

European Union - FP 6

“Narrative media interaction and psycho-trauma therapy.”

(Acronym: “Media/ Social Therapy”, Project No. MC-23953)

PD Dr. Harald Weilnböck (Ph.D.)

Abstract:

The project studies the citizens’ *interaction with literature and media* and investigates its psychological, social, and cultural functions. How do young adult’s from various strata of society and ethnic backgrounds mentally and narratively interact *with* and *about* media products? How do the *psycho-affective* processes interrelate with the *individual’s* life history? How does narrative media interaction work *collectively* on the level of multi-ethnic society and its group-dynamics about important media events? How and when do these narrative processes of *media interaction* have (*counter-*) *therapeutic effects* on individuals and communities in the sense that they advance or hinder the resolution of personal conflict-issues and the moderation of social/ethnic conflicts? More specifically: How can (traditional and electronic) media be used/taught in such a way that they support the *psycho-biographical* and *socio-cultural working-through* of *traumatic experiences* (inherent to 20th century European history)? How can we develop *sustainable forms of narrative/ interactional and emotional intelligence*?

A multidisciplinary approach to qualitative media-interaction research drawing from social studies, therapy- and psycho-trauma studies, narratology as well as cultural studies and pedagogy will be applied. The methods employed range from narration analysis, narrative biographical interviewing, group interviewing on media experiences and narratological text/film analysis. The overriding aim is to find out more about how media interaction and education can best prepare tomorrow’s multi-cultural *knowledge societies* for the challenges of contemporary Europe. How can free cultural (self-) expression and narrative media literacy be advanced in order to secure the build-up of psychological and social “soft skills” which are crucial both for entrepreneurship and societal wellbeing. How can the European scientific community be prompted to focus attention and resources on narratological studies?