

Analysis of Structural Violence in Stephen King's Carrie (1974): A Galtungian Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the significance of violence, particularly structural violence – as a critical topic of literary research. Violence is a persistent and evolving element of human life, making it essential to explore its forms and implications. As societies have developed through the establishment of governments, regulations, and institutions, structural violence has become increasingly prevalent. This form of violence manifests as indirect harm embedded within social, economic, and political systems, often disadvantaging specific individuals or groups through financial hardship, unequal access to education, healthcare disparities, and discrimination. Notably, structural violence often goes unnoticed and lacks a clearly identifiable perpetrator. The purpose of this study is to analyze the portrayal of violence, with a focus on structural violence, in Stephen King's novel Carrie. Employing a qualitative method, this research draws upon textual evidence from the novel to support its analysis. The findings reveal that Carrie reflects various instances of structural violence through its narrative, particularly those that inflict invisible wounds on the victim. However, this study is limited to institutionally embedded forms of violence, leaving broader dimensions of the topic open for future exploration.

Keywords: *Carrie, Johan Galtung, Structural Violence, Stephen King, Qualitative Analysis*

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INTRODUCTION

Violence remains one of the most complex and debated topics confronting scholars, policymakers, and communities worldwide. Far from being merely a matter of physical harm, violence constitutes a fundamental dimension of human existence that shapes both individual experiences and broader societal structures. Its manifestations are diverse – including warfare and domestic abuse, poverty and systemic marginalization, psychological trauma and cultural suppression. Each form carries distinct implications and raises unique moral, ethical, and practical questions. Consequently, this complexity has made achieving a coherent and universally accepted definition of violence an ongoing challenge across multiple academic disciplines, from sociology and political science to anthropology and literary studies.

Understanding violence requires more than simply cataloging its various forms or measuring its immediate effects. Rather, it demands careful attention to the broader contexts, systems, and meanings that shape how violence emerges, operates, and becomes rationalized within different societies and historical periods. Violence is not merely an isolated act but a phenomenon embedded within complex webs of power relations, cultural narratives, institutional practices, and economic structures. Therefore, any serious examination must consider both the immediate manifestations of violence and the conditions that enable, sustain, or legitimize it.

The scholarly investigation of violence has evolved along multiple trajectories, incorporating both empirical and theoretical approaches. Contemporary research draws upon diverse methodological frameworks, from quantitative studies measuring violence's prevalence and impact to qualitative analyses exploring its symbolic dimensions and cultural

meanings. As a result, this interdisciplinary engagement has enriched our understanding while simultaneously revealing the limitations of any single analytical lens. The field now includes perspectives from psychology and psychiatry, which examine violence's effects on individual mental health and behavior; from economics, which analyzes the material costs and structural factors behind violent conflicts; from history, which traces the evolution of violent practices and their social contexts; and from cultural studies, which explores how violence is represented, normalized, or resisted within different symbolic systems.

The concept of 'violence' has prompted extensive scholarly debate, with researchers approaching the phenomenon from both material and conceptual angles. The following analysis examines these diverse academic interpretations, beginning with the foundational observation that violence typically disrupts established social norms and violates fundamental human rights and freedoms. The discussion then progresses through essential definitions offered by influential theorists such as Ted Honderich and Manfred Steger, before engaging with more detailed frameworks, including Katherine Hirschfeld's critical assessment of structural violence theory. Subsequently, to bridge theoretical insights with lived realities, this paper also explores the role of literature as a powerful medium for examining structural violence in practice, demonstrating how fictional narratives can illustrate the operation of Galtung's theoretical framework within specific social contexts and individual experiences.

Violence characteristically transgresses social boundaries and violates individual rights, disrupting the normative frameworks that societies establish to maintain order and protect their members. This transgressive quality has long fascinated scholars, many of whom trace the etymological connection between "violence" and "violation" – both terms deriving from the Latin *violare*, meaning to break, infringe upon, or transgress something sacred or protected. Thus, this linguistic relationship points to violence's fundamental character as a force that crosses established limits, whether legal, moral, or social. The act of violation inherent in violence suggests not merely the application of force, but the deliberate or consequential breaking of agreements, expectations, or rights that communities have established as essential to their functioning.

Different academic traditions have attempted to establish working definitions that capture violence's essential characteristics while remaining analytically useful. Ted Honderich offers a deliberately straightforward approach, defining violence as "a use of physical force that harms, damages or destroys people or things" (2002, p. 91; 2003, p. 15). This definition's strength lies in its clarity and focus on observable, measurable phenomena – physical force and its tangible consequences. However, its emphasis on physicality has drawn criticism from scholars who argue that such narrow definitions exclude important forms of harm that operate through psychological, economic, or structural mechanisms.

In contrast, Manfred Steger presents a more expansive conceptualization, arguing that violence "comprises a range of meanings, including 'to force', 'to injure', 'to dishonor', and 'to violate'" (2003, p. 12). Steger's broader framework acknowledges that violence operates across multiple dimensions simultaneously, including not only physical harm but also psychological damage, social degradation, and symbolic assault. This approach reflects growing recognition among scholars that violence's effects extend far beyond immediate physical injury to include long-term trauma, social disruption, and cultural destruction.

The expansion of violence beyond its purely physical dimensions has led to important theoretical developments, particularly the concept of structural violence introduced by Johan Galtung. Structural violence refers to harm caused by social, political, and economic systems that prevent individuals and groups from achieving their full potential or accessing basic necessities. This framework has proven influential in understanding how seemingly peaceful societies can perpetrate violence through discriminatory policies, unequal resource distribution, and exclusionary practices. Nevertheless, the concept of structural violence has attracted significant criticism.

Katherine Hirschfeld (2017) offers a pointed critique, arguing that the concept has become "increasingly outdated and poorly theorized," often applied too broadly without sufficient empirical rigor or analytical precision. Her concern centers on the tendency to use

structural violence as a catch-all explanation that may actually obscure the specific historical, political, and epidemiological factors operating in complex situations. Hirschfeld illustrates this problem through the example of how structural violence was invoked to explain the West African Ebola epidemic, noting that such applications risk oversimplifying intricate realities and can lead to what she terms "moralistic storytelling" rather than rigorous empirical investigation (Hirschfeld, 2017). Furthermore, she emphasizes that Galtung himself distinguished between unavoidable deaths—such as those from incurable diseases in earlier historical periods—and preventable ones, suggesting that the concept requires more careful application and theoretical refinement. Those academics scholars have different interpretation of violence. But, In this research, the researcher uses definition of violence as a violation of a person state of mental and emotional balance.

Understanding violence can be achieved by carefully reading how violence is depicted in literary works. Beyond academic theory, literary works serve as valuable case studies for examining how structural violence operates within specific social settings. Literature offers detailed portrayals of social hierarchies, institutional practices, and cultural norms that may constitute forms of structural violence as defined by Galtung's framework. Derek Attridge's definition of literary work as "a verbal text that, when read in the appropriate manner, gives pleasure through its manipulation, in a temporal medium, of the formal properties of the language" (Attridge, 2015) emphasizes literature's aesthetic dimensions while acknowledging its capacity to engage with serious social and political issues.

Literary works reveal how violence operates within human relationships and social structures, showing the conditions that give rise to violent acts and their consequences for individuals and communities. As a result, this representational capacity complements empirical research by providing concrete examples of how structural violence manifests in everyday life, making abstract theoretical concepts accessible through specific characters and situations.

The intersection of academic analysis and literary representation creates opportunities for more complete understanding of violence's multiple dimensions. While scholarly research provides systematic frameworks for analyzing violence's causes, patterns, and effects, literature offers detailed explorations of its human significance and meaning. Therefore, together, these approaches contribute to a fuller picture of violence as both a social phenomenon and a fundamental aspect of human experience that demands sustained critical attention.

METHOD

This study implement the qualitative approach of textual research, qualitative approach according to Creswell "Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem." (J.W. Creswell, 2017). The object of qualitative approach conducted in this study is Stephen King's novel *Carrie* (1974) which is scrutinized through the concept of structural violence—a term first articulated by peace researcher Johan Galtung (1969). This form of violence may not be overt like physical abuse, yet they profoundly impact individuals, particularly when a character's potential is stifled or warped by their surroundings.

Instrument

In qualitative research, particularly in studies involving textual analysis, the primary instrument is often the researcher herself. This study conforms to that convention. The researcher selecting relevant data, interpreting the meaning of texts, to applying theoretical frameworks. Unlike quantitative studies that may rely on external instruments such as surveys or statistical software, qualitative research is heavily interpretive in nature. The researcher is responsible for constructing meaning from the textual material by relying on analytical sensitivity, theoretical knowledge, and critical engagement with the text.

In the context of this study, which analyzes *Carrie* (1974) by Stephen King through the theoretical lens of Johan Galtung's concept of structural violence, the researcher serves not

merely as a passive observer but as an analytical agent who interprets the narrative content to reveal deeper, often implicit meanings. The researcher's role involves identifying key excerpts from the novel that exemplify indirect or institutionalized forms of violence, determining thematic patterns, and interpreting these within the framework of structural violence. This process includes exercising subjective judgment, reflexive awareness, and theoretical insight – especially important in literary analysis where meanings are not always fixed or self-evident.

While the novel *Carrie* functions as the primary source of data, it is not the instrument of research itself. The novel provides the textual content to be examined, but the process of analysis—how that content is approached, what is selected, and how it is interpreted—is shaped by the researcher. Similarly, the theoretical framework—Galtung's structural violence—serves as an interpretive guide or analytical lens. It informs the way the data is understood but does not replace the interpretive work carried out by the researcher. **Procedure**

This research follows several steps to analyze the representation of structural violence in *Carrie* by Stephen King using qualitative textual analysis. The procedures are as follows:

Text Selection and Reading

The novel *Carrie* (1974) was selected as the primary text due to its depiction of psychological and social oppression. The researcher read the novel multiple times to understand its plot, characters, and social dynamics.

Theoretical Preparation

The concept of structural violence by Johan Galtung (1969) was studied and used as the main analytical framework. The researcher focused on how violence can be embedded in systems like family, school, and religion.

Data Collection

Passages from the novel that show indirect or systemic violence were selected. These include moments of humiliation, control, exclusion, and institutional neglect.

Thematic Analysis

The selected quotations were analyzed using thematic analysis. The researcher identified themes such as religious abuse, peer bullying, institutional silence, and social rejection. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that researchers use to systematically organize and analyze complex data sets. It is a search for themes that can capture the narratives available in the account of data sets. It involves the identification of themes through careful reading and re-reading of the transcribed data (King, 2004; Rice & Ezzy, 1999).

Interpretation

Each theme was interpreted through Galtung's theory to understand how structural violence operates in the narrative. The analysis links events in the novel to broader social structures that maintain harm.

Data Analysis

The textual data extracted from *Carrie* by Stephen King reveal four dominant themes of structural violence that align with Johan Galtung's theoretical framework: religious abuse, peer bullying, institutional silence, and social rejection. These themes emerged through close reading and thematic categorization of selected excerpts, each of which illustrates the systemic harm Carrie White endures not through direct physical assault alone, but through socially embedded mechanisms of domination, exclusion, and neglect.

Religious abuse is one of the most pervasive forms of structural violence portrayed in the novel. Margaret White, Carrie's mother, imposes a harsh, fundamentalist interpretation of Christianity that functions not as spiritual guidance but as a tool for fear and control. The command, "Go to your closet and pray! Ask forgiveness for your sin," (King, 1974) exemplifies how Margaret uses forced prayer and isolation as disciplinary mechanisms to suppress Carrie's autonomy. Furthermore, Carrie's complete ignorance of menstruation—"She didn't know what was going on... she had no idea of what was taking place" (King, 1974)—demonstrates how Margaret's religious fanaticism leads to a deliberate denial of basic biological education. This withholding of knowledge constitutes a form of cultural violence, as defined by Galtung, where ideology justifies harm. Although neighbors eventually yell,

"You ought to be ashamed!" at Margaret, their moral outrage lacks action, reflecting society's passive acceptance of domestic spiritual abuse.

The theme of peer bullying is illustrated through multiple scenes of aggressive humiliation and psychological torment, often enacted by groups of Carrie's classmates. The infamous chant, "Plug it up! Plug it up!" (King, 1974) during her first menstruation is both a verbal and physical assault, as Carrie is bombarded with tampons in a moment of deep vulnerability. The recurring graffiti "Carrie White eats shit" further signals that this abuse is not isolated but socially normalized within the school culture. The attack described as "The girls were bombarding her with tampons... chanting" (King, 1974), demonstrates a ritualized form of cruelty, a group performance of degradation that dehumanizes Carrie and pushes her toward psychological breakdown. These scenes depict peer bullying not merely as teenage cruelty, but as a sustained structure of violence in which Carrie is systematically denied dignity and belonging.

Institutional silence is another form of structural violence that emerges in the novel. School authorities—those in positions of power—consistently fail to respond to Carrie's suffering in any meaningful or protective way. For instance, the assistant principal's reaction to her distress is described as passive and awkward: "Mr. Morton... glanced down at the bloody handprint and blinked." (King, 1974)

His failure to address the incident reflects an institutional tendency to minimize emotional harm. Similarly, when a teacher refers to Carrie by the wrong name—"Do you need a ride, Cassie?"—and is met with Carrie's correction, "That's not my name," (King, 1974) it has interpretive meaning for sure, but considering the bullying Carrie has just experienced, mistaken her name multiple times showcasing lack of concern or indifference towards the victim. These examples highlight how institutional neglect contributes to structural violence by allowing abuse to go unchallenged and denying the victim's sense of self and agency. Such silence, in Galtung's terms, is not neutral, it actively sustains harm by refusing to disrupt the status quo.

Finally, the theme of social rejection captures the cumulative effect of Carrie's lifelong alienation. Her statement, "They laughed at me. They've always laughed," (King, 1974) is a powerful condensation of years of ridicule and exclusion. This rejection is not limited to a single event but is a persistent condition of her social reality. Even in her private reflections, Carrie acknowledges that "She had tried to fit. She had defied Momma in a hundred little ways," (King, 1974) revealing her efforts to adapt and connect to different ways Carrie's mother and Carrie's peers are living. Yet her attempts are futile, as her difference, shaped by poverty, religion, and isolation, is never socially forgiven.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Excerpt	Theme	Novel Page (PDF)
Go to your closet and pray! Ask forgiveness for your sin.	Religious Abuse	54
She didn't know what was going on... she had no idea of what was taking place.	Religious Abuse	41
Plug it up! Plug it up!	Peer Bullying	40
Carrie White eats shit.	Peer Bullying	38
The girls were bombarding her with tampons... chanting.	Peer Bullying	40
Mr. Morton... glanced down at the bloody handprint and blinked.	Institutional Silence	49
Do you need a ride, Cassie?" "That's not my name!	Institutional Silence	49
They laughed at me. They've always laughed.	Social Rejection	50
She had tried to fit. She had defied Momma in a hundred little ways.	Social Rejection	51
You ought to be ashamed!	Religious Abuse	54

Discussions*What is violence?*

Today, scholars who study violence are challenging limited views that only think about physical harm, and their ideas match up with Johan Galtung's writings on structural violence. Instead of only focusing on things like hitting and shooting, experts such as Dr. Sarah Johnson from UC Davis are taking a wider view, similar to how Galtung argued that violence is "built into how society is set up." Johnson's work shows that real violence happens when a person or group purposefully uses force or power against another person or group, leading to injuries, mental distress, development issues, or denial of basic needs. This relates to Galtung's thought that "if people are starving when it could be avoided, then violence is happening." Both experts agree that violence isn't only the bloody and bruised type we see in movies. When someone lives in constant fear or is regularly blocked from opportunities, that creates real trauma too, whether it's direct violence between people or the "silent" structural violence that Galtung talked about.

Building on this larger understanding, experts who study violence in the workplace are working to find these patterns before they get worse. Government researchers at NIOSH describe workplace violence as anything from mean words to physical attacks on people while they are at work. The great thing about this idea is that it sees how violence really grows - it usually starts slowly, with angry words and unkind actions, then gets worse if no one steps in. These researchers have shown that violence at work can cause mental health issues, physical injuries, or even death. That's why they are telling employers that this isn't just about avoiding lawsuits, but about stopping things from going from verbal abuse to something far worse.

The researchers who focus on stopping violence in communities argue that we can't understand violence by only looking at individual events. They are saying that violence comes from larger social problems - when communities don't have enough resources, when people face discrimination, when young people don't have opportunities, which is exactly what Galtung meant when he said violence is part of unfair power structures. Instead of waiting for violence to happen and then punishing people later, they want to change the things that make violence more likely. This means fighting poverty, stopping discrimination, and ensuring people can get mental health care, which is basically dealing with what Galtung saw as structural inequalities that lead to unequal chances in life.

This connection is very clear when we think about Carrie, whose potential were regularly sabotaged by structural violence at home and school. The strong religious views and emotional abuse at home, along with being left out and bullied at school, are exactly the "silent" structural violence that Galtung talked about, which are systems that always stopped Carrie from having chances to grow in a healthy way. Her potential was ruined not by one violent act, but by everyday power and exclusion structures that modern violence prevention experts now see as very damaging. This shows how structural violence doesn't just cause immediate pain, but it ruins a person's ability to grow and succeed, which is why today's researchers say it's important to change the systems themselves.

What is structural violence according to Johan Galtung?

In social and political theory today, researchers don't just think of violence as something which causes only physical damage. But, also see it as anything that seriously disrupts or harms individuals and communities, whether the damage is visible or not. The damage of violence might be invisible, creating a mental wound that hardly ever being treated because how invisible it is. Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung changed how people think about violence when he came up with the idea of structural violence. Galtung put it this way: "violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Galtung, 1969). His definition of structural violence might be challenging to be understood. Basically, Galtung stated violence happens when something larger than individual, a system, could be a family, school system, or a government prevents individual from reaching full potential. For example, a person is smart enough to be a doctor but the system keeps that person poor and can't afford education.

As a result, the person possibly capable of being a doctor, cannot be a doctor. The potential is sabotaged by system, in this case, economic system. It could be classified as structural violence. This refers to the way social, economic, and political systems can systematically harm people by blocking them from reaching their potential. Unlike direct violence, for example someone hitting an individual, leaving physical scars, structural violence works quietly and often gets treated as normal, making it hard to see even though it does real damage.

How is structural violence depicted in novel "Carrie" (1974) by Stephen King?

Extreme interpretation of religious text by neglecting basic knowledge of biology

In Stephen King's *Carrie* (1974), structural violence can be seen in the relation between Carrie White and her mother, Margaret White. Structural violence disguised as religious discipline. Margaret, a devout Christian, imposes extreme interpretations of biblical scripture on Carrie, depriving her of self-autonomy, education in even the most rudimentary of human biology.

"It seems incredible that, as late as 1979, Carrie knew nothing of the mature woman's monthly cycle. She was innocent of the entire concept of menstruation." (Carrie, p.10) (King, 1974)

Margaret is a representative of patriarchal religious structures that systematically devalue female agency and sexuality. Her violence is not just personal—it's the result of a deeply ingrained belief structure that legitimates psychological and physical control in the name of salvation. This educational neglect prevents Carrie from living her normal life as a girl in school, even causing her to become the object of bullying from her classmates. Shame in Carrie's part is the invisible wound caused by this type of educational neglect.

School's Representative Underestimation of Bullying Case

Based his theory of violence, Galtung presents structural violence as an injury that does not necessarily come from someone with malice, but is inherent in the social, political, and economic structures that govern people's lives. It describes how individuals are systematically placed at a disadvantage—not because someone is intentionally harming them, but because the nature of society stops them from fulfilling their fundamental needs or achieving their full potential. Galtung is asserting that the conditions are not "natural," not required, though society insists on treating them as if they were. Structural violence is indirect and invisible. It's the oppression created by poverty, inequality, racism, sexism, and all the other invisible forces. It's "silent" because it doesn't have bombs or blood, but kills people slowly through malnutrition, disease, despair, and being excluded from society.

Carrie's classmates also participate in the violence performing a school culture that trivializes bullying and exclusion. Carrie is relentlessly bullied over her clothes, her gangly body, and her solitary lifestyle, all of which stem from her home life. The infamous locker room scene, in which the girls taunt her for having her first period, is an episode of blatant interpersonal brutality.

"Period!" The catcall came first from Chris Hargensen. It struck the tiled walls, rebounded, and struck again. Sue Snell gasped laughter from her nose and felt an odd, vexing mixture of hate, revulsion, exasperation, and pity. (Carrie, p. 6-7) (King, 1974)

The true evidence of structural violence is how the school culture legitimates and sanctions such acts. Miss Desjardin, one of the school teacher in the school give a slap to Carrie's face and told Carrie to get up indifferently after the incident in the locker room. This direct violence and disrespect inflicted upon the victim of bullying shows how poorly bullying case is handled by the school staff which marked the structural violence in the school.

"Miss Desjardin employed the standard tactic for hysterics: She slapped Carrie smartly across the face. She hardly would have admitted the pleasure the act gave her, and she certainly would have denied that she regarded Carrie as a fat, whiny bag of lard. ." (Carrie p.11) (King, 1974)

The school indifference towards bullying case is a mirror to greater systems that place marginalized individuals on the margins. Carrie is the object upon whom others displace their own fear and play out dominance, maintaining a violent system of exclusion. This institutional gaslighting, while the teachers may have some superficial sympathy, the real concern is never

justice or Carrie's welfare, but scandal avoidance and difficulty with parents or the administration. This is a textbook case of structural violence in its bureaucratic form – where the institution fails to safeguard the marginalized and, rather, suppresses their pain in an attempt to maintain the status quo. The novel's presentation of the life of Carrie White reveals the insidious and invisible nature of violence within cultural, institutional, and interpersonal systems. Carrie is not merely a bullied teenager or a domestic violence victim – she is a symbol of how society can systemically fail the vulnerable individuals through strata of normalized oppression.

The Case of Chris Hargensen : The Poor vs The Privileged

As is narrated by Stephen King, Carrie White is a victim of bullying by her classmates, especially Chris Hargensen. Chris is the daughter of a wealthy lawyer who has many connections and money. In contrast to Carrie White who is a poor orphan student, with a mother who is a religious fanatic. This inequality triggers injustice because Carrie has no power at all to fight the bullying she receives from Chris. When their school tries to give Chris Hargensen a 'light' punishment, namely detention. Chris instead calls her father. Chris's father justifies his daughter's actions despite that he is seemingly working for the law as a lawyer and instead comes to sue Teacher Desjardin and the school in general. Stephen King quotation supports this argument in page 47 of the novel.

Hargensen waved his hand impatiently. "Apparently, you're laboring under a misconception, Mr. Grayle. I am here because my daughter was manhandled by your gym teacher, Miss Rita Desjardin. And verbally abused, I'm afraid. I believe the term your Miss Desjardin used in connection with my daughter was 'shitty.'" Grayle sighed inwardly. "Miss Desjardin has been reprimanded." (King, 1974)

Chris Hargensen's father not only did not admit his daughter's mistakes but instead turned the facts around as if the teacher had verbally abused his daughter when in fact it was a firm action in response to the bullying case against Carrie.

"Yes," Hargensen said, rising. A thin flush had suffused his features. "It tells me I'll see you in court. And when I'm done with you, you'll be lucky to get a job selling encyclopedias door to door."

Grayle also rose, angrily, and the two men faced each other across the desk. (King, 1974)

CONCLUSIONS

This study has explored the representation of structural violence in Stephen King's *Carrie* using a qualitative textual analysis grounded in Johan Galtung's theoretical framework. Drawing from thematic analysis of selected textual excerpts, the research identified how indirect and normalized forms of harm operate through religious ideology, peer interaction, institutional inaction, and class-based power. The first theme, religious abuse, was evident in Carrie's relationship with her mother, Margaret White, whose extreme religious beliefs enabled spiritual manipulation and emotional control. Quotations such as "Go to your closet and pray!" and the concealment of basic biological knowledge—Carrie's ignorance of menstruation—highlight how religion, when weaponized, can suppress individual agency. This form of violence aligns with Galtung's notion of cultural violence, where belief systems are used to justify harm without physical force. The second theme, peer bullying, emerged through collective acts of humiliation, such as the locker room scene ("Plug it up!") and repeated verbal degradation ("Carrie White eats shit"). These excerpts illustrate how systemic cruelty becomes normalized among adolescents, especially when authority figures remain passive. The school's failure to intervene further exemplifies institutional silence, where administrators either overlook or minimize psychological violence, reinforcing Galtung's argument that structural violence persists through inaction and indifference. The third theme involves social rejection and legal inequality. Despite Carrie's efforts to fit in, she is consistently excluded ("They've always laughed at me"). This alienation is compounded by social class dynamics, especially when the father of one of the bullies—himself a legal

authority – attempts to shift blame away from his child and onto the school. This scene reveals how privilege can distort institutional responses, and how structural violence is often protected and reproduced by those in positions of power. This research demonstrates how Carrie functions as a literary representation of Galtung's concept of structural violence. The novel reveals how harm is perpetuated not only through visible cruelty but through cultural norms, systemic neglect, and unequal power structures. By bridging literary criticism with human rights discourse, this study affirms the value of literature as a site for examining how invisible forms of violence shape individuals' lives.

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