

The fact is that Marshall McLuhan is probably not the patron saint of TV at all, although he is the author of *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, *Culture is Our Business*, *The Medium is the Massage*, *Understanding Media*, *The Mechanical Bride*, *Through the Vanishing Point*, and *War and Peace in the Global Village*, most of which were written in short bursts of unconnected lines, words and paragraphs.

(The books above are not listed in linear, chronological, vertical or philosophical order, or in the order of their degrees of thickness.)

Mr. McLuhan is a solemn man, a serious man and a professor at the University of Toronto. In the mid-sixties he burst on the electronic world as the MaN wItH the aPpRoPrI AtE mEsS AGe. It was that the world had moved, abruptly, from an age of linear, egocentric thinking into the age of the GLOBAL VILLAGE.

It was an idea
WHOSE TIME HAD COME,
though difficult to get hold of.
Still McLuhan's bursts of perception (accompanied by a great many illustrative pictures and cartoonish words like ZAM, BAM and ZOWIE) seemed to explain some of the odder aspects of life in the sixties, such as: incense, war and peace, the fact that Johnny couldn't read, long hair and short attention spans.

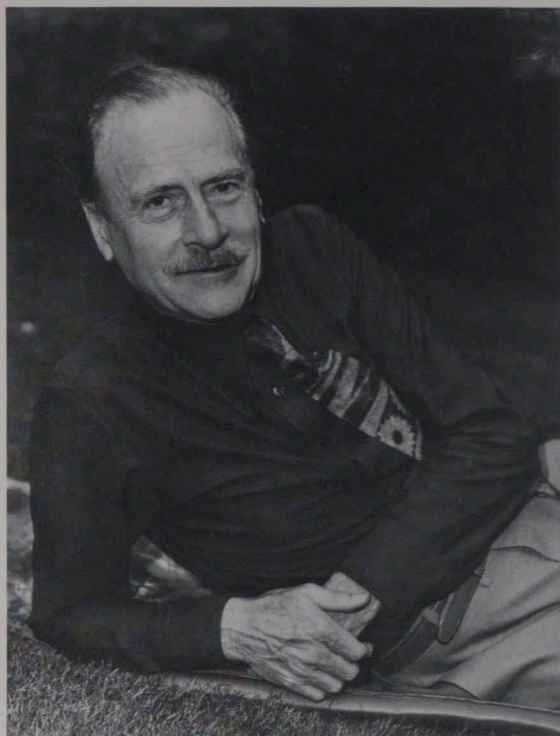
One interpretation of his theory (not necessarily his) is that the world has changed profoundly with the invention of movable type. Before there were books (or book stores), man did not think of himself as the centre of the world around him. When he painted a picture of his village, he painted all of it, including people and objects on both sides of walls, indoors and out. In his own mind he was not the prime viewer but just part of the clutter.

The arrival of type (and in time, of newspapers, held twelve to fourteen inches from the tip of the nose) caused man to become egocentric and gave birth to, among other things, capitalism, rugged individualism, SUPERSTARS, suicide, spelling bees and social outcasts. Type (a hot medium) made Renaissance man self-conscious and fiercely logical, seeing causes and effects all around, often in places they didn't exist.

In some places this caused the burning of witches, heretics and persons who ruined the crops.

McLuhan believed (and believes) that television (a cool medium) has knocked man out of his position at the centre. When man looks into that small box, he sees other people doing things, many of them violent, without paying attention to him. He is no longer the critical observer.

He is



ONE OF THE CROWD.

Meanwhile, McLuhan, who, whatever else, is NOT ONE OF THE CROWD, continues to speak forth. Most recently he has been considering the functions of the right and left brain hemispheres. Research indicates that the right hemisphere is concerned with spatial, emotional and intuitive processes; the left, with verbal, sequential, intellectual and analytic thought. Here are some of his recent remarks which have appeared

IN PRINT:*

"You see, TV will not take a face, it has to have a mask. That's why the Jimmy Carters and the John F. Kennedys were good people for TV because they didn't have a face, they had a mask. That applies to Trudeau as well. Trudeau has the mask of an American Indian and it's a potent mask. The American Indian does not have a private face. He has the face of his tribe, his clan. Now, that's good TV. It's called charisma."

"The effect of television is certainly to turn off the left hemisphere, and insofar as it is being used by mainly left hemisphere people that is sort of against the grain. TV itself cries out for right hemisphere programming."

"My whole natural bent is right hemisphere but my academic training was all left hemisphere, and so was yours. Anybody who's been to school is a left hemisphere person; on the other hand, if they have an artistic bent, that means they're in head-on clash all the time with everything they're learning."

* *Maclean's*, March 7, 1977.