclude that the notion of structural violence remains a fruitful tool for peace researchers within the twenty-first century.

2009 will mark the fortieth anniversary of the publication of Johan Galtung's landmark essay "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," in which he famously introduced the concept of structural violence.¹ A great many scholars have subsequently conducted extremely interesting research on structural violence.² In fact it is fair to say that Galtung's eventual tripartite classification of violence—involving the categories of personal, structural, and cultural violence—has become one of the prevailing paradigms guiding research within the field of Peace Studies. Recently, however, Galtung's 1969 essay has been subjected to a surprisingly hostile critique by the influential senior Australian philosopher, C. A. J. Coady.³ This is unfortunate since Coady's attack may discourage the next generation of young scholars from making an effort to study Galtung's work firsthand and discovering for themselves what, if anything, it has to offer. The purpose of this essay is to respond to Coady's critique and, in so doing, to argue that Galtung's insights into personal and structural violence remain highly relevant to the present day.

Much of Coady's discussion focuses on Galtung's canonical definition of violence, which runs as follows: "Violence *is present when human beings are*

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