

Abstract

This thesis explores the multidimensional violence experienced by Charlie Davis, the protagonist of Kathleen Glasgow's novel *Girl in Pieces*, through the lens of Johan Galtung's violence typology—direct, structural, and cultural/symbolic violence. Employing a sociological approach to literature, the study identifies how various forms of abuse shape Charlie's psychological trajectory, social alienation, and emotional development. Direct violence manifests in physical and verbal abuse, primarily within her family, while structural violence is evident in her marginalization, poverty, and institutional neglect. Cultural and symbolic violence emerge through gendered stigmas surrounding mental health, trauma, and self-harm, illustrating how societal norms further compound Charlie's suffering. By combining literary analysis with trauma and violence theories, the study highlights how Glasgow's narrative reflects broader social issues such as domestic abuse, adolescent mental health, and systemic failure in protecting vulnerable individuals. The findings reveal that Charlie's self-destructive behaviors are not solely personal struggles but are deeply rooted in sustained societal and familial violence. This thesis emphasizes the role of fiction in mirroring real-world traumas and underscores the critical need for trauma-informed perspectives in both literary criticism and social discourse.

Keywords: *Girl in Pieces, Charlie Davis, violence, trauma, sociology of literature, Galtung, symbolic violence.*