

Marshall McLuhan

Canadian philosopher, whose work is among the cornerstones of the study of media theory

McLuhan coined the expression "the medium is the message" and the term global village

Marshall McLuhan defined media as anything requiring use of the human body. Under this definition, both cars and even clothing can be identified as media

When a media is introduced it is adapted to human senses so that it becomes an extension of the individual, and its capabilities influence the whole of society, leading to change.

McLuhan splits history into four periods:

the Tribal Age

the Literacy Age

the Print Age,

the Electronic Age

Tribal Age.

It was a time of community. And ear was dominant sense organ. With everyone able to hear at the same time, listening to someone in a group a unifying act, deepening the feeling of community. In tribal ages McLuhan argues, everything was more immediate, more present, and fostered more passion and spontaneity.

Literacy age

Literacy Age, begins with the invention of writing. This was a time of private isolation. The dominant sense organ were eyes. Writing turns sounds into visible objects and it creates symbolic environment. Words were no longer alive and immediate, they were able to be read over and over again. Writing leads to more independent thought. People didn't need to come together to get information anymore.

Print age

It can be described as individual media products were mass-produced due to the invention of the printing press.

It gave the ability to reproduce the same text over and over again. With printing came a new visual stress: the portable book, which allowed people to carry media so they could read in privacy isolated from others.

Libraries were created to hold these books and also gave freedom to be alienated from others and from their immediate surroundings.

Printing press also gave power to national states.

Because printing press rise on national languages. Soon after the invention of the Gutenberg-style printing press the reformation sparked.

It led to the establishment of the nation-state as the powers that were dominant, over the previous dominance of the Roman Catholic Church.

Capitalist entrepreneurs printed their books and media in the vernacular (instead of exclusive script languages, such as Latin) in order to maximize circulation.

As a result, readers speaking various local dialects became able to understand each other, and a common discourse emerged. The first European nation-states were thus formed around their "national print-languages."

Electronic age

It started with the invention of the telegraph and led to the telephone.

This ability to communicate instantly returns people to the tradition of sound.

McLuhan argues that being able to be in constant contact with the world creates the **global village**.

Marshall McLuhan used the phrase global village to characterize an end to isolation:

"humans can no longer live in isolation, but rather will always be connected by continuous and instantaneous electronic media"

McLuhan addresses the idea of a global village in his book *The Gutenberg Galaxy* saying, "Such is the character of a village or, since electric media, such is also the character of global village.

Technology, especially electronic media in today's age, makes the world increasingly interconnected. Socially, economically, politically, culturally, what happens in one part of the world has a ripple effect into other countries.

However, in McLuhan's day, the global village was just becoming possible due to technology like television and long distance phone calls. Internet makes it possible to check news stories around the globe, and social media connects individuals regardless of location.

Technology has created an interconnected world, and with that should come concern for global events and occurrences outside one's own community.

Critics worry about, that in creating a truly global village, some cultures will become extinct due to larger or more dominant cultures imposing their beliefs and practices.

The Medium Is the Message

McLuhan's often-quoted phrase The medium is the message.

But the real name of book is «The Medium Is the Message»

McLuhan adopted the term "massage" to denote the effect of numerous media in how they 'massage' the human sensorium.

By playing on words and using the term "massage," McLuhan suggests that modern audiences enjoy mainstream media as soothing, enjoyable, and relaxing.

Marshall McLuhan argues that technologies—from clothing to the wheel to the book and beyond—are the messages, rather than the content of the communication.

Medium is the Message

Demonstrates the ways the mainstream media are extensions of human senses; they ground us in physicality but expand our ability to perceive our world to an extent impossible without them.

The main idea is that: each mainstream medium produces a different "massage" or "effect" on the human sensorium.

Criticism about McLuhan

(Technological determinism)

Determinism insists that all of society is a result of or effected by one central condition. In some cases the condition can be religion (theological determinism), financial (economic determinism).

In the case of McLuhan, technology is the sole determinant for society. He can be classified as technological determinism.

Ideas of technological determinism generally have negative connotations.

Technological determinism does not led people will or ability to shape their life and society