

## REVIEW OF THE BOOK: BULLYCID IN AMERICA

There is something amazingly oxymoronic about the title: why should this condition exist here (although we all know it's everywhere in the world), in “the land of the free, and the home of the brave”, even though we are reminded of these words every time we sing our national anthem? Why must we, and most especially children, be so very brave every day, and still not enjoy “the freedom from fear” as F.D.R. so eloquently enunciated? Why should we permit this atrocity in our wonderful country?

This amazing little book gives the story of 7 ordinary youngsters (look at their pictures—smiling, outwardly happy and content young people) who were bullied into depression and, ultimately, death, without “the system” recognizing their plight at first, and then doing nothing or things negative about it.

The suffix “-cide” comes from the Latin verb “cido”, which means “to kill”; the prefix “sui-“ comes from the Latin “sus, suis”, which means “self”. Etymologically, that's it. Etymology is such a cold, analytical and academic word--but in reality, it is more—so very much more.

Each story is the story of a young human being who was treated in barbarically inhumane ways while most looked on in neutrality, or worse, in mild amusement, as the cowardly bullies did their evil. These were wonderful productive kids, each with a wonderful productive life, who were bullied—persecuted, to death.

As a teacher, I am ashamed to put almost all the blame where it rightly belongs: on our educational system. We are so concerned with N.C.L.B.A., (No Child Left Behind Act), and academic responsibility and accountability, but we have forgotten totally about the responsibilities of morality and integrity.

Teachers must clearly relate to their students that they **SHALL NOT** accept any actions of bullying, or seeming to be bullying, in her/his classroom at any time, or in his/her presence at any time—and enforce it. As soon as possible the teacher should put up a “No-Bully Zone” or “Bully Free Zone” poster in their room to advertise and exemplify her/his commitment to the principle.

All teachers (as well as all adults and children) should stand up together and say “we're not gonna take it, anymore”. Where would the cowardly bullies be then? Alone, where they should be. But of course, bullies are made, not born, and they need our help overcoming their condition as well as our condemnation for the condition itself.

This most remarkable little book, with its seven tragic, but, also, hopeful stories, because of the courage of their survivors, should give us all pause, and then an impetus for action in this most important area for all our children.

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(I am 62 years old, and my bullying experiences still causes me pain and are as fresh as yesterday.)