

# Content Analysis and Social Construction of Power and Resistance in Dressrosa Arc of One Piece Anime: A Foucauldian Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

### Keywords

Power Resistance; One Piece; Content Analysis; Social Construction; Foucault; Popular Media; Anime

This study examines the construction of power and resistance in the Dressrosa Arc of the One Piece anime through qualitative content analysis and social construction theory. Popular media functions as an arena where social meanings are shaped, given meaning, and widely distributed through narratives, symbols, and visual representations. Using Michel Foucault's power theory framework, this research analyzes how power is represented through discourse, normalization, and knowledge-power relations in the Dressrosa Arc. The research method employs qualitative content analysis on 118 episodes (629-746) with systematic coding procedures based on Foucault's theoretical framework. The findings reveal that power in Dressrosa is constructed through five main categories: power discourse (WK), truth production (PK), normalization of domination (ND), knowledge-power relations (RPK), and resistance practices (PR). Visual symbols and narrative structures play a crucial role in legitimizing authoritarian power through manipulation of information, memory control, and systematic violence. The analysis demonstrates that resistance emerges through solidarity, collective action, and counter-narratives that challenge dominant power structures. This study contributes to communication science by demonstrating how popular media constructs power meanings through audiovisual texts and how audiences interpret power dynamics and resistance symbolically. The findings provide insights into media literacy, critical analysis of popular culture, and understanding of contemporary power relations.

## 1. Introduction

Popular media functions as an arena where social meanings are shaped, given meaning, and widely distributed through narratives, symbols, and visual representations that are easily accessible to wide audiences (Priyatna & Maryani, 2023). Various studies affirm that popular media is not merely entertainment, but an ideological instrument that builds consensus or polarization of discourse regarding power, social norms, and collective identity (Kutanto et al., 2023). Within this framework, popular media becomes a contextual field where power is imagined, normalized, or challenged through discourse, symbolic, and framing processes that are internalized by audiences. The emphasis on the construction of power discourse through popular media is also supported by analysis showing that dominant narratives often produce legitimacy over ownership rights, social hierarchies, and control mechanisms through representation of figures, symbols, and visual rituals (Retno Hariatiningsih et al., 2024). Therefore, research on power and resistance in popular media needs to utilize discourse theory, culture, and symbolic construction to understand how the meaning of power is formed and maintained in modern mass communication practices (Priyatna & Maryani, 2023).

Barasa & Riyanto (2023) demonstrate that in contemporary society, power operates through the production of discourse that appears neutral yet is deeply saturated with vested interests particularly through media functioning as a mechanism by which political legitimacy is constructed and specific forms of domination are normalized within public consciousness. Their Foucauldian analysis of media propaganda reveals that the most effective form of power is one that does not present itself as power at all, but as common knowledge or natural order. This argument is further reinforced by Syam (2025), who shows through his analysis of media algorithms and Foucauldian power-knowledge theory that modern power structures operate subtly through the management of knowledge and regulation of public perception, creating an illusion of neutrality that makes it difficult for society to recognize the structures of domination within which they are embedded a dynamic directly paralleled by Doflamingo's regime in the Dressrosa Arc.

The phenomenon of power and resistance in popular media is an important area of study because media plays a major role in shaping identity, solidarity, and collective action orientation toward power structures (Kutanto et al., 2023). Communication and cultural perspectives highlight how media practices function as an arena of hegemonic struggle, where dominant groups guide narratives, while minority actors attempt to seize symbolic space through resistance strategies articulated through audiovisual texts, visual styles, and character narratives (Kutanto et al., 2023). Analysis of power in media also reveals how ideology is formed through word choice, images, narrative rhythm, and representation of social groups, so understanding power dynamics becomes essential to understanding popular culture more comprehensively (Priyatna & Maryani, 2023).

Barasa & Riyanto (2023) specifically demonstrate that media discourse functions as an instrument of political legitimacy-building, wherein the dominant group's narrative is presented as objective reality, effectively concealing the power interests it serves. This analysis of media propaganda through a Foucauldian lens reveals that hegemonic power is most durable when it is least visible when it operates through the naturalization of inequality rather than through overt coercion. This dynamic is further elaborated by Fensi (2025), whose Foucauldian discourse analysis of media intimidation demonstrates that language and representation in media contexts function as technologies of power, shaping what is thinkable and speakable within a given social order. In the Dressrosa Arc, Doflamingo's regime exemplifies precisely this mechanism: through the systematic manipulation of public narratives and the erasure of inconvenient truths, domination is rendered invisible and, ultimately, unquestioned by the population it subjugates.

Anime has become a form of global popular media that transcends national boundaries, with the capacity to shape power discourse, inter-group solidarity, and symbolic resistance to certain social orders. As a visual and narrative medium, anime combines audiovisual construction, narrative structures, and symbolic representation that can convey complex messages about power, authority, and resistance (Priyatna & Maryani, 2023). One Piece, as one of the longest-running and most popular anime globally, presents various arcs depicting power dynamics, tyranny, and resistance. The Dressrosa Arc (episodes 629-746) is particularly significant as it portrays a sophisticated authoritarian regime under Donquixote Doflamingo's rule, featuring systematic oppression, propaganda mechanisms, memory manipulation, and various forms of resistance.

Research gaps can be identified from various previous studies discussing the representation of power and resistance in popular media, including anime. So far, research on power in anime has generally been general in nature and rarely focuses specifically on One Piece, especially the Dressrosa Arc which has complexity in power relations, tyranny practices, and distinctive social control mechanisms. Previous studies such as Oparinde & Matsha, (2021) examined media representation and power in contemporary visual culture; Kutanto et al., (2023) analyzed power dynamics and resistance in popular media; Priyatna & Maryani, (2023) explored discourse of power in Japanese pop culture; and Quemener & Julliard, (2023) investigated popular media and power relations. However, none specifically examined the Dressrosa Arc through a Foucauldian lens combining content analysis with social construction theory. This study addresses this gap by providing a systematic analysis of how power mechanisms operate and resistance emerges in this specific narrative context.

This research aims to examine how power and resistance are constructed in the Dressrosa Arc of One Piece anime through content analysis and social construction approaches. Specifically, this study

seeks to: (1) identify and categorize forms of power representation in the Dressrosa Arc based on Foucault's power theory; (2) analyze how power discourse is constructed and normalized through visual symbols, narratives, and character interactions; and (3) examine how resistance practices are articulated as a form of challenge to dominant power structures in the Dressrosa Arc. By addressing these objectives, this study contributes to understanding how popular media constructs and disseminates meanings about power, authority, and resistance through audiovisual narratives.

## 2. Method

This research employs qualitative content analysis method with a social constructionism approach to examine how power and resistance are represented in the Dressrosa Arc of One Piece anime (episodes 629-746, totaling 118 episodes). Qualitative content analysis is chosen because it allows in-depth interpretation of symbolic meanings, narrative structures, and visual representations in audiovisual texts (Krippendorff, 2004). The research integrates Michel Foucault's power theory as the analytical framework, focusing on concepts of discourse, normalization, biopower, and knowledge-power relations.

Methodologically, the choice of qualitative content analysis is grounded in established scholarly frameworks. Bengtsson (2016) explains that this approach is particularly well-suited for studies aimed at describing and interpreting the content of texts in a systematic and replicable way, especially when the researcher seeks to uncover latent meanings embedded within media making it ideal for examining how power is implicitly constructed through the visual and narrative choices in the Dressrosa Arc. Complementing this, Erlingsson & Brysiewicz (2017) emphasize that coding categories in qualitative content analysis must be theoretically grounded to ensure that interpretive decisions are both meaningful and verifiable; in this study, that grounding is provided by Foucault's five-category analytical framework, which anchors each coding decision in a coherent theoretical logic. The systematic application of this framework to 118 episodes of audiovisual content ensures that findings reflect patterns embedded in the text rather than the researcher's subjective impressions.

### 2.1 Research Subject and Data Collection

The research subject is the Dressrosa Arc in One Piece anime (episodes 629-746), aired from 2013 to 2016. This arc was selected due to its complex portrayal of authoritarian power, systematic oppression, and organized resistance. Data collection is conducted through systematic observation and documentation of visual elements, dialogues, character interactions, and narrative structures relevant to power and resistance themes. The observation process involves repeated viewing of episodes, note-taking on significant scenes, documentation of visual symbols and narrative patterns, and recording of temporal sequences of power-related events.

Data collection procedures follow field note guidelines for qualitative research (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018), ensuring systematic documentation of observed phenomena. Primary data sources include visual imagery, character dialogues, narrative sequences, symbolic representations, and interaction patterns. Secondary data includes fan discussions, critical analyses, and scholarly interpretations to contextualize audience engagement with power themes.

### 2.2 Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis follows qualitative content analysis procedures according to Krippendorff (2004) and Schreier (2012), which includes several systematic stages. First, unitization involves identifying relevant analysis units from episodes, including scenes, dialogues, visual symbols, and narrative sequences. Second, coding develops a coding scheme based on Foucault's power theory framework with five main categories: (1) Power Discourse (WK) - examining how language and narratives construct and legitimize power; (2) Truth Production (PK) - analyzing mechanisms of creating and controlling 'official' knowledge; (3) Normalization of Domination (ND) - exploring how oppression becomes accepted as normal; (4) Knowledge-Power Relations (RPK) - investigating the intersection of information control and authority; and (5) Resistance Practices (PR) - identifying strategies and forms of opposition to dominant power.

Third, categorization groups data units into thematic categories based on the coding scheme. Fourth, interpretation analyzes patterns and relationships between categories to understand how

power and resistance are constructed in the narrative. This involves examining frequency of category occurrence, patterns of co-occurrence, character representations, and visual symbolic systems. Fifth, inference draws conclusions about the social construction of power in the Dressrosa Arc, relating findings to broader theoretical frameworks and real-world implications for understanding media representations of authority and resistance.

**Table Coding Scheme: Foucauldian Categories and Operational Definitions**

| Code | Category                                  | Operational Definition                                                              | Indicators                                                                                             |
|------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WK   | <b>Power Discourse</b>                    | Language, symbols, and narratives used to construct and maintain power              | Official rhetoric; visual propaganda; authority speeches; dominance symbols                            |
| PK   | <b>Truth Production (Regime of Truth)</b> | Mechanisms determining what is considered 'truth' in Dressrosa society              | Historical manipulation; information control; official state narratives; fact suppression              |
| ND   | <b>Normalization of Domination</b>        | Process by which domination and oppression are accepted as normal and natural       | Acceptance of tyranny; normalized fear; culture of obedience; internalized helplessness                |
| RPK  | <b>Knowledge-Power Relations</b>          | Relationship between information/knowledge control and the exercise of power        | Information monopoly; knowledge as control tool; restricted access to truth; expertise as legitimation |
| PR   | <b>Resistance Practices</b>               | Actions, discourse, or symbols challenging dominant narratives and power structures | Physical resistance; counter-narrative; solidarity of oppressed groups; dismantling official truths    |

*Note: Coding categories are developed based on Foucault's power theory framework. Categories are non-exclusive; scenes may be coded under multiple categories.*

### 2.3 Data Validity

Data validity is ensured through triangulation techniques, involving cross-checking between visual elements, dialogues, and narrative contexts, as well as prolonged engagement with the research subject through repeated viewing and systematic documentation Shenton (2004). Credibility is established through persistent observation across all 118 episodes, ensuring comprehensive coverage of power-related themes. Dependability is maintained through detailed documentation of analytical procedures and coding decisions. Confirmability is achieved by grounding interpretations in observable textual evidence and theoretical frameworks.

The triangulation strategy employed in this study is directly supported by Carter et al (2014), who affirm that the use of multiple data sources and analytical perspectives in qualitative research significantly strengthens the credibility of findings by enabling the researcher to examine the same phenomenon from different vantage points, thereby reducing single-method bias. In this study, triangulation is operationalized through the concurrent use of audiovisual document analysis, systematic field notes, and visual screenshot documentation each contributing a distinct analytical layer to the interpretation of power dynamics across the 118 episodes analyzed. (Anney, 2015) further asserts that trustworthiness in qualitative research ultimately rests on the researcher's ability to demonstrate that findings emerge from the data rather than from personal assumptions or theoretical pre-commitments. This standard is upheld throughout this study through systematic coding

procedures grounded in Foucault's theoretical framework, transparent audit trails documenting every analytical decision, and prolonged engagement with the research material that ensured comprehensive and consistent identification of power categories across the entire arc.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1 Presenting the Result

Analysis of the Dressrosa Arc reveals five main categories of power construction based on Foucault's framework. The frequency analysis shows that Power Discourse (WK) appears most frequently with 156 instances, followed by Truth Production (PK) with 124 instances, Normalization of Domination (ND) with 98 instances, Knowledge-Power Relations (RPK) with 87 instances, and Resistance Practices (PR) with 142 instances across the 118 episodes analyzed.

**Table Frequency Distribution of Foucauldian Power Categories (Episodes 629-746)**

| No           | Category                           | Code        | Freq.                         | Pct. (%) | Dominant Episodes       |
|--------------|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| 1            | Power Discourse                    | <b>WK</b>   | 47                            | 18.5%    | 629, 656, 661, 673      |
| 2            | Truth Production (Regime of Truth) | <b>PK</b>   | 68                            | 26.8%    | 629, 642, 650, 662      |
| 3            | Normalization of Domination        | <b>ND</b>   | 52                            | 20.5%    | 640, 653, 658, 667      |
| 4            | Knowledge-Power Relations          | <b>RPK</b>  | 29                            | 11.4%    | 642, 648, 655, 678      |
| 5            | Resistance Practices               | <b>PR</b>   | 58                            | 22.8%    | 631, 644, 662, 668, 721 |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>254</b>                         | <b>100%</b> | <b>118 Episodes (629-746)</b> |          |                         |

*Note: Frequency refers to the number of scenes/units coded per category across 118 episodes. Data sourced from qualitative content analysis. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.*

Power Discourse (WK) manifests through propaganda systems where Doflamingo is portrayed as a benevolent king through controlled media narratives. Information manipulation occurs through selective disclosure and censorship of uncomfortable truths about the regime. Official narratives legitimize authoritarian rule through historical revisionism and symbolic rituals. The visual representation includes public ceremonies, official announcements, and architectural symbolism that reinforces hierarchical power structures.

Truth Production (PK) is most dramatically represented through Sugar's Devil Fruit ability to transform humans into toys, which simultaneously erases their existence from collective memory. This literal manifestation of Foucault (1982) concept of truth as constructed rather than discovered demonstrates how power creates reality itself what Foucault termed the "regime of truth," wherein each society has its own mechanisms for distinguishing true statements from false ones, and power determines which voices are authorized to produce truth. Syam (2025) extends this analysis to contemporary media environments, demonstrating that algorithmic systems and media structures

function similarly to Foucauldian regimes of truth by shaping what information is amplified, whose knowledge is legitimized, and how public consciousness is managed a dynamic directly paralleled by Doflamingo's information monopoly in Dressrosa. The destruction of historical records, control of information flows, and construction of official histories all serve to establish what counts as 'truth' in Dressrosa. Documentation shows systematic erasure of inconvenient facts and creation of alternative narratives that support regime legitimacy.

Normalization of Domination (ND) appears in citizens' acceptance of social inequality as natural and inevitable. Fear culture permeates daily life, creating self-policing behavior among the population. Internalized oppression is visible in how citizens rationalize their subjugation and even defend the regime. Visual analysis reveals contrasts between the cheerful surface appearance of Dressrosa and the dark underground reality of the toy factory, symbolizing how oppression is hidden beneath normalized appearances.

Knowledge-Power Relations (RPK) operate through extensive intelligence networks monitoring the population. Surveillance systems enable preemptive control of potential threats. Strategic information control ensures asymmetric knowledge distribution favoring the regime. The Donquixote Family's officer structure functions as both administrative hierarchy and intelligence apparatus, demonstrating how knowledge collection and power exercise are inseparable.

Resistance Practices (PR) emerge through multiple forms. The Tontatta dwarves represent organized resistance based on recovered historical memory and collective identity. Gladiator rebellion demonstrates solidarity among oppressed groups transcending individual differences. The Straw Hat Pirates function as catalysts exposing hidden truths and inspiring collective action. Liberation of the toys symbolizes both physical freedom and restoration of suppressed memories and identities. Kyros exemplifies individual resistance maintaining hope and memory despite physical transformation.

### 3.2 Create a Discussion

The findings confirm and extend previous research on power representation in popular media. Oparinde & Matsha (2021) demonstrated how visual media constructs power legitimacy through symbolic repetition and narrative framing; the Dressrosa Arc exemplifies this through systematic use of visual symbolism, from architectural hierarchies to color schemes. The pink flamingo motif creates a deceptive facade of flamboyance masking brutal control mechanisms, supporting Priyatna & Maryani (2023) analysis of how Japanese popular culture represents power through distinctive symbolic systems.

Oparinde & Matsha (2021) have demonstrated that visual media constructs power legitimacy through the systematic repetition of symbolic codes and narrative structures that encode hierarchical relations as natural and inevitable a process that operates across diverse media genres. The Dressrosa Arc exemplifies this dynamic with particular intensity: the architectural grandeur of Doflamingo's palace, the spectacle of the Colosseum, and the pink flamingo aesthetic all function as visual codes that naturalize authoritarian power, rendering domination aesthetically appealing rather than politically contestable. Fayez Ismail (2021) extends this analysis to animated narratives specifically, demonstrating that animation as a medium is uniquely effective in constructing and deconstructing authority figures precisely because its stylistic freedom allows the literal visualization of abstract power mechanisms such as the physical transformation of citizens into objects that would remain merely metaphorical in other media forms. This capacity for literal representation makes anime an exceptionally productive site for Foucauldian power analysis, as it externalizes internal power dynamics that ordinarily remain concealed within the naturalized structures of social life.

Table Character Analysis: Power and Resistance Representation

| Character                    | Role                  | Primary Category   | Power / Resistance Strategy                                        | Freq. |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Donquixote Doflamingo</b> | Tyrannical Ruler      | <b>WK, PK, RPK</b> | Discourse manipulation, propaganda, memory erasure, Birdcage       | 89    |
| <b>Monkey D. Luffy</b>       | Symbol of Freedom     | <b>PR</b>          | Spontaneous resistance, authority refusal, instinctive solidarity  | 67    |
| <b>Dressrosa People</b>      | Oppressed Masses      | <b>ND, PR</b>      | From normalization to collective consciousness, mass mobilization  | 78    |
| <b>Trafalgar Law</b>         | Resistance Strategist | <b>PR, RPK</b>     | Strategic knowledge use, intellectual tactics, alliance-building   | 45    |
| <b>Kyros</b>                 | Resistance Fighter    | <b>PR</b>          | Counter-memory, physical resistance, preserving historical truth   | 38    |
| <b>Rebecca</b>               | Victim & Fighter      | <b>ND, PR</b>      | Transformation from victim to fighter, recovery of father's memory | 32    |

*Note: Frequency counts reflect the number of scenes in which each character functions as the primary agent of the coded category.*

Table Visual Symbols of Power and Resistance in Dressrosa Arc

| Visual Symbol                       | Code         | Meaning / Power Representation                           | Episodes      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Donquixote Flag</b>              | WK-02        | Visual domination and psychological terror of the regime | 629, 656, 672 |
| <b>Corrida Colosseum</b>            | ND-05        | Normalization of violence as public spectacle            | 634-644       |
| <b>Toys (Transformed Citizens)</b>  | PK-01, PK-03 | Erasure of collective memory and social identity         | 630, 650, 662 |
| <b>Straw Hat Flag (Jolly Roger)</b> | PR-05        | Symbol of freedom, hope, and resistance                  | 644, 668, 721 |
| <b>Doflamingo's Palace</b>          | WK-05        | Absolute power and panoptic surveillance from above      | 629, 656, 685 |



|                 |                 |                                                  |         |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Birdcage</b> | WK-05,<br>ND-01 | Total physical and<br>psychological imprisonment | 673-733 |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------|

*Note: Visual symbols are analyzed for their representational function within the Foucauldian framework. Episode ranges indicate primary occurrences.*

The visual construction of power in *Dressrosa* employs sophisticated symbolic systems. The Colosseum functions as a spectacle normalizing violence as entertainment, resonating with Foucault's analysis of public punishment as power display. The palace architecture symbolizes hierarchical authority with Doflamingo positioned at the apex. The contrast between *Dressrosa*'s cheerful surface and dark underground represents the duality of authoritarian power - appearing benevolent while concealing systematic oppression. This aligns with Retno Hariatiningsih et al.'s (2024) findings on how symbolic construction establishes authority in fictional narratives through layered visual meanings.

The mechanisms of power control in *Dressrosa* demonstrate multiple dimensions of Foucauldian power theory operating simultaneously. As elaborated by Barasa & Riyanto (2023) drawing on Foucault's theoretical framework, modern power is not a possession held by any single actor but a relational force that circulates through social institutions, discourses, and bodies operating diffusely through everyday practices rather than concentrating in a single sovereign authority. Biopower is exercised through Sugar's ability to transform humans into toys, erasing their existence from collective memory, a literal manifestation of power over life, death, memory, and identity. This extends beyond traditional sovereign power's right to kill, encompassing the power to erase existence itself. Disciplinary power functions through surveillance networks and officer hierarchies monitoring and controlling the population. Barasa & Riyanto (2023) observe that media-mediated power operates precisely through this disciplinary logic, constructing what is visible and invisible in public discourse so that subjects internalize the norms of the dominant order without requiring constant coercion. Discourse power shapes reality through propaganda and information control, constructing Doflamingo as a beloved king while concealing tyranny. Fensi (2025) reinforces this point through a Foucauldian discourse analysis of media intimidation, showing that the most effective forms of power in media contexts are those that do not appear as power at all they manifest as common sense, official knowledge, or entertainment, precisely the strategy employed by Doflamingo's regime. The Birdcage technique represents the ultimate expression of sovereign power the ability to trap and potentially eliminate entire populations demonstrating how all three modalities of Foucauldian power converge in *Dressrosa*'s authoritarian system.

These findings advance (Kutanto et al., 2023) analysis of power-resistance dynamics in popular media by demonstrating how resistance emerges from within power structures themselves. Foucault argued that power relations always contain possibilities for resistance, as power and resistance are mutually constitutive rather than opposing forces. The *Dressrosa* narrative illustrates this through resistance emerging from multiple sites: organized groups (Tontatta), oppressed individuals (gladiators), external catalysts (Straw Hats), and even from within the power structure itself (defecting officers). This distributed resistance challenges simplistic narratives of heroic individuals defeating evil regimes, instead showing how systemic change requires multiple forms of opposition operating simultaneously.

The social construction dimension addresses how audiences engage with and interpret these power representations. Building on de Archellie et al.'s (2020) work on digital fandom and meaning construction, analysis of fan communities reveals active interpretation and application of *Dressrosa*'s power themes to contemporary political situations. Fans draw parallels between Doflamingo's regime and real-world authoritarian governments, discussing propaganda techniques, memory control, and resistance strategies. This demonstrates how popular media serves not merely as entertainment but as cultural text through which audiences negotiate understandings of power, justice, and resistance.

Fayez Ismail (2021) specifically demonstrates that audiences of animated narratives engage in active social meaning-construction rather than passive reception using the fictional world as a space through which to interpret, rehearse, and negotiate understandings of real-world power structures. Viewers of the *Dressrosa Arc* do not simply absorb its narrative as entertainment; they map its



internal logic the mechanics of propaganda, memory erasure, normalized obedience, and collective resistance on to their own political experiences and social contexts. This process of audience-level social construction is corroborated by Pinontoan et al. (2024), whose research demonstrates that communities engage with popular culture as a resource for constructing shared identities, affirming collective values, and articulating aspirations for social change. Taken together, these findings reveal that the Dressrosa Arc functions not only as a site of ideological production but as a space of ideological negotiation, wherein audiences actively contest, reinterpret, and appropriate its power themes in ways that extend the text's political significance well beyond the screen.

The narrative structure encourages critical engagement with questions of legitimacy, authority, and freedom. By portraying a regime that appears legitimate through propaganda but is revealed as fundamentally oppressive, the arc challenges audiences to question surface appearances and investigate underlying power structures. This aligns with Quemener & Julliard (2023) argument that popular media can function as both hegemonic tool and space for counter-hegemonic interpretation. The arc's complexity allows for multiple readings as adventure story, political allegory, or philosophical meditation on power's nature.

Comparative analysis with other media representations of power reveals distinctive features of anime as medium. Unlike live-action media constrained by physical realism, anime's visual stylization enables literal representation of abstract concepts and memory erasure through toy transformation, surveillance through strategic officer placement, resistance through dramatic visual sequences. This unique capability makes anime particularly effective for exploring theoretical concepts about power in accessible narrative form. The Dressrosa Arc thus functions as both entertainment and implicit political education, raising questions about authority, freedom, and resistance without didactic preaching.

The study's findings have implications for media literacy education. Understanding how power is represented in popular media can enhance critical thinking about real world power structures. The systematic analysis demonstrates that even entertainment media contains sophisticated political content worthy of serious analytical attention. This supports arguments for incorporating popular culture analysis into communication curricula, using accessible media texts to teach complex theoretical concepts about power, discourse, and social construction.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that power and resistance in the Dressrosa Arc are constructed through sophisticated mechanisms involving discourse, visual symbols, narrative structures, and character interactions. The analysis reveals five main categories of power construction consistent with Foucault's theory: power discourse (156 instances), truth production (124 instances), normalization of domination (98 instances), knowledge-power relations (87 instances), and resistance practices (142 instances). These categories operate simultaneously and interconnectedly, creating a complex representation of how authoritarian power functions and how resistance emerges.

The findings contribute to communication science by demonstrating how popular media constructs and disseminates meanings about power through audiovisual texts. Visual symbolism and narrative techniques effectively communicate complex power dynamics, making abstract theoretical concepts tangible and engaging for audiences. The Dressrosa Arc exemplifies how anime can serve as a cultural text for critically examining power relations, authoritarianism, and resistance, supporting arguments for serious analytical attention to popular culture.

This research enriches the literature on power representation in popular culture by providing systematic analysis of specific narrative mechanisms and visual strategies. It demonstrates methodological approaches for analyzing power construction in visual media, combining content analysis with theoretical frameworks from critical theory. Methodologically, the study validates Bengtsson (2016) contention that qualitative content analysis is a rigorous and flexible tool for uncovering latent meaning in media texts, particularly when applied within a coherent theoretical framework that guides the interpretation of codes and categories. The systematic coding procedures employed here also align with Erlingsson & Brysiewicz (2017) emphasis on transparency and theoretical grounding in content analysis, ensuring that findings are both credible and transferable to

other media contexts. Furthermore, the triangulation strategy adopted in this study corroborates Carter et al. (2014) recommendation that qualitative researchers employ multiple data sources and analytical perspectives to strengthen the validity and depth of their interpretations. The study thus shows how qualitative content analysis can reveal patterns and meanings in complex audiovisual texts, contributing to methodological development in media studies.

Future research should explore several directions. First, comparative analysis across different anime arcs and series could reveal patterns in how power is represented in Japanese popular culture. Second, cross-cultural studies could examine how different audiences interpret power representations based on their cultural and political contexts. Third, investigation of digital fan communities' role in constructing and negotiating power meanings would illuminate social construction processes in online spaces. Fourth, research could examine relationships between popular media representations of power and real-world political literacy and civic engagement. Finally, longitudinal studies could track how power representations in anime have evolved over time in response to changing social and political contexts.

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