

Propositions accompanying the PhD thesis

Echoing Events

The perpetuation of national narratives in English and Dutch history textbooks, 1920-2010

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1. Although history education is more politicized than many other school subjects, research on the 'autonomy' of historical narratives is a promising approach for future research.
2. An in-depth analysis of history textbooks' frames and keys can shed new light on the perpetuation of national narratives in this genre by exposing recurrent systems of meaning and networks of memory.
3. It is important not to regard history textbooks as poor substitutes of academic historiography but as mediators and adapters of various discourses.
4. National narratives' 'timeless truths' are not as timeless as is often assumed.
5. Comparative research on textbooks' national narratives can give insight in transnational narrative structures that might be overlooked when the analysis is limited to a specific national context.
6. After World War II, Europe was seen as a promising framework for narrating national history but this is no longer the case.
7. According to the French historian and politician Alexis de Tocqueville, history is 'a gallery of pictures in which there are few originals and many copies' (1856). Whereas he referred to historical events, this statement is certainly true for historical narratives and their plots.
8. Historical textbook collections are endangered to disappear.
9. 'But this is true too: stories can save us' (Tim O'Brien, 1990). Construction as well as deconstruction of (national) narratives are both important elements of history education.
10. Longitudinal research is needed in order to balance the amount of short-term studies.
11. Living a good story is as important as writing one.