Chapter 1
Introduction: School Violence in the Nordic Countries – A Changing Sociocultural Landscape

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Introduction

This book brings together researchers who are interested in different ways in questions surrounding school violence in the Nordic context. School violence is a global phenomenon that encompasses a wide range of behaviours, from school shootings to minor theft, bullying and sexual harassment. Most of the research on school violence has been done in post-industrial democracies such as the US, the UK and Australia. This research has shown that there are numerous significant parallels across nations, but also many significant differences between them (Robinson et al. 2012). Sweden and the other Nordic countries have long been viewed as exceptions, in that they focus on care and social pedagogical measures rather than punishment (Lappi-Seppälä 2008; Estrada et al. 2012). However, since most of the research on school violence has been carried out in the Anglosphere, it is important to bear in mind the differences between schools in, for example, the US and UK and schools in the Nordic countries.

The Nordic countries are known for their progressive education, which places a strong emphasis on equality. However, during the past two decades, Nordic societies have undergone a number of significant school reforms (Bergh and Englund 2014). The debate on the so-called 'crisis in the schools', which emerged from the US in the 1980s, has been a travelling discourse that has transferred into the European and Nordic context, advocating for stricter measures against 'youth problems'. As a result, in recent decades, the policies and governance of most educational systems in Western Europe and Australia, New Zealand and the US have experienced substantial changes. One commonality has been a series of initiatives

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to improve education outcomes (Ball et al. 2012). This has been pursued through decentralization of responsibility and adaptation to market-based principles in a number of welfare institutions, including schools. This push for change has been closely intertwined with the idea that high quality and efficiency are best achieved through competition. The idea here comes from a customer perspective, according to which citizens should choose the institutions that can deliver the desired results (Dahlstedt and Fejes 2017). One consequence of this development has been increasing demands on professionals working at different welfare institutions to be accountable for goals, strategies and results (Ball et al. 2012). In the Nordic context, this development may have been most significant in Sweden. Our purpose is, therefore, to use Sweden as a case study and as an example of recent changes in policies and attitudes concerning the handling of violence in schools. We aim to situate the Swedish case in relation to developments in the Nordic countries and in other countries such as the UK and the US; nevertheless, the main parts of the empirical studies are conducted in Sweden.

There has been a long tradition of Nordic collaboration between researchers in sociology and criminology, with a focus on juvenile delinquency. A majority of these studies are based on students' self-reports of being subjected to a crime or having committed a crime, and most of this research is quantitative (Kivivuori and Bernburg 2011). As the contributions in this book are primarily based on qualitative research, they are thus complementary to the existing research.

The first studies in this field were conducted in the early 1960s. The results from these studies generally indicated a major similarity in the prevalence of young offenders among young people in the Nordic countries. During the 1960s and 1970s, the differences between Nordic countries in this area were primarily that theft was more common among young people in Sweden, Denmark and Norway compared with Finland, whereas sexual harassment and the use of alcohol were more common in Finland. These differences were explained by the fact that the Finnish economy was weak for a long period after the Second World War, in comparison with the other Nordic countries. Since the 1990s, when the Finnish economy reached a similar economic level to that of the other Nordic countries, these differences have disappeared (Kivivuori and Bernburg 2011). Later studies on self-reported crimes among young people in the Nordic countries showed no major differences between countries with regard to theft and violent crime (Ring and Svensson 2007). However, the use of alcohol and drugs among young people in Denmark is more similar to the situation in countries such as the Netherlands and Germany than to the situation in other Nordic countries (Kivivuori and Bernburg 2011).

In the earliest studies conducted in this field, only the prevalence of boys' crime was investigated (Träskman 2015). Later studies included participation from both girls and boys. The results show that boys are overrepresented – both as victims and as perpetrators – in most forms of crime, in a pattern that is similar to that revealed by other international research. This situation is also similar among the Nordic countries over time (Elonheimo et al. 2014). All in all, the research reveals a picture in which the similarities of juvenile delinquency among the Nordic countries are distinctive in many ways (Estrada et al. 2012).

In Nordic research, there has been a development in which the students of each generation state that they have committed fewer crimes than previous generations of students. There are several interpretations of this development (Träskman 2015; Svensson and Ring 2007). One interpretation is that social control has increased in public places such as streets and parks through camera surveillance and a greater presence of security guards. In addition, the development of security tags and alarms have made it riskier to shoplift. Another interpretation, which is related to recent technological development regarding computers and social media, is that young people now spend more time at home, with much of the social relations that once took place in the streets and squares now having shifted to social media. Even if this shift has led to the development of new (online) forms of criminality, violence and harassment, which will be further discussed in this book, it has generally reduced the time spent by adolescents in insecure environments (Kivivuori and Bernburg 2011). Furthermore, research has indicated an attitude change among students that makes it increasingly unacceptable to commit crimes. Violence is being increasingly associated with failure and with the status of a 'loser'. Young people are aware that committing criminal acts carries the risk of reducing and complicating their prospects for a successful professional life (Vainik and Kassman 2018; Kivivuori and Bernburg 2011; Löfstrand 2009).

Research on juvenile delinquency has included a discussion on whether a decreasing inclination to commit crimes can be viewed as an increased polarization between young people who commit crimes and those who follow the law (Svensson and Ring 2007). This theory is based on the fact that most adolescents have become increasingly law-abiding, with a minority of adolescents being accountable for the greater part of the crime committed. The research shows different results, however. Statistics do not show that the rate of serious crime has increased among the proportion of adolescents who commit most of the crime (Estrade et al 2012; Ring and Svensson 2007; Wikström and Loeber 2000). Nevertheless, there have been serious incidents of deadly violence in school environments (Kivivuori and Bernburg 2011).

The conclusions drawn from the polarization theory can also be related to research on how school failure affects students' risk of being involved in criminal activities. This research shows how this risk is mediated by difficulties in school, especially for students growing up in socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Vainik and Kassman 2018). Furthermore, research shows that it is often the same students who report that they are bullied in school and other situations. An overlap has also been revealed between students who are involved in graffiti and illegal file-sharing of movies, music and games, and students who report that they have performed a number of other illegal acts (Ring and Svensson 2007).

To conclude, a great deal of research indicates that it is not primarily the social or ethnic backgrounds of young people that explains which adolescents are involved in violence and bullying in school. Rather, it is how students are treated by school staff, and the support that students receive at school, that are significant in determining students' risk of being exposed to and exposing other students to violence and harassment. This conclusion leads us to the main issue addressed in this book, which will be examined in the following chapters.

Violence in School – Historical Aspects

Today, the notion that violence, degrading treatment and bullying are unacceptable is well established. From a historical standpoint, education has played a central role in reproducing the social and moral order (Englund 2016). What is commonly perceived as degrading treatment against and between students today was previously not considered unacceptable. In Swedish schools, for example, corporal punishment was used as a method of disciplining children until 1958. The teacher was the obvious authority figure and had the right to use physical and psychological punishment. Older students also had the obligation to educate younger students. In secondary schools, bullying was an approved system for integrating new and younger members into the student community. Students who were particularly vulnerable were characterized as 'whipping boys'. If the violence and harsh treatment of these students went over the limit, it was considered a moral problem and a violation of the 'moral contract', rather than a violation of the law and of the individual victim (Hammarén et al. 2015). Since the 1990s, however, the Swedish school system has become an institution that focuses on social order in terms of law and legal issues. Behaviours previously described as 'teasing' and 'fighting' have gradually come to be positioned as issues for juridical judgment, rather than as pedagogical problems (Swedish National Agency for Education 2012).

In the Nordic context, the tendency of schools to treat unruly behaviour, bullying and violence as crimes is a partly new phenomenon. Compared with other democratic post-industrial countries, the Nordic countries have been known for their strong welfare state and low incarceration rate (Estrada et al. 2012). However, there has been a change in Nordic policies emphasizing care and treatment since 1990 that has been described as a new punitive attitude. This transformation has several dimensions. First, the Nordic countries have adapted to the punitive laws and policies in place in the European Union. Second, there is criticism of, and a break with, the former social democratic welfare state that dominated the post-war period in the Nordic countries. As a result, a new criminal law was introduced that emphasized that society would not tolerate criminal acts (Lappi-Seppälä 2016). Third, there has been a development of movements and interest groups that speak for the victim and emphasize the importance of the victim's perspective in legislation. These dimensions are reflected in the changes that have taken place when dealing with violence and degrading treatment in Swedish schools (Träskman 2015). Since 1990, these changes have been part of a radical change in schools' approaches to violent behaviour. Increasingly, schools tend to treat violence in schools as a crime, making violence a police matter rather than a pedagogical problem (Hammarén et al. 2015).

The Educational Crisis and the Individualization of the School Landscape

In Sweden, the political debate on both academic performance and students' behaviour has been tightly linked to issues of educational quality. Today, schools in Sweden are competing on an educational quasi-market of free choice regulated by the state, where safe and supportive learning environments have become a selling point (Dahlstedt and Fejes 2017). Researchers argues that this education policy reform has favoured a combination of neoliberal demands for marketing, competition and accountability, along with neoconservative demands for traditional values. The result is a mixture of contradictory demands being placed on both schools and students, including neoconservative ideals of students being disciplined, well-behaved and respectful, along with neoliberal ideals of students learning to take initiative and become self-governing entrepreneurs (Ball et al. 2012; Bergh and Englund 2014).

The debate on the school crisis, and on how children and youth are at risk in schools, must be integrated into a wider perspective. An ongoing standardization and individualization of the Swedish school system is taking place, such that it is up to the individual to navigate and find his or her way through the school system. This development is tied to the construction of the *entrepreneurial self*. Certain attitudes and behaviours are promoted and encouraged, whereas others are seen as constricting and limiting factors. Learning has become a personal responsibility, which often results in societal and political factors being under-emphasized and neglected. Failure to fit into the image of the entrepreneurial self is mainly viewed as being caused by personal defects and shortcomings. When addressing the problems of children and youth, there is a risk that rather than examining the problems at the institutional and structural level, the problems are lifted out by teachers and other professionals of the school context by and placed on the individual level – and thus transformed into personal and/or psychological problems. This development is notable in the increasing tendency to use different diagnoses in schools than were previously used.

In the Nordic countries, the number of school children diagnosed with an issue in a school context has increased during recent decades. There is currently a debate concerning the over-representation of school-related diagnoses in the Nordic countries (Hjörne and Säljö 2014). One of the most common diagnoses is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Nordic researchers have noted that the Nordic countries have the largest proportion of children with such diagnoses in Europe, in relation to the population (Hellblom-Thibblin 2017). This difference can partly be explained by the fact that different mapping methods are used in different countries. Other explanations may include national and cultural differences regarding what it means to be a child, or how an adolescent is understood. Differences between countries in terms of routines for treating children with school-related diagnoses may

offer another explanation (Madsen 2014). In the Nordic countries, biomedical definitions are predominant, and the definition of ADHD is based on behaviours such as hyperactivity, concentration difficulties and lack of impulse control. This definition has been critically discussed, as there is a risk that diagnoses such as ADHD will be used to explain problems that may be better explained by a child's or youth's life situation. Different definitions of 'problems' such as diagnoses have been used to deal with what has been socially and culturally defined as a 'problem' during different historical periods.

In addition to the increasing use of psychiatric diagnoses, another twist has taken place in the discussion around the poor results obtained by Swedish students on international comparison tests: that is, the poor results are being explained by behavioural factors. Similar developments can be seen in the UK, for example, where students' school results have been related to a lack of discipline at school (Ball et al. 2012). These changes have led to greater opportunities and requirements for schools to take action when students are subjected to violence; they have also resulted in schools having a greater inclination to report school trouble to the police, and thereby make it into a legal problem (Hammarén et al. 2015). A parallel example of how schools are supposed to solve or counteract societal issues is when education is mentioned in relation to safeguarding democracy against terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization – a task that was previously the sole responsibility of national security services and the police. In recent action plans and in the objectives and measures recommended by governmental institutions in the Nordic countries, schools are given two main guidelines for solving the problem of radicalization and extremism: (1) to safeguard democracy and (2) to identify and report individuals who might be at risk of becoming radicalized (Sivenbring 2017).

From a wider perspective, the majority of students in Sweden are doing well: most complete secondary school, find a job and become functioning adults (Cater et al. 2014). At the same time, increased polarization can be seen between those who manage to navigate the individualized school landscape and those who fall out of the system (Beach and Sernhede 2011). There is a close relationship between the discussion on the 'global school crisis' and moral panics involving stereotypical images of violent and threatening young people (Ball et al. 2012; Ostrowicka 2012).

Changing Policies

The transformation of school policies for managing school violence has been reflected in the political debate, in which schools are increasingly encouraged to file police reports on actions that violate the rules of order (Larsson 2014). In 2006, a new Swedish government was elected. During the pre-election period, the issues of social order and discipline in schools were emphasized in the political debate. The former social democratic government was accused by the present liberal right-wing government of having created 'slacker schools'. Hence, the new government's

education policy claimed to aim to re-establish order and discipline in schools. The education policy established on this basis can be understood as the beginning of policy reforms that emphasize discipline, place greater demands, introduce grading at younger ages and conduct more frequent school inspections (Hammarén et al. 2015). The meanings of concepts such as degrading treatment, bullying and harassment were transformed and situated in an intertextual relation to concepts such as attitudes and discipline. This change resulted in a gradual shift from a focus on the child at risk to a stronger focus on order, discipline and student achievement. This initiative can be understood as politically motivated; it is not primarily intended to protect vulnerable children, but rather to improve academic results in Swedish schools (Larsson 2014).

Through these political changes, school governance has shifted from being an issue of responding to central goals to an issue of being responsible for reaching these goals. This shift implies a change from a situation in which professionals are responsible for achieving a number of centrally established goals and regulations, to a situation in which professionals are accountable for reaching the centrally set goals through locally formulated goals (Ball et al. 2012). *Responsibility* as an idea springs from the trust professionals embody in their work. *Accountability*, on other hand, is based on the idea that professionals can be held accountable for proving that they have done their work. For example, accountability involves taking responsibility to make work against degrading treatment transparent through local policies and documenting and evaluating this measure, so that other agencies can inspect and judge the measure (Hatch 2013).

The Juridification of Schools

Increased regulation by law has been described as a *process of juridification*. In general terms, juridification means that decisions that were previously considered to be political concerns are replaced by a juridical process, along with juridical concepts and interpretations. Hence, problems are solved to a greater degree by turning to rules and laws. Juridification also affects the relation between citizens, who begin to see each other primarily as legal subjects. Criticism against this development describes how issues that were previously solved through dialogue and informal processes – from political and cultural perspectives – have been transformed into legal concerns. This narrow focus on what the law permits and demands carries the risk of overshadowing ethical and professional judgments (Bergh and Arneback 2016).

The phenomenon of schools being regulated through laws and legal jurisdictions is not new. Nevertheless, it is clear that legal concepts and perspectives now have greater influence on the governance of education, in comparison with only a decade ago. Previous regulations have changed, and new regulations have been put in place in areas that were once not considered to be legal issues. This shift has been part of a more general transformation of education towards a system of control, in which

authorities have obligations to report results, conduct external inspections and make repeated quality measurements. As a result, what were previously considered to be primarily pedagogical responsibilities and challenges have now become the subject of legal consideration (Blichner and Molander 2008; Fransson 2016). For example, the concept of bullying – which has long been an established perspective among researchers in pedagogy and psychology as well as among school professionals – is no longer present in the educational act or in policy recommendations from the education agency. This transformation has contributed to the reinforcement of legal language and has made it possible for students and parents to transfer complaints to the school inspection agency. Overall, this change has led to increased control of education. For example, municipalities can be required to pay an indemnity if students are exposed to degrading treatment at school (Carlbaum 2016).

The juridification of education has thus come to influence not only the requirements placed on professionals working at schools, but also how various situations are perceived. This has made schools' obligations to support the individual child even stronger. However, as juridical language aims to clarify what obligations and responsibilities schools do and do not have, it tends to narrow the perspective regarding what can be legally defined. This narrowing raises questions about what happens to responsibilities that have traditionally been among schools' obligations, but that are impossible to define legally (Carlbaum 2016). While a pedagogical discourse is occupied with the question of how to accomplish objectives, these are not issues that can be addressed using a legal discourse. Different rationales concerning encounters with violence and degrading treatment in schools can therefore create tensions for professionals. Previous research has discussed how these tensions can lead to situations in which professionals do what they are legally required to do, but at the price of what they consider to be pedagogically desirable (Bergh and Arneback 2016).

The connection between the juridification of schools and more general crime-control efforts is stronger in the US than in the Nordic countries (Theriot 2009). In the US, this transformation was rooted in a set of policies and practices often known as 'zero tolerance'. Zero-tolerance policies spread fast in the US during the early 1990s. From the beginning, such policies had the aim of ensuring gun-free schools. The mandate to adopt zero tolerance for weapons was soon generalized to include zero tolerance for alcohol, tobacco, drugs and violence (Hirschfield 2008). Unlike other policies regarding mandatory criminal sentences, however, zero-tolerance policies often give little consideration to explanatory circumstances (Gregory et al. 2010). The shift from disciplinary discretion based on teachers' and school authorities' judgment to disciplinary rules that stipulate exclusionary punishments has led to more frequent use of suspension for students who violate school rules. This shift has been discussed as a form of symbolic criminalization, irrespective of whether such judgment follows strict penal guidelines or is decided by school authorities (Hirschfield 2008). Research has repeatedly reported that minority students and students growing up in disadvantaged circumstances are subject to suspension more often than white middle-class students (Skiba et al. 2011).

Conclusion

No positive evidence suggests that an exclusive emphasis on police reporting and the implementation of sanctions reduces the extent of violence in schools. It seems unlikely that the criminalization of unwanted behaviour can mitigate the complex social problem of violence in schools. Moreover, allocating additional resources to surveillance and discipline may not facilitate mutual respect, dialogue and inclusivity in schools. By criminalizing certain forms of behaviour and legally prosecuting degrading treatment, the legal discourse may result in an increased focus on schools' legal responsibility to create a safe, equitable learning environment. Furthermore, there is no clear evidence that violence and degrading treatment are actually increasing in Nordic schools. However, there is evidence suggesting that it is societal norms and school policies that are changing, rather than the actual prevalence of violence. The various contributions in this edited volume present and explore a map of relevant changes over the past decades along with more recent policy changes and research. This anthology is thus of great interest from an international perspective, and can contribute to broadening the perspective on school violence. Taken together, the chapters in this volume provide a nuanced and rich picture of school violence today and in the future. Our ambition is also to promote a critical pedagogical perspective on how schools and society are dealing with young people's sometimes precarious situation in late modern times.

Three of the chapters in this book (Chaps. 4, 5 and 6) are part of a research project titled Schools and Crime: Policing Violence and Intimidation at Schools, funded by the Swedish Research Council. This project focuses on how a number of Swedish schools define and categorize students involved in and situations involving different forms of violent or abusive acts in schools. Professionals working in schools encounter students with different needs, cultural backgrounds and social backgrounds. Therefore, schools must deal with a wide range of situations and dilemmas on a daily basis. Students' disagreements and situations involving violence and harassment are a part of such dilemmas. In institutions such as schools, narratives and categories are significant tools professionals use when making sense of their daily work; such tools also support them in managing various dilemmas and difficulties. In terms of methodology, we approach these different narratives and categorizations from a discourse analytical perspective. Here, we have been influenced by discourse theory in the broadest sense; however, we also try to place the different discourses within a sociological and theoretical framework. Our ambition has been to theoretically explore and use quotations to study how educators shape and reshape their understanding of low- and high-level violence and of harassment in schools. The study comprises extensive case studies of nine Swedish secondary schools. Key informants include the school professionals at each school who are part of the student welfare team. In Sweden, each school must have a student welfare team composed of a school nurse, psychologist and curator, along with staff possessing special educational skills. The welfare team usually has a weekly meeting at which key staff members such as the principal, school nurse, counsellor and special

education teacher are present, along with other school officials if necessary. The aim of these meetings is to discuss issues such as students' well-being, students with poor academic achievement, students with health-related problems and students enacting criminal behaviour or who are at risk of committing crimes. At most schools, the members of the school welfare team have a special responsibility to handle issues related to violence, bullying and conflicts among students. During the fieldwork, we conducted interviews, focus group interviews, observation and data collection from the police registration of crimes in school. The schools selected for the study were located in different geographical and socioeconomic areas.

Organization of This Book

The rest of this book is arranged as follows. In Chap. 2, titled 'What is the most violent thing to do? Mapping the definitions and complexities of violence', Hammarén explores the concept of (school) violence. Different categorizations, interpretations and manifestations of violence are presented, and the dividing lines between them are discussed and problematized. The author indicates that the concept of violence includes a variety of forms and manifestations. The ways in which human aggressiveness and violence are characterized and comprehended vary between decades, contexts, disciplines and scholars. In general, however, violence can manifest itself through physical, relational, verbal, cyber and sexual expressions, as well as through systemic, structural, symbolic and objective forms. The former relate to more explicit, concrete and direct types of violence, while the latter focus on less visible, indirect and subtle forms. This division is partially dependent on whether the definition of violence being used is psychologically or sociologically produced.

In Chap. 3, Estrada focuses on the causes of youth crime, and examines how its levels and trends are important for social policy. In this chapter, titled 'Youth and crime in Sweden. Trends, inequalities and societal response in a welfare state', Estrada highlights how debate in Europe often includes descriptions of constantly rising youth crime, and demands that society be tougher on juvenile delinquents. However, an analysis of crime statistics, questionnaire surveys and medical data does not support the view that youth crime is on the rise – rather, it supports the opposite view. This chapter addresses a number of issues that should be regarded as central by everyone interested in the life conditions of young people: how has the nature of youth crime changed? Why do some groups of young people commit more offences than others? In this chapter, the author also elaborates how the welfare society deals with young people who engage in offending.

Chapter 4 is titled 'Juridification of Swedish education – changing conditions for teachers' professional work'. Here, Bergh and Arneback examine the changes that have occurred in the governance of Swedish education during the last two decades. The aim of this chapter is to study how the juridification of education conditions teachers' view on the knowledge and values expressed in national policy documents.

The results demonstrate that the increase of juridical language clearly affects teachers' professional work. In the worst case, the use of legal concepts may result in more instrumental relationships in which teachers focus on their role as assessors and monitors. However, this depends on how legal concepts are interpreted and enacted by school staff.

In Chap. 5, 'The many faces of school violence: ambivalent categorizations of perpetrators and victims', Lunneblad and Johansson discuss how school officials at different schools describe various measures taken to deal with school violence. In the case studies, the school officials mainly reported physical violence to the police. However, reporting to the police was not necessarily linked to the degree of violence inflicted on the students. Furthermore, the professionals filed police reports in order to clearly delineate what behaviour was not tolerated. However, rather than reporting to the police, the school officials sometimes tried to solve the 'problems' through social pedagogical interventions. As regards criminality and subversive behaviour, young people are seen as both a risk group and a security risk. Consequently, there is a need to investigate categorizations and definitions of young people 'at risk'.

Chapter 6 by Johansson and Lunneblad, titled **'**Policing the school: dialogues and crime reports', is based on a study comprising two interlinked case studies. The first case consists of principals and school health teams working closely with young students in the school; the second case involves police officers. The design of this study allows us to discuss and analyse different professional views and attitudes regarding school violence. Whereas the school professionals tend to work relationally and try to solve conflicts and violence through dialogue and interaction, the police officers primarily see their role as identifying offenders and crimes. Furthermore, the results reveal that both professional groups focus more on policing in segregated than in "unsegregated" areas. The police placed segregated areas under surveillance, targeted young people and defined them as potential suspects. The teachers in segregated areas also tended to use a more juridical approach to school violence, especially in comparison with teachers in more affluent middle-class neighbourhoods.

> Social and ethnic residential segregation has increased in recent years in Sweden, making residential areas more ethnically and socioeconomically homogeneous.

In Chap. 7, titled '"race" and school violence', Hunehäll Berndtsson illustrates how school violence is understood and handled by school staff in demographically diverse areas. A comparison between the schools in the study shows that the strategies used and the ways in which school staff talk about students differ significantly. At a school located in an upper-middle-class area, the school staff adapted to expectations and demands from the upper-middle-class parents. At a school located in a lower-working-class area with only immigrant students, on the other hand, the school staff adapted to expectations from other authorities, such as the social services and the police. These cases indicate that the Swedish education system adjusts according to students' social class and 'race' in terms of how professionals describe school violence and violations, and what strategies are employed to address these problems. This chapter shows how segregation, class, place and 'race' play a

decisive role in schools' institutional practices and challenge the image of the Swedish education system as a cornerstone of Swedish society.

In Chap. 8, 'School bullying in Sweden', Thornberg describes how the historical definition of bulling has been disputed and developed. International research on school bullying first began in Sweden, initiated by the work of Olweus during the 1970s. His definition of bullying is the most widespread definition used in this field. However, there has been and still is debate and criticism regarding the definition of bullying among international scholars. These shifts in perspectives are discussed and problematized in this chapter. The chapter then discusses the prevalence of school bullying in Sweden, both over time and cross-culturally. In Swedish school policy, shifts have occurred in how bullying is viewed: in perspective, from a psychological and pedagogical matter to a legal matter (juridification); and in terminology, from focusing on the term 'bullying' to use of the more inclusive term 'degrading treatment' and, later on, 'harassment'. The chapter ends with a discussion on anti-bullying policy and practice in Sweden, including a change from anti-bullying practice as a pedagogical matter to a legal matter, and a shift from programmes to general recommendations.

> As seen in legal and educational documents, school bullying has been ungendered through its legal separation from discrimination and harassment and its reduction to a form of degrading treatment against someone's dignity.

In Chap. 9, 'Juridification and the ungendering of school bullying', Horton and Forsberg investigate the juridification of school violence in the Swedish context by focusing on the issue of school bullying and gendered perceptions of difference. Emphasis is placed on the legal ungendering of school bullying as being unconnected to issues of social difference – a view that aligns with the majority of school bullying research, which has shifted from being distinctly gender blind to being somewhat gender essentialist. The authors problematize dominant conceptualizations of sex/gender 'roles' through a discussion of power relations, and argue that the juridification of school bullying does not adequately account for the importance of dominant gendered societal norms. They also argue that school bullying may be a form of 'normative cruelty' that is socially learned and underpinned by dominant gendered discourses.

> A substantial part of many young people's everyday lives now takes place online.

In Chap. 10, titled 'Cyberbullying in childhood and adolescence: assessment, negative consequences and prevention strategies', Berne, Frisén and Berne discuss possible negative aspects of this situation, as peer interaction on the Internet carries the risk of cyberbullying. This form of bullying is conducted through modern information and communication technology; it can involve hurtful photos, videos and texts that are uploaded to pages on the Internet, and offensive text messages. Cyberbullying is a relatively new phenomenon; therefore, this chapter begins with a short overview of how cyberbullying can be defined and which behaviours are included in this form of aggressive peer interaction. Research shows that being bullied online is associated with several negative consequences such as somatic symptoms and poor body esteem. Hence, the chapter includes a section on students' experiences of and reactions to cyberbullying. The chapter poses this question: what

can be done to counteract cyberbullying? Suggestions given by Swedish youths are then presented as possible answers.

In Chap. 11, 'The rules of violence: young people's moral work around violence and fighting', Uhnoo examines how young people approach and deal with violent conflicts arising both in and outside of school settings. The results show the complexity of such moral work, and how young people's rules regarding violence remain open to negotiation and vary according to the situation and the type of relationship between the parties involved. A typology of violence and fighting among young people is presented that considers and compares the rules for different types of violence and fighting, while noting the kinds of violence and fighting that can be seen as normalized and legitimized for different situations and social relationships, based on the rules in use.

Finally in Chap. 12, titled 'Democratic dilemmas in education against violent extremism', Sivenbring addresses preventive measures that are suggested for education against so-called radicalization and various forms of violent extremism in the Nordic region. Education in the Nordic countries is founded upon common values and a strong tradition of democratic governance. School plays a key role in preventive work through democracy education and in equipping young people with norm-critical values and critical skills that support them in resisting extremist propaganda. Schools can also offer forums for discussions of differing world views in order to strengthen democratic values such as equality and freedom of speech. However, the national action plans for prevention against radicalization and violent extremism in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden prompt teachers and school staff to identify, investigate and report students who show signs of being radicalized. If freedom in expressing views and attitudes can lead to investigation and registration, this situation may result in restrictions of the democratic rights of young citizens.

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