Marginalisation and Aggression from Bullying to Genocide

INNOVATIONS AND CONTROVERSIES: INTERROGATING
EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Volume 5

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Marginalisation and Aggression from Bullying to Genocide

Critical Educational and Psychological Perspectives

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All chapters in this book have undergone peer review.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

At the time of my completion of this book – June, 2016 – I have been active in the field of anti-bullying work in schools and school communities, as a researcher and a practitioner, for just over a decade and a half. One of the things that I have found that many people struggle to acknowledge (and perhaps this is more true of parents than it is of young people in schools themselves) is that as human beings, we are all capable of causing hurt (be that physical, or emotional hurt) to others, as well as being hurt by them. In my professional experience, the parents of young people who report having been bullied have consulted me far more frequently than have the parents of young people who have been involved in the bullying of others.[1] There are many reasons for this, of course – when I have spoken about this observation to others, some have opined that the behaviour of young people who bully might be disavowed by, ignored by, receive the tacit (or even direct) support of, or perhaps has been modelled on that of their parents. All of these are possibilities, of course; the point that I am attempting to make here is that both capacities – the capacities to be aggressed against and persecuted, and to aggress against and persecute others – exist within every human being, and as we shall see over the course of this book, across what appears to me to be a variety of social contexts.

Few psychologists (for such I am) find their professional niches accidentally, and I would say that this is doubly so for those involved in the practitioner disciplines of psychology. In my career, I have endeavoured to keep a foot in both the 'research' and 'practice' camps; although originally trained as a counselling psychologist in the mid-1990s, I found myself increasingly drawn to the world of research and teaching, and consequently took up an academic position at Trinity College Dublin's School of Education whilst completing my Ph.D. (2002–2007), where I have remained ever since. My initial involvement in anti-bullying research was for a temporary (three-month) contract in 2000, when I was hired to co-write a national report regarding what had been done in Ireland to prevent and counter violence in schools (published as O'Moore & Minton, 2003). Somehow, I stayed in the field of anti-bullying; and when, within a matter of eighteen months, I found my newly accrued 'expertise' called upon by schools and school communities, I took the welcome opportunity to involve myself on a practical level, talking to and with young people, their parents, teachers, and school management staff – anyone who wanted to talk, listen, and wanted to make a difference (or in a thankfully

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[1] When introducing this idea to groups of parents, I often reflect that in my professional career in Ireland, many hundreds of parents have consulted me (in person, or by e-mail or telephone) regarding their child being bullied, whereas just two have telephoned me for advice regarding their child bullying others – and clearly, it cannot the same two children running around Ireland perpetrating the bullying. This reflection, which is intended to be (and thankfully, has always been received as) both humorous and thought-provoking, illustrates that parents can be more than a little blinkered regarding their own children's actions. (I know that I am.)

small number of cases, wanted to appear to be making a difference). Publications (chapters, conference papers, journal articles, even a couple of books), and involvement in national and European projects, all followed, and as the years passed, I began to feel more grounded in offering the knowledge and skills that I had accrued over the years.

But nowhere – or, as we shall see, *almost* nowhere – in this output did I publicly acknowledge what had either initially drawn me to the field of anti-bullying, or kept me active there; and, as I have already said, I believe that few psychologists find their professional niches accidentally. As we shall see, in the first chapter of this book, I posit that a form of aggressive behaviour (that often stems from marginalisation and prejudice) that most people will have at least second-hand experience of is school bullying behaviour. For me, the experience was first-hand. In my professional life, no adult – no editor, co-author, academic colleague, university student, civil servant, government minister, school manager, teacher, parent or member of the clergy – has ever asked me whether I have had first-hand experience of bullying behaviour. But young people often have had the – indelicacy? No, straightforward honesty and curiosity – to ask me. And because I believe it to be important for me to be honest with young people – it seems important to be so, if there is to be a basis for trust, safety and respect – I answer them honestly. I tell them, yes. Some parts of primary school, and the early part of secondary school, were difficult for me, because I was bullied. And I have come to realise, especially in my adult years, that when I was at school myself, I missed many opportunities to prevent others from being bullied. And to the almost invariable follow-up question to my second admission – 'So are ye tryin' to make up for it now?' – again, my honest response is, 'Yes'. I suppose that I am.

I lived for eleven years as an adult before I got directly involved in anti-bullying work, and at some level I suppose that I tried to make sense of what had gone on for me, in direct or indirect ways. Seemingly instinctively, but doubtless as an outcome of experience, I have always found myself drawn to and sympathetic towards so-called 'outsiders' – those excluded from, or marginalised by, the 'mainstream' of society. In a way, that is the genesis of this book. As I will argue, such marginalisation finds its extreme form in genocide, and the accounts of intended victims of genocide formed a not insignificant part of my reading in my student years. Consequently, I found myself relatively uninspired by my undergraduate psychology reading lists, especially when placed next to autobiographical survivor accounts such as Primo Levi's personal survival of Auschwitz, *If This is a Man* (1979). Consider the following passage, in which Levi describes the psychological impact of the process of being interred (pp. 32–33):

> Then for the first time we became aware that our language lacks words to express this offence, the demolition of a man. In a moment, with almost prophetic intuition, the reality was revealed to us: we had reached the bottom. It is not possible to sink lower than this; no human condition is more miserable than this, nor could it be conceivably so. Nothing belongs to us any more; they have taken away our clothes, our shoes, even our hair; if we

speak, they will not listen to us, and if they listen, they will not understand. They will even take away our name: and if we want to keep it, we will have to find ourselves the strength to do so, to manage somehow so that behind the name, something of us, of us as we were, still remains.

This was surely, I thought at the time, the psychology that was worth paying attention to; this was the sort of experience and writing that really lit a fire under me. Or had the fire always been there? Whilst it would be absolutely ridiculous – nonsensical and utterly offensive, in fact – to compare my feelings on having been bullied as a child to those of Levi's in a death camp, I have to own that, 'justified' or not, accounts such as Levi's held, and still hold, great emotional resonance for me. Because although I had not 'reached the bottom', like many of those who have been bullied that I have spoken to since, I had felt low; I had felt miserable, voiceless, unheard, undignified; I had taken physical beatings and humiliations that at that time I had felt helpless to defend myself against. Compared to mine, Levi's experiences were, of course, magnified by an order that it would be senseless to attempt to compute. But he had survived.[2] (And so did I). Others had not. Early on in my period of involvement in the field of anti-bullying research, the authors of *Bullycide: Death at Playtime* (which I read on its publication in 2001), journalist Neil Marr and anti-bullying campaigner Tim Field, made an informed estimate that around sixteen children a year in the United Kingdom committed suicide rather than face another day of bullying – they were literally 'bullied to death'. The main section of the book comprised a series of such case studies, and it is one of the most profoundly moving books that I have ever read.[3] Consider the following passage quoted by Marr and Field (2001), the final diary pages of thirteen year-old Vijay Singh:

I shall remember forever and never forget.
Monday: my money was taken.

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[2] Primo Levi died in 1987 after a three-storey fall from his Turin apartment's interior landing; the coroner ruled his death a suicide (Thomson, 2002). Many linked this apparent suicide to his experiences at Auschwitz, and possible 'survivor guilt': Elie Wiesel, the Nobel Peace Prize (1986) laureate, writer and political activist, himself a survivor of Buchenwald and Auschwitz (Kanfer, 2001), said that, 'Primo Levi died at Auschwitz forty years earlier' (Nadkarni, 2010). Others have questioned as to whether there exists any direct evidence to suggest that his death was a delayed response to his experiences at Auschwitz. Jochnowitz (2004) pointed to the fact that Levi was going through a period of severe depression, from which he had suffered his entire life (i.e., pre-dating his internment), and for which he was taking prescribed anti-depressant medication. Furthermore, at the time of his death, Levi had been experiencing a fear of being unable to write, a difficulty in witnessing the senility of his aged mother and mother-in-law, and had recently (twenty days previously) undergone a prostate operation. Shortly before his death, Levi had also denied the link between his depression and his experiences of Auschwitz to a close friend (Jochnowitz, 2004). Hence, although his most recent biographer (Thomson, 2002) agrees with the coroner's verdict, we have no way of knowing – nor is it apparent how we may ever know – whether Levi's death was suicide, or if it was, how accurate it is to attribute it to his experiences at Auschwitz.
[3] The reader may wish to consider the fact that the youngest victim of 'bullycide' mentioned in Marr and Field's (2001) book was eight years old – a little girl who hanged herself with her skipping rope, rather than return to school after the Christmas holidays.

> Tuesday: names called.
> Wednesday: my uniform torn.
> Thursday: my body pouring with blood.
> Friday: it's ended.
> Saturday: freedom.

Vijay Singh was found hanging from the bannister rail at his home on the Sunday. On my reading this, Vijay's words and acts beggared a host of questions. Why was the only situation in which Vijay could find his 'freedom', or indeed any sense of control and agency, in his decision to commit suicide? What, in the way of hope, strength, resources did I wish – as a reader, a psychologist, as a human being – that Vijay, and others like him, could have found? How do some people survive the experiences that lead to such desperate feelings, and such absolutely hopeless situations? As a young man, I found a very evocative fictional description of the almost sacred, existentially vital (and perhaps mystical and mythical, for surely, we are talking about the embattled soul) 'last inch' that can be found in desperate situations in the graphic novel, *V for Vendetta* (Moore & Lloyd, 1988). The story's protagonist, Evey Hammond, reads a letter apparently left in her solitary prison cell[4] by a former prisoner (Valerie) of the neo-Fascist regime that governs the future dystopic England in which the graphic novel is set (pp. 159–160):

> I shall die here. Every inch of me shall perish. Except one. An inch. It's small and it's fragile and it's the only thing in the world that's worth having. We must never lose it, or sell it, or give it away. We must never let them take it from us. I don't know who you are, or whether you're a man or a woman. I may never see you. I will never hug you or cry with you or get drunk with you. But I love you. I hope that you escape this place. I hope that the world turns and that things get better, and that one day people have roses again. I wish I could kiss you. [signed] Valerie. [Evey's response:] I know every inch of this cell. This cell knows every inch of me. Except one.

To move away from the experiences of fictional characters, and back to atrocious historical realities, the passage reminded me of something that Viktor Emil Frankl (who was remarkable not only as a psychotherapist and thinker, but also as a survivor of the Nazi concentration camps) wrote of his experiences as a prisoner at Auschwitz:

> Everything can be taken from a man but one thing – the last of the human freedoms — to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way. (1963, p. 104)

Along similar lines, Levi (1979) reported a 'complete lesson' administered to him by his fellow prisoner at Auschwitz, the '… ex-sergeant Steinlauf of the

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[4] Those who have read *V for Vendetta* will recognise the paucity of the description; this is deliberate, as to explain the situation in which Evey found herself would take rather too long, and would also be a plot-spoiler for those who have not yet read it!

Austro-Hungarian army, Iron Cross of the '14–'18 war', about the importance of washing and its apparent link to survival (pp. 46–47):

> I must confess it: after only one week of prison, the instinct for cleanliness disappeared in me …. Steinlauf sees me and greets me, and without preamble asks me severely why I do not wash. Why should I wash? Would I be better off than I am? Would I please someone more? Would I live a day, an hour longer? I would probably live a shorter time, because to wash is an effort, a waste of energy and warmth. Does not Steinlauf know that after half an hour with the coal sacks, every difference between him and me will have disappeared? … He administers me a complete lesson … precisely because the Lager [camp] was a great machine to reduce us to beasts, we must not become beasts … even in this place, one can survive, and therefore one must want to survive, to tell the story, to bear witness … [and] to survive we must force ourselves to save at least the skeleton, the scaffolding, the form of civilisation. We are slaves, deprived of every right, exposed to every insult, condemned to certain death, but we still possess one power, and we must defend it with all our strength for it is the last – the power to refuse our consent. So certainly we must wash … we must polish our shoes … we must walk erect, without dragging our feet, not in homage to Prussian discipline but to remain alive, not to begin to die.[5]

My own experience in university teaching (where, unlike my own undergraduate lecturers, I often refer to Frankl and Levi) has shown me that hearing about such accounts of the choice for dignity – and perhaps the fact that choice of attitude can and does exist, even under the most extreme sets of circumstances (which was absolutely fundamental in Frankl's theoretical and therapeutic viewpoint, which in itself was formed and remained grounded in his experiences in the camps; see Frankl, 1959) – is often deeply affecting for audiences. But other, and opposite choices in extreme sets of circumstances also exist, and it is the fact that they exist that contributes to, and generates those situations of extremity in the first place. Having already owned its importance in the early development of some of my own personal and philosophical viewpoints, I would ask the reader for a final opportunity to share (and I can only hope that this does not feel like too much of an indulgence) something else that I learnt from the graphic novels of Alan Moore. In *Watchmen* (Moore & Gibbons, 1986), the deeply emotionally disturbed former vigilante, and current mental patient, Walter Kovacs,

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[5] Levi, apparently with some regret, owned that he could not accept Steinlauf's 'complete lesson' whole-heartedly. 'These things Steinlauf, a man of good will, told me; strange things to my unaccustomed ear, understood and accepted only in part, and softened by an easier, more flexible and blander doctrine, which for centuries has found its dwelling place on the other side of the Alps [author's note: Levi was Italian]; according to which, among other things, nothing is of greater vanity than to force oneself to swallow whole a moral system elaborated by others, under another sky. No, the wisdom and virtue of Steinlauf, certainly good for him, is not enough for me … is it really necessary to elaborate a system and put it into practice? Or would it not be better to acknowledge one's lack of a system?' (p. 47).

in an uncharacteristically lengthy and apocalyptic utterance, and making full use of a sudden and stark expression of his deeply nihilistic *Weltanschauung*, forces a prison psychiatrist to confront for himself certain bleak aspects of human existence. He does so by describing the 'certain type of insight' (prompted by his own killing of a criminal who had abducted and murdered a child, and attempted to conceal his crime by feeding her body to his dogs) that it took to for him (Kovacs) to 'become' his vigilante alter-ego, 'Rorschach' (ch vi, p. 26):

> Live our lives, lacking anything better to do. Devise reason later. … There is nothing else. Existence is random. Has no pattern save what we imagine after staring into it too long. No meaning save what we choose to impose. This rudderless world is not shaped by vague metaphysical forces. It is not God who kills the children. Not fate that butchers them or destiny that feeds them to dogs. It's us. Only us …. Does that answer your questions, Doctor?

Later on, during my university and especially my postgraduate years, I would find that the importance of human choice was very heavily emphasised in the work of the phenomenological and existentialist philosophers, psychologists and psychotherapists that I became familiar with, and professionally inspired by. Arguments such as human freedom and human responsibility being, properly considered, one and the same, echoed in an important way what I had picked up in my earlier years from graphic novels, and my own teenaged musings. Such arguments form an important part of the theoretical basis of this book (where the more academically-minded reader may be relieved to be reassured that they are made on the basis of philosophical and psychological writing). It is to Frankl (1959) that I will return to conclude on this particular point, in order to reproduce the clarity which he provided concerning the absolute given that for human beings, multiple choices can and do exist, albeit delimited by the circumstances in which we find ourselves, and that we ourselves cannot be anything other than responsible for the choices that we make under that given set of circumstances. In his classic *Man's Search for Meaning*, Frankl stated that in the concentration camps (1959, p. 157):

> … in this living laboratory and testing ground, we watched and witnessed some of our comrades behave like swine while others behaved like saints …. Our generation is realistic, for we have come to know man as he really is. After all, man is that being who invented the gas chambers of Auschwitz; however, he is also that being who entered those gas chambers upright, with the Lord's prayer or the Shema Yisrael on his lips.

In summary, I have always had a curiosity in finding out what it is that underlies choices in extreme circumstances; as I grew older, I was no longer content to read about them purely in graphic novels (or any other form of fiction), or survivor accounts. I had a desire to find out what is it that can or could help human beings survive, and also how and why it is that human beings construct the very situations in which it is necessary for their fellow human beings to try to survive. For this, I had turned to the study and profession of psychology, and found that when I

needed a job on completion of my studies, what was open to me was an involvement in anti-bullying research and practice. This book, therefore, tracks some of my life-long interests and developing understandings, maintained and forged in the context of that career involvement; as a consequence, it draws primarily on the informing disciplines of psychology and education. I will now provide a summary of its five chapters.

In Chapter 1, 'Aggression and Marginalisation in Educational Systems: the Case of Bullying in School Communities', bullying – a form of aggressive behaviour which generally stems from marginalisation and prejudice and which, given its frequency, most people will have had at least second-hand experience, as I have already indicated – is examined. The ways in which researchers into bullying and cyber-bullying have designed and conceptualised their areas of enquiry is considered, before providing a summary of the chief findings of those researchers over the past three to four decades. How that research has informed the underlying philosophy, development, design, implementation and evaluation of 'whole-school' approaches to (especially) large-scale anti-bullying intervention is reviewed, as are the outcomes of such intervention programmes. It has been found that such programmes have generally had rather modest effects, in terms of changing the ways in which young people behave. Some have argued for a shift in focus, and rather than continuing to focus directly on bullying behaviour, that attention should instead be paid to the making of improvements to the learning environment in schools. I have suggested instead that attending to prejudice as an important, yet hitherto relatively unattended-to factor that may underlie bullying behaviour, should be considered in the attempt to improve the efficacy of anti-bullying interventions. This suggestion is based upon findings that so-called 'minority' groups (and here, homophobic and disablist bullying, as well as the bullying of those from ethnic minorities, and young members of alternative sub-cultures are considered) are disproportionately more likely to report having been bullied at school. As young and adult members of these so-called 'minority' groups have experienced, and continue to experience, other forms of aggressive and discriminatory behaviour, I assert that a view of school bullying not so much as a phenomenon in itself, but as one of a number of possible manifestations of broader historical and contemporary patterns of marginalisation in society, may be supported.

In Chapter 2, 'How and Why do Aggression and Marginalisation Occur? Psychological Considerations', a review of the psychological understandings of aggression, according to most of the major schools of psychological thought, is undertaken. This includes an introduction to the principles of, and insights from, evolutionary accounts of aggressive behaviour; the physiological bases of aggressive behaviour; the neuropsychology of human aggression; psychodynamic accounts of aggression and aggressive behaviour (including the contributions to this area of Sigmund Freud, Alfred Adler and C. G. Jung); the role of learning in accounting for aggression and aggressive behaviour (including behaviourism and social learning theory); type and trait approaches in considering the potential links between aggression and personality; and some psychological models that

emphasise social interactions. Marginalisation is considered through a somewhat more multi-disciplinary lens, with psychological perspectives being supplemented with insights from other cognate disciplines. Sociological approaches to the phenomenon of social exclusion are considered, followed by a consideration of how social understandings along the lines of the 'One' and the 'Other' are constructed. My own arguments regarding the existence of a 'continuum of marginalisation' are then advanced; essentially, these are based on the assertion that a similar set of individual, group and societal mentalities and actions (all of which relate to the targeted persecution and destruction of 'Otherness') exist, which underlie and stretch across a continuum of aggressive marginalisation phenomena, spanning prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, harassment, bullying and street violence, through to acts of colonisation, forced assimilation, legally-sanctioned subjugation, war, and at its most extreme, genocide. As we shall see, these ideas are further developed in the next two chapters. Philosophical and sociological approaches to understanding marginalisation and power relationships, exemplified in the work of Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman, are then introduced; these points are developed in the consideration of the phenomenon of 'victim-blaming', and how some oppressed people may exhibit the learning of the power of the oppressor.

In Chapter 3, 'Psychology, Social Cognition and Physical Genocide', a (self) critical assessment of the contributions that experimental psychology, and more especially, the sub-discipline of social cognition, has made to our understanding of the underlying processes of physical genocide is made. It is argued that if psychology is genuinely a 'science of mind and behaviour' (i) it should offer more than an ordinary understanding of such matters; and, (ii) it should offer predictive validity, which if extended to the extremes of human behaviour, means that we should at least potentially be able to predict (and therefore take steps to avoid) the atrocity of physical genocide. In attempting to illuminate how psychologists have attempted to contribute to a social cognitive understanding of physical genocide, and in the attempt to evaluate their efforts, an eight-stage model of physical genocide is offered: (i) ingrouping/outgrouping; (ii) the construction of an aspirational national *Weltanschauung* that excludes the 'Other'; (iii) the positioning of the 'Other' as '*Gegentypen*'; (iv) the dehumanisation of the 'Other'; (v) the deindividuation of the 'One'; (vi) the vilification of resistance; (vii) the mechanisation of means of destruction; and, (viii) ongoing denial and mystification. In providing a historical exemplar of physical genocide in this chapter, specific reference is made to the Lakota-Cheyenne Campaign (1864–1890) of the so-called 'Indian Wars' of late nineteenth century United States. Through the elucidation of the afore-mentioned eight-stage model, it is contended that whilst a start was made by social cognitive psychologists in the 1960s, comparatively little has been contributed to our understanding of the fundamental underlying factors for around forty years – psychologists who have specialised in 'aggression studies' since have more often focussed their efforts on smaller-scale (e.g., peer group, school) dynamics. Nevertheless, even with the acknowledged limited psychological knowledge that we have, it is concluded that we can, at least,

learn to look out for the warning signs of 'genocidal mentality', primarily through attending to the use of linguistic signifiers of the first six stages of the model. However, it is concluded that what has been contributed by experimental psychological understandings of genocide can only be, at best, one possible (and approximate) picture of the genocidal *mentality*. The systemic and power factors that permit genocidal *behaviour* to be actualised are, therefore, to be considered in the following chapter.

In Chapter 4, 'Educational Systems and Cultural Genocide', the concept of 'cultural genocide', which has been recognised by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) as having been pursued in the historical policy of the forcible separation of Canada's aboriginal children from their families and traditional societies, and their subsequent enrolment in residential schools, is examined. It is rendered as distinct from physical genocide which, although seemingly determinative of the way in which most people think about the crime of genocide is, in terms of international law, just one of the five categories of genocidal actions, the other four of which can best be understood as forms of cultural genocide. According to international law, the intent of genocide, regardless of the means, remains the same – the destruction of a racial, religious, ethnic or national group, and the imposition of the cultural or national pattern of the oppressor. The bulk of this chapter is devoted to the provision of two extensive case studies that demonstrate the past culpabilities and participation of education systems and educators in actions of cultural genocide. These are (i) the role of schools and school systems in the policy of the 'Norwegianisation' of the Sami people during nineteenth and twentieth centuries; and, (ii) following on from the previous chapter, and thereby showing how cultural genocide can 'complete the task' that was begun in actions of physical genocide, the American Indian boarding school system. The process of the forcible separation of indigenous children from their families and native cultures, the often abusive nature of the 'education' that such children received, the conditions that they endured, and the role that education systems and educators played through this type of schooling in the marginalisation of and cultural genocide perpetrated against indigenous cultures, mean that these past processes have continued to cast a long shadow. Some concluding thoughts are provided on the possible use and likely effectiveness of truth and reconciliation processes in addressing these issues of legacy, and the challenge is laid down to today's educators that, with their historical predecessors having been part of the problem, it remains to be seen if and how they could be part of potential solutions and resolutions.

In Chapter 5, 'What Can Be Done? Some Ideas Regarding the Humanisation of Psychological and Educational Practice', some starting problems raised regarding these aims that have been raised in the previous four chapters of the book are re-stated. In the first place, the drive towards aggression is deeply embedded within the human system; secondly, so too is our tendency to understand ourselves in our relationships to others in terms of inherently and necessarily conflictual 'One' and 'Other' dynamics. Taken together, it is of little surprise that a continuum of aggressive marginalisation, introduced as a concept in Chapter 2, and exemplified

in Chapters 1, 3 and 4, is discernible. This chapter provides a final critical look at the informing disciplines of psychology and education, in the consideration of whether the understandings generated in these disciplines regarding marginalisation and aggression have been helpful in addressing these issues, or in some sense, may contribute to their persistence. The roots of traditional psychology's primary focus on behaviour are traced back through the psychological school of thought known as behaviourism, and that school's understandings of the thinking of the British empiricists, and its continued persuasiveness is considered through the broader Western cultural emphasis on the individual, and the perception of relationships in terms of oppositional dualisms. Other possibilities – ecological thinking, humanistic psychology and systemic approaches – are introduced, with a consideration of what is offered by modern positive psychology being made. It is acknowledged that traditional approaches to education (in its systems, and in terms of classroom practice) show similar influences, leading to a restricted view of education as schooling, or informational instruction. It is suggested that psychologists and educators attempt to meaningfully re-capture genuine person-centredness, in the radical form in which it was originally conceived, in their thinking and their practice. The chapter concludes with my outlining the hopes that I have had for this book; essentially, these revolve around our being, within whatever constraints that we may have, genuinely active in our possibilities for reaffirming humanity in our individual and collective choices.

I would also like to make two notes on my use of language forms here. Firstly, in my own writing, I attempt to avoid the use of gendered language; perhaps because I identify as a feminist, I am particularly conscious of the use others have made, and some continue to make, of individual masculine pronouns when expressing what should actually be a neutral form. Earlier on in the introduction (see page xiv), we have seen that Frankl (1959) made such a use; whilst that might have been typical at that time – and indeed, direct quotes will be reproduced in their original form throughout – my preferred usage is of the 'she and/or he', 'her(s) and/or his', 'herself or himself' type. Secondly, due to the considerable influence of Nordic authors in the field of bullying research (as we will see in Chapter 1), and my focus on the situation of the Sami people in Norway in Chapter 4, I have made extensive reference to Nordic authors throughout this book. The Nordic languages contain 'extra' vowels (i.e., those that do not appear in the standard Latin alphabet; in Danish and the Norwegian languages, these are 'æ', 'ø' and 'å'; in Finnish, 'ä', and 'ö'; and in Swedish, 'å', 'ä', and 'ö'. In the Nordic languages, these 'extra' vowels are *not* diacritic versions of Latin vowels (as are the French 'à', 'â', 'æ', 'è', 'é', 'ê', 'ë', 'î', 'ï', 'ô', 'œ', 'ù', 'û', 'ū' and 'ÿ', and the German 'ä', 'ö' and 'ü'), but are, rather, separate letters, and in Nordic orthographies, they are positioned at the end of the alphabet (so after 'z'). I have used the Nordic style of alphabetical ordering in my own system of referencing (to give an example, in the references section, a work by the Swedish authors Ålberg and Ljunggren, 2015, is listed *after* a work by the American author Zimbardo, 2007).

As stated above, the content and course of this book reflects the maintenance of some of my life-long interests, and some developments in my understanding that have taken place over the course of my professional life to date. Other people may have reached similar insights via different routes, and may have reached them rather more quickly; others, too, may examine the material that I place before them in this book, compare my arguments with their own knowledge bases, experiences and insights, and reach entirely different conclusions to mine. But this has been my journey, and I own that; and the reader will make of it what he or she must. Whether the reader finds herself or himself in agreement or disagreement with me, I hereby invite her or him to let me know. Let's talk. And listen. And think. And maybe do things a little differently, and who knows, maybe even a little better in the future.