

TELLING STORIES
OR
MEDIA FANTASIES AND POLITICAL REALITY

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Who tells most of the stories today? No longer home and community. No longer parents, schools, or church. In many parts of the world not even the native country. Our children are born into a cultural environment dominated by television whose principal story tellers little to tell but a great deal to sell.

This has far-reaching consequences for human socialization and governance. It will be argued that, contrary to conventional assumptions, political implications do not stem only, or perhaps even primarily, from political news, or, in fact, from any news. Politically relevant conceptions of reality are constructed before a child learns to read, goes to school, and becomes a newsreader. Fiction and fact intermingle in a process the continues throughout life. The dynamics of broader social implications of that process will be discussed and illustrated by examples. Suggestions will be made about meeting the challenge to citizenship in a media age.