



# Thinking Globally Acting Locally: A Personal Journey

*Peter Mittler*

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## **Thinking Globally Acting Locally: A Personal Journey** Peter Mittler

ABOUT THE BOOK This unusual book is more than just the memoir of a distinguished career. It is a history of the twentieth century reflected in the life and work of one individual. It begins in 1938 with a year in the life of an eight year old Viennese Jewish boy as he experiences the worst and best of humanity, from Nazi persecution to rescue by strangers through the Kindertransports. It tells of his encounters with an English schooling system at its worst and best and of his formative years as a 'History Boy' and Cambridge undergraduate. But this is not a story of one person's liberation. That little refugee boy grew up to contribute to the liberation of hundreds of thousands of people world-wide. Influenced by his own early experiences, Peter Mittler has spent a lifetime committed to the human rights of people with intellectual disabilities. From their liberation from the big institutions left over from the nineteenth century, to their inclusion in shaping the 2008 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this book tells the story of a dynamic and powerful human rights movement. It is perhaps the last great untold story, the story of how persons with intellectual disabilities finally gained the right to respect, value and autonomy and of the long struggle for schooling, access to work and their own front door key. This memoir weaves professional memories and accounts of collaboration across the global village with anecdotes and travellers' tales to reflect a global perspective from someone who was there at every twist and turn, working with families, teachers, researchers, governments and self-advocates for over 60 years to influence legislation and drive lasting reform.

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