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Book review of: Aleksandra Tłuściak-Deliowska (2017). *School bullying. Socio-pedagogical analysis of the phenomenon* [Dręczenie szkolne. Społeczno-pedagogiczna analiza zjawiska.] Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej, Warsaw.

The book *School bullying. Socio-pedagogical analysis of the phenomenon* by A. Tluscia-Deliowska (2017) is an important theoretical contribution to the field of social pedagogy, social psychology and educational studies. The subject of the analysis - the phenomenon of school bullying - has an enormous impact on people's lives and achievements throughout their school years and beyond. This means that a deeper understanding of bullying mechanisms and its prevention are of paramount importance for the future of our societies. This book's vital contribution to the field relies on a thorough revision and critical analysis of the state of knowledge, regarding the phenomenon of school bullying, which at this point, has not been carried out within the landscape of Polish pedagogy nor psychology. This complex and comprehensive review of world-wide literature and research about interpersonal aggression amongst children, is methodically structured and systemised in accordance with the newest strategies in an attempt to understand the phenomenon of bullying, its socio-cultural and psychological conditioning and most importantly to identify the most efficient strategies and programmes dedicated to prevention.

The author distinguishes two main perspectives that she uses as frames for the analysis. The first is the individualised one - focussed on personal differences amongst persons involved in school bullying, based on biological, personal and social factors. The second perspective is the processual one, based on group dynamics, social positioning, power relations and status hierarchies within peer groups at school. Moreover, the author has taken an informed decision to interpret school bullying within the symbolic field of social interaction that takes place in a peer group, using functionalism as one of the chosen interpretative frames for analysis.

The book opens with an overview of works dedicated to etymology and a selection of classical publications devoted to bullying and mobbing. The cultural conditioning of how these terms are defined is discussed at length. Furthermore, the questions of anonymity, the process of ongoing primary and secondary stigmatization of the victim are analysed. International statistical data on self-reported bullying and the victimization of school children gives the reader an improved understanding of how widely spread and common this issue is. Moreover, the author runs through multiple methods of measuring the attitudes towards bullying, the experiences of bullying and group socio-metrics related to it.

In the individualised approach, she looks at who the common victim and perpetrator are and how they are individually conditioned and characterised? What is relatively original and fresh is the acknowledgement and the exploration of the role of a witness in a situation of bullying. This discovery may be crucial in building strategies of prevention, impediment and coping. In the group approach, the role of a family as a support buffer is discussed and also identified as initially responsible for aggressive behaviour. The author considers classroom ecology, issues of popularity and group relations, descriptive classroom norms and social cohesion, which surprisingly may be linked to bullying.

The analysis includes a debate over the active or the passive roles of witnesses and their responsibility for strengthening the bully or for protecting the victim. A fascinating discovery highlighted in the book is that bullying is more likely to take place in smaller

classes than in larger ones. Moreover, according to the author's findings, witnesses who defend a victim in a solidly structured group with a well established leader suffer greater emotional and positional costs than when defending a victim in a loosely structured or unstructured ones. The author discusses peer culture, the culture of bullying, its socio-interactive character and the requirement of collective group inaction to permit the bullying to continue. The author also shows that a steady pattern of bullying works as a stabilisation of inter-peer relations in the classroom.

The added value and perhaps the most practical dimension of the book is the assessment of different prevention and intervention programmes that combat bullying in schools and have been developed in multiple countries. The overview of these programmes leads to useful recommendations of which prevention and intervention programmes work the best and the book concludes with the useful discovery that in such programmes one should focus on the role of witnesses.

After reading this book I view bullying from a different perspective and it has triggered me to think this may be the case for many other readers, ready to engage with this sophisticated work, which is written in a clear and easy to read manner. As a mother of two young children, I rate this book as source of solid knowledge and I have found many unexpected answers to questions I had about bullying. I also feel that parts of this book should be considered a must read for teachers, school councillors, therapists, educators, students of relevant faculties and parents.