

## 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.

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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.<sup>1</sup> A great many scholars have subsequently conducted extremely interesting research on structural violence.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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*

*being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations*" (168). Coady argues that the underpinnings of this definition are "theoretically unsound" and that the practical consequences of adopting any such "wide" definition of violence "are likely to be . . . disappointing" (35). In what follows, I will consider each of Coady's criticisms of Galtung's definition, following exactly the order in which Coady presents these criticisms. And to be fair to Coady, I will not appeal to any of Galtung's voluminous publications besides this 1969 article, since this is the only work of Galtung's to which Coady makes reference.

1. Coady's critical response gets off to an unfortunate start. Regarding the definition of violence cited above, Coady states,

Galtung confesses to some unease about this definition as soon as he formulates it, saying that it "may lead to more problems than it solves," but this avowal seems to have no more than ritual significance, since no such problems are raised in the course of the article (25).

This remark is unfortunate since it amounts to little more than a personal attack designed to create the impression that Galtung is not a serious scholar and that his words are not to be taken seriously. It sets an inappropriate tone for the ensuing discussion. More significantly, however, this remark reveals that Coady simply has not read Galtung's article carefully. In fact, Galtung discusses, at some length, a number of significant problems that accompany his proposal.

Galtung's definition of violence requires us to compare the "actual realizations" of human beings with their "potential realizations." Violence, Galtung says, is whatever *causes* the actual level of realization to be lower than the potential level of realization (168). We can make essentially the same point, perhaps more intuitively, as follows: violence is whatever causes people to be less well off than they otherwise could be. This definition has the virtue of being simple and elegant. But as a working definition, it invites enormous difficulties and complications. Galtung is not unaware of these problems, nor does he attempt to conceal them from his readers.

First, one cannot actually apply this definition without presupposing some view about what makes a human life valuable. As Galtung says, peace research—research aimed at understanding, preventing and reducing violence—is "an effort to promote the realization of *values*" (190). And it hardly needs to be said that investigations into values raise complex and controversial

concerns. Accordingly, after defining violence, on the very next page Galtung issues the following warning: “The meaning of ‘potential realizations’ is *highly problematic*, especially when we move from somatic aspects of human life, where consensus is more readily obtained, to mental aspects” (169, my italics). Somatic or physical violence is “violence that works on the body,” whereas psychological violence is “violence that works on the soul” (169). Somatic violence occurs when individuals are less well off physically than they otherwise could be. As Galtung notes, there is considerable consensus as to what generally constitutes physical well-being. Nonetheless, hard questions arise when we ask how we can sensibly *measure* this particular dimension of well-being. Frequently, this necessitates asking equally hard metaphysical questions about what sense of *possibility* ought to be invoked in attempting to understand the nature of violence.

Mortality rates, for example, appear to offer one simple and straightforward measure of what it means for different people to enjoy (or endure) “unequal life chances” (171). So violence occurs, Galtung suggests, when individuals live lives that are shorter in duration than they otherwise *could* have been had, say, economic resources been deployed differently. But Galtung also explains why “it is by no means obvious how potential life-span should be defined” (187). So it is not obvious how to measure even this one dimension of physical well-being. The identification of violence is, to this extent, also shrouded in uncertainty.

Moving to value questions around the assessment of psychological well-being, Galtung rhetorically asks his readers to compare the value (if any) of being literate with the value (if any) of being a Christian (169). Having effectively signalled in this fashion the “highly problematic” value dimension of his proposed definition, Galtung wisely chooses not “to explore this difficult point further in this context” (169). The main point, of course, is that there exists profound and widespread disagreement over what constitutes psychological well-being. While no one would expect these issues to be resolved within the space of a single journal article, someone might nonetheless argue that these uncertainties and disagreements are significant enough to raise serious concerns as to the utility or desirability of Galtung’s proposed definition.

Galtung also articulates, and responds to, a number of focused and potentially damaging objections to his attempt to distinguish structural violence from personal violence. Some of these objections are theoretical in nature, whereas others have a practical focus. In part four, for example, he addresses

the theoretical worry that the distinction between personal and structural violence is not a “clear” or even a “real” distinction (177). And later, in part five, he grapples with the serious objection that, by encouraging individuals to aim at the elimination of *both* personal violence and structural violence, their hands may be tied in such a manner that their efforts help sustain or produce societies in which *neither* personal violence *nor* structural violence are eliminated. Galtung acknowledges that “there is no doubt a danger” (184) inherent in the “non-extremist” strategy he advocates. Personal violence and structural violence, he notes, often seem “to be coupled in such a way that it is very difficult to get rid of both evils” (185). Hence the temptation to focus in a more “extremist” fashion on the elimination or reduction of just one of these evils. And so, in contemplating the possibility that peacemakers may be “left without anything to do” in certain (highly repressive) political contexts, Galtung asks, “how valuable is this recipe for peace?” (184).

This is not the place to consider Galtung’s responses to these objections. But what emerges throughout this article is a picture of a serious and honest intellectual who appreciates the complexity of the issues with which he is dealing, who sincerely welcomes critical engagement with others, and who is deeply committed to the principle that “a discipline fully satisfied with its own foundations and definition is probably a dead discipline” (190).

2. Coady next attempts to establish that Galtung’s definition of violence is subject to a number of absurd counter-examples.

It seems to follow from [Galtung’s definition] that a young child is engaged in violence if its expression of its needs and desires is such that it makes its mother and/or father very tired, even if it is not in any ordinary sense “a violent child” or engaged in violent actions. Furthermore, I will be engaged in violence if, at your request, I give you a sleeping pill that will reduce your actual somatic and mental realisations well below their potential, at least for some hours (27).

Neither counter-example is compelling, however, since Coady seems to have overlooked two rather obvious facts. First, Galtung’s definition appeals to how individuals fare *overall*, and feeling tired, of course, captures only one dimension of well-being. Second, in appealing to the consequences of human activity, Galtung is of course appealing to *long term* consequences (182).

From the fact that parents are often exhausted as a result of caring for their children, it does not follow that these children therefore commit acts of

violence against their exhausted parents. Most parents place a very high value on their relationship with their children, and most parents (correctly) believe that, overall, they are much better off in the long run as a result of having had children. That parents suffer in various ways does not negate the overriding fact that parenting typically contributes immeasurably to the value of a human life. (Likewise, that your dentist causes you pain does not negate the fact that your dentist makes your life go better overall, in the long run. So dentists are not engaged in violence against their patients.) This is not to say, of course, that children can never commit acts of violence against their parents, but only that this question cannot be resolved using the simplistic formula suggested by Coady.<sup>4</sup>

It should now be clear that Coady's second alleged counter-example is too sketchy to establish anything of any significance. Suppose that, at my request, you give me a sleeping pill that renders me unconscious for a few hours. This basic scenario can be embellished in any number of ways. In one case, you do this with the malicious intent of causing me to miss an important meeting and, as a result, my life goes much worse overall, in the long run. Then it is not implausible to say that you have committed an act of violence against me. (Yes, I did ask for the sleeping pill, but for a different reason. I merely wanted to be well-rested for the meeting, but had seriously underestimated the potency of the drug in question.) Alternatively, suppose you give me the sleeping pill to spare me the excruciating pain I would otherwise feel for the next few hours. (Suppose you are my dentist.) Then you have not committed an act of violence against me, since you have made my life go better. Counter-examples to a definition do not work unless they respect the parameters within which that definition is framed.

3. Coady's next objection turns on the fact that Galtung's definition allows for structural violence as well as personal violence. Personal violence occurs when there exists a clearly identifiable *actor* who is "the cause of the difference . . . between actual and potential realization" (172). (This actor may or may not act with the intention to cause harm.) Structural violence occurs when "there is no such actor" (170), although, by definition, there still exists a difference between actual and potential realization. Clearly, therefore, structural violence is caused in some other fashion. To build upon our earlier discussion, structural violence occurs when, for example, different individuals within a society enjoy unequal life chances—one ethnic group, for example, may have a much lower life expectancy than another—and there is no clearly identifiable agent causally responsible for this avoidable discrepancy.

Galtung has many reasons for classifying structural violence as a kind of violence. One reason runs as follows. If we restricted the concept of violence to personal violence, and defined peace as merely the absence of personal violence, “then too little is rejected when peace is held up as an ideal. Highly unacceptable social orders would still be compatible with peace. Hence, *an extended concept of violence is indispensable*” (168). To this line of reasoning, Coady responds as follows:

Now it seems to me that this justification of the value of his definition is either muddled or mischievous (and just possibly both). If the suggestion is that peace cannot be a *worthy* social ideal or goal of action unless it is the total ideal, then the suggestion is surely absurd. A multiplicity of compatible but non-inclusive ideals seems as worthy of human pursuit as a single comprehensive goal, and, furthermore, it seems a more honest way to characterise social realities (28).

Coady’s response rests upon a false assumption. Galtung never assumes that peace would not be worth pursuing if it was defined, more narrowly, as merely the absence of personal violence. In fact, it is quite astonishing that anyone who has read the 1969 article could imagine attributing this view to Galtung. Galtung makes it very clear, especially throughout parts four and five of his paper, that personal violence is a discrete evil, and that the elimination of personal violence is a goal well worth pursuing in and of itself. In fact, given that personal violence constitutes such an immense and tangible social problem, Galtung acknowledges that there exists a considerable and somewhat commendable temptation to focus exclusively on the need to eliminate personal violence (including war), and to employ (or at least tolerate) other “lesser evils” in the attempt “to drive out [this] greater evil” (185).

Nonetheless, Galtung’s settled position is that while the elimination of personal violence is a goal worth pursuing, it is not the *only* goal worth pursuing. The elimination of structural violence is also worth pursuing. “*Both* values, *both* goals are significant” (185). Furthermore, with respect to the twin evils of personal violence and structural violence, Galtung writes, “It is probably a disservice to man to try, in any abstract way, to say that one is more important than the other. . . . They are *both* of such an order of magnitude that comparisons appear meaningless” (185). Accordingly, rather than privileging either one of these evils over the other, Galtung elects to regard them as two inextricably linked aspects of a single larger phenomenon—two sides of a single coin.<sup>5</sup>

4. Coady next entertains the possibility that Galtung's work constitutes an exercise in propaganda. Corresponding to the two faces of violence, Galtung also operates with two conceptions of peace. *Negative* peace (or peace narrowly construed) is defined as the absence of personal violence. *Positive* peace is defined as the absence of structural violence (183). Galtung also frequently refers to positive peace as "social justice" (171).

Coady correctly perceives that, in the broadest sense, Galtung has a political agenda. He values both positive and negative peace, and he wants to encourage researchers to explore the means by which societies can actively promote both of these goods. Thankfully, virtually everyone already favours eliminating or at least reducing personal violence. And so virtually everyone already favours the promotion of peace, conceived narrowly or negatively as the elimination of personal violence. Coady therefore correctly notes that the energies of these individuals "can be harnessed practically on a wide front against all sorts of social injustice" (28) if we simply adopt the existing laudatory term "peace" and define it broadly to include the elimination of structural violence as well. The problem with this strategy, says Coady, is that it

not only has much the same moral status as propaganda, it also shares the disadvantages of propaganda in that it is likely in the long run to defeat the ends, good or ill, that it is designed to serve. The deliberate promotion of muddle or unclarity is liable to be detected and when detected resented, because it is seen for what it is, namely, an exercise in manipulation (29).

No one would deny that language can be used as a weapon to manipulate or injure others. Responsible scholars need to be sensitive to semantics, especially when their research incorporates an element of advocacy for social change. But I fail to see that Coady has uncovered a problematic "muddle or unclarity" in Galtung's prose. And it hardly seems that "manipulation" is the right word either, when Galtung writes with complete transparency about his intentions—which include, among other things, a desire to construct a rigorous theoretical foundation for what was, at the time, the emerging new field of Peace Studies.

Language is a powerful tool. It can affect how we perceive reality and, in the process, it can alter the very nature of reality itself. In playing a pivotal role in the creation of the academic discipline known as Peace Studies, Galtung deliberately and self-consciously developed a new vocabulary, and thus a new

conceptual framework, that carried with it an exciting new vision of what has come to be known as engaged scholarship. Peace Studies does not pretend to be value neutral. Nor does it pretend to describe in purely “objective” terms a world about which it is fundamentally disinterested. On the contrary, scholars in the field of Peace Studies, including Galtung, openly embrace certain values and openly articulate a commitment to effect social change that is congruent with those values.

We see this commitment at work, operating in a perfectly transparent fashion, in the closing sentence of Galtung’s 1969 article wherein he spells out a distinctive research agenda for peace scholarship. Referring to negative peace and positive peace, he writes, “There are more than enough people willing to sacrifice one for the other—it is by aiming for both that peace research can make a real contribution” (186). One of the main challenges facing Peace Studies, then, is to discover mechanisms that promote both positive peace and negative peace (as opposed to mechanisms that promote just one kind of peace while undermining the other). Not surprisingly, linguistic reform can play an important role in this project. By incorporating social justice within the definition of peace, Galtung notes that we can construct “an image of harmony of interests” (167) that might otherwise have remained invisible to us. In other words, the notion of positive peace enables social workers, teachers, politicians, pacifists, trade unionists, and health care professionals, among others, to perceive (and build upon) hitherto unrecognizable common interests. It is in this spirit that Galtung writes that the word “peace,” when used creatively, can itself help bring about peace and social harmony (167).

5. Coady eventually acknowledges that there is a more charitable interpretation of Galtung’s project and aim, which is to “call attention to genuine similarities between personal and structural violence in the hope that once they are seen, people who are concerned to oppose the violence of, for example, war will also work to oppose . . . structural violence” (29). Nonetheless, Coady continues,

The similarities between personal violence and structural violence seem to be far too few and too general to offset the striking differences between them. The basic similarity that Galtung’s definition enshrines in a somewhat cumbersome way is that violence and social injustice both involve the production of some sort of hurt or injury broadly construed, but the types of harm and the conditions of their production are terribly different (29).

Clearly Galtung has made a radical proposal that calls for a fundamental shift in the way we understand, evaluate, and tackle the problem of violence. So it is hardly obvious that Galtung's path is indeed the best way forward. We need to ask hard theoretical questions about Galtung's proposal; we need to see whether a research program built around the distinction between personal and structural violence bears substantial fruit; and we need to compare these results with the results of competing research programs. All of this requires care, diligence, patience, and balanced judgment. Even then it may be far from obvious how best to proceed. Trade-offs, for example, may be required, as no single theory may deliver everything we are after. So it is not surprising that Coady's quick and easy dismissal of Galtung's project again rests on an extraordinarily superficial understanding of that project. I restrict myself here to the following three points.<sup>6</sup>

First, Coady arguably misdescribes Galtung's position. There are, of course, differences between the causes and the consequences of personal and structural violence, and it is possible to have a serious discussion about the nature of those differences. But Coady makes no mention of Galtung's repeated insistence that personal and structural violence are, in many respects, exactly on a par. (One may not agree with this claim, but it is important to recognize that Galtung makes it.)

In very concrete terms, both personal and structural violence may result in individuals being treated in exactly the same manner, for example, "killed or mutilated" (170). (And the victim in question may not be particularly interested in the distinction between personal and structural violence.) So the similarity between personal and structural violence extends beyond Coady's point that they both result in "some sort of hurt or injury *broadly construed*" (29, my italics). In conceptually aligning personal violence with structural violence, Galtung draws our attention to the significant sociological fact that "highly different means may lead to *highly similar results*" (177, my italics).

In more abstract terms, Galtung insists upon a "completely symmetrical" treatment of personal and structural violence according to which "there is no temporal, logical or evaluative preference given to one or the other" (185). Both types of violence result in massive human suffering, for example, and as we have seen, Galtung claims that it is pointless to speculate which type of violence causes more suffering. This evaluative symmetry provides one very strong reason why Galtung places personal and structural violence on a conceptual par by treating them as two specific instances of a single more generic

phenomenon. (Both problems desperately need to be addressed, so do not privilege one over the other.) Coady fails to mention this reason.<sup>7</sup>

None of this, of course, implies that there are no differences between personal and structural violence. Nor does it imply that Galtung's approach requires us to overlook or downplay the significance of these differences. On the contrary, and this is my second point, Coady also fails to mention Galtung's absolutely pivotal claim that whereas personal violence typically "shows" itself and is evident to victim and perpetrator alike, structural violence is very often "silent, it does not show" (173). Precisely because structural violence is often invisible, and precisely because it can seem so normal or "natural" (173) within a given society, Galtung considers it imperative that we use our conceptual resources to bring this phenomenon into sharper relief. By *naming* structural violence as a kind of violence—a kind of avoidable harm or injury—we are far more likely, Galtung believes, to perceive more accurately the full extent of the problem that we are facing.

Finally, since structural violence so easily escapes our attention, it stands to reason that, without special effort, the causal relations between personal and structural violence will also likely remain hidden. Once again Coady fails even to mention the principal causal symmetry with which Galtung struggles throughout the second half of the 1969 article. There are effective ways of reducing personal violence that escalate the level of structural violence within a society and, correlatively, effective ways of reducing structural violence that dramatically increase the level of personal violence. Unless we continually bear in mind that the two faces of violence stand in this intimate causal relationship, we run the risk of working for peace along paths that are ultimately self-defeating.

6. Coady next argues that the morality of personal violence "seems to be different" (32) from the morality of structural violence. Specifically, he points to the following asymmetry. Most people are willing to accept, or at least find nothing conceptually odd in the suggestion that an act of personal violence (acting in self-defense, for example) may be morally justified. "By contrast, the idea that social injustice may be morally legitimate is more surprising" (33).

Even granting that Coady is correct in claiming that this asymmetry exists, it is hard to imagine how this constitutes an effective criticism of Galtung's work. First, Galtung never claims that personal and structural violence are similar in all respects. In fact, as we have seen, he readily admits that there are

a number of very significant differences between them. So one more difference would not, by itself, count for much.

Nonetheless, one might argue that morally relevant differences count for more since violence, on any account, is so heavily imbued with moral significance. Notice, however, and this is my second point, that Galtung's theory can readily explain why the morality of personal violence differs markedly from the morality of structural violence. Personal violence is often committed with the intention to harm others whereas, by definition, structural violence is not the direct or immediate product of intentional action. Since, as Coady concedes, "intentional action is of distinctive importance" (32) to morality, it would be very odd, and in fact a mark against Galtung's theory if he claimed (or was committed to claiming) that personal and structural violence are exactly on a par from a moral point of view.<sup>8</sup> The morality of blame, for example, ought to function very differently in these two spheres.

Third, although he often discusses values, Galtung never employs the language of moral justification, moral legitimacy, moral obligations, duties, or prohibitions within his 1969 article. So he simply does not address the specific issue with which Coady's present objection is concerned. Nonetheless, it is clear that Galtung is advocating for substantial moral reform, and he couches these reforms in the language of relatively precise and technical terms, such as "structural violence."

Coady's objection appeals to everyday or natural language intuitions about our use of the term "social injustice." While it is true that Galtung proposes "social injustice" as a convenient gloss or substitute for his notion of structural violence, it is clear that the correct interpretation of any claim Galtung makes about social injustice must ultimately rest on his technical definition of structural violence. So Coady's objection, at best, amounts to the unsurprising claim that Galtung's technical assertions about structural violence may clash with the ways people use the term social injustice in conventional moral discourse. There may be linguistic battles on the horizon for those who wish to implement research or political agendas built around the notion of structural violence. But this is hardly news for those engaged in social reform. At most it suggests that perhaps, should the linguistic battles become too distracting or counterproductive, the term social injustice should simply be jettisoned in favour of the more transparently stipulative notion of structural violence.

Finally, and most importantly, one can easily extend Galtung's analysis to challenge the specific moral asymmetry to which Coady appeals. Galtung

insists, of course, that the reduction or elimination of structural violence is a moral ideal. But there are a great many different types of structural violence; some are more serious than others in the sense that they cause greater misery, and some are easier to reduce or eliminate than others. So it is difficult to know what we ought to do, all things considered, when it comes to working for the ideal of positive peace. Certainly, Galtung's definition cannot, by itself, resolve this issue for us, and this is a matter over which there can be plenty of rational disagreement. But clearly not everything can be accomplished at once, and so various compromises and strategic decisions are inevitable.

Now, slavery, to borrow one of Coady's examples, is certainly a clear case of structural violence or social injustice. But within the framework articulated in the previous paragraph, there is nothing conceptually awkward, odd, or jarring in the suggestion that this particular social injustice may be "morally acceptable" or "morally justifiable" (33) in the narrow and specific sense that, for the time being, we are morally required to tolerate it as a necessary evil while we direct our efforts temporarily to other, more urgent moral problems. Because we cannot accomplish everything at once, something is morally acceptable (or morally permissible) in this sense if, in our particular historical and political context, it will likely survive our best efforts to combat violence. We are imagining, in other words, a situation in which focusing our efforts on the abolition of slavery is currently, for whatever reason, a morally inferior option.

It might be useful, at this point, to distinguish between three separate claims to which Galtung is committed. (1) In the most general terms, we ought to pursue both positive peace and negative peace—systematically and, where possible, simultaneously.<sup>9</sup> (2) Therefore, we continually need to guard against the real danger that our efforts to promote one kind of peace will damage or undermine the other kind of peace. (3) And specifically, we ought not to promote one kind of peace without regard for how we are affecting the other kind of peace. The suggestion made in the previous paragraph does not challenge any of these three points. Galtung believes that the best overall strategy for combating violence is one that operates on a variety of fronts and employs a variety of tactics while aiming, systematically and relentlessly, at the production of both positive peace and negative peace. In Galtung's approach, no one form of peace is to be privileged over the other. But in following the most effective path to the promotion of peace along its many dimensions, we may find that, regrettably, some *specific instances* of personal violence or structural

violence may have to be tolerated as morally acceptable or necessary evils in a morally imperfect world.

Coady speculates that Galtung, and like-minded theorists, would not tolerate the idea of a morally acceptable social injustice, given that social injustice is “usually their primary social evil” (33). This comment, of course, overlooks the fact that Galtung refuses to assert that structural violence is a greater evil than personal violence. More significantly in the present context, however, it falsely assumes that social injustice (i.e., structural violence) is a homogeneous phenomenon. We face many different kinds of evil, some more resilient than others, thriving along many different dimensions of our social, political, and personal lives. Given our limited capacity for promoting the good, the moral life is a life full of hard choices and heart-wrenching compromises. In one sense, evil is certainly morally intolerable. But it is also here to stay, lurking within our midst, as we search for a morally acceptable way to navigate through these troubled waters.

7. Finally, Coady argues that a wide definition of peace and violence is “likely to have undesirable practical consequences” since

the realities of social causation are such that some ideals are achievable in relative or even total independence of others. . . . Use of the wide definition seems likely to encourage the cosy but ultimately stultifying belief that there is one problem, the problem of [structural] violence, and hence it must be solved as a whole with one set of techniques (33-34).

By now it should be readily apparent why this criticism misses its mark. Galtung is acutely aware that positive peace can be pursued independently of negative peace, and that negative peace can be pursued independently of positive peace. He also acknowledges that much good can come of either initiative. In reducing the level of personal violence, for example, we certainly accomplish something that is good in and of itself. And, if we are lucky or wise, this reduction in personal violence may be accompanied by a reduction in structural violence as well. For some reason, Coady seems to believe that Galtung wants to deny these fairly prosaic claims.

Rather, in proposing the dual goals of positive peace and negative peace, Galtung is more interested in cautioning us to guard against deliberately pursuing one of these goals *at the expense of* the other. History shows, Galtung would claim, that there is no light at the end of this tunnel. And in promoting

a more holistic approach to peace, Galtung does not deny that, in our day-to-day activities, we often have to work in a piecemeal fashion on relatively tiny and discrete problems. Nor does Galtung ever support or encourage the truly bizarre idea that there is some single technique, or set of techniques, that will magically defeat violence everywhere in all its grotesque manifestations. Effective strategies need to be tailored to complex and fluid historical, physical, and cultural realities. As Gandhi stressed, peacebuilding is inherently eclectic and experimental. And Galtung himself has spent an entire lifetime tirelessly traversing the globe as a mediator, designing highly creative and diverse “therapeutic” responses to seemingly intractable violent conflicts. Readers interested in exploring this aspect of peace research would be well-advised to consult one of his most recent book-length publications, *50 Years: 100 Peace and Conflict Perspectives*.<sup>10</sup>

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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#### ENDNOTES

- 1 Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no 3 (1969): 167-91.
- 2 For a useful overview of some of this work, see Kathleen Maas Weigert, “Structural Violence,” in *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict*, ed. Lester Kurtz (San Diego: Academic Press, 1999), 3: 431-40.
- 3 C. A. J. Coady, *Morality and Political Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). See especially pages 25-35. All further references to Coady’s book and to Galtung’s article will be cited within the text. As the relevant page references do not overlap, this should not result in confusion.
- 4 Nor is it true that these acts, when they occur, must be performed by “violent children.” Assessing an act as violent is one thing; assessing a person as violent is another.
- 5 It is also worth noting that peace is not “the total ideal” for Galtung since peace is compatible with extreme but *unavoidable* poverty, sickness, ignorance, and other forms of human misery (169).

- 6 I also will not address Coady's three-page discussion of intentionality and the act/omission distinction (29-32) since it has no direct bearing on Galtung's proposal. Acts of personal violence may be intentional or unintentional. And "failing to act" can also count as personal violence on Galtung's analysis. Suppose that someone dies as a result of my failure to administer a certain drug. Then personal violence has occurred since s/he is less well off than s/he otherwise could have been, and I am the actor causally responsible for this avoidable discrepancy.
- 7 Various temporal and logical symmetries are explored at length throughout part four.
- 8 The evaluative symmetry, referred to earlier, is not affected by this claim about intentions. Regardless of how it is caused, the harm caused by personal violence is not intrinsically of lesser or greater concern than the harm caused by structural violence. So the evaluative symmetry stands, despite other moral differences. Philosophers regularly distinguish axiological or evaluative claims—claims about value—from moral or normative claims about how individuals ought to behave.
- 9 Galtung explicitly ties this point to the Gandhian principle of the unity of means and ends in part five of "Cultural Violence," *Journal of Peace Research* 27, no. 3 (1990): 291-305.
- 10 Johan Galtung, *50 Years: 100 Peace and Conflict Perspectives* (Bergen, Norway: Transcend University Press, 2008).