



## The Essential McLuhan

*Marshall McLuhan (Editor) , Eric McLuhan , Frank Zingrone*

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Marshall McLuhan's insights are fresher and more applicable today than when he first announced them to a startled world. A whole new generation is turning to his work to understand a global village made real by the information superhighway and the overwhelming challenge of electronic transformation.

“Before anyone could perceive the electric form of the information revolution, McLuhan was publishing brilliant explanations of the perceptual changes being experienced by the users of mass media. He seemed futuristic to some and an enemy of print and literacy to others. He was, in reality, a deeply literate man of astonishing prescience. Tom Wolfe suggested aloud that McLuhan's work was as important culturally as that of Darwin or Freud. Agreement and scoffing ensued. Increasingly Wolfe's wonder seems justified.” From the Introduction

Here in one volume, are McLuhan's key ideas, drawn from his books, articles, correspondence, and published speeches. This book is the essential archive of his constantly surprising vision.

## The Essential McLuhan Details

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## From Reader Review The Essential McLuhan for online ebook

### Arda says

Notes from finals - particularly on MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE:

The perspective that McLuhan presents in line with vision and objectivity gives insight to the interactivity that is involved in the process of decoding meaning from word. The process of deciphering visual codes and analyzing them has a productive, imaginative element to it. Writing, therefore, is regarded as a technology that provides that medium in which symbols are put together to produce words, and words provide meaning. This act of producing meaning, either through writing or reading, is an interactive process through which senses are extended to create environments by ways of association. Environments, after all, are made up of human associations. Sounds echo, McLuhan observes, and thoughts develop; senses extend and become part of the environment. It is the togetherness, the extension of human senses, that determines what would become of environments.

Our senses are extended, as McLuhan demonstrates, through the bringing about of something else. The written word offers something entirely different from the spoken word, that involve the collective process of meaning.

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### Charles says

Difficult but can be fun

not something i typically read through but there are a few passages or pieces in this compilation that are serious, difficult, challenging--the type of critical thinking one might do in college. but who wants that for weekend reading

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### Misty says

Overrated at best.

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### Michael says

great quotes, sometimes more than i could understand, but they guy had a head on his shoulders, and many of his thoughts are pretty prophetic right about now (in the 2000s)

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### Andy McIlwain says

I didn't know much about McLuhan before reading this book. I knew \*of\* him, but that was about it. This

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"best of" compilation was a solid introduction to his works.

It's not an easy read, but as I came to understand, that's just part of the McLuhan experience. His writing is a meandering exploration of concepts and references.

But tucked in there are the insights and quips -- "the medium is the message" -- that he's best known for. They're eerily prescient sometimes, enough to make you stop and think and wonder what's next.

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## **MM says**

Great collection -- includes McLuhan's infamous Playboy interview, one of his most lucid moments. And I love the collection of quotes -- perfect for a master of aphorism. "If I turn off this mike my relationship to you is changed instantly." to Mike Wallace in 1966, p. 273.

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## **Meg Coulson says**

Lots of interesting ideas, but a lot of the material in this compilation is repetitive. Book would have been easier to understand (I think) if I had ever read *Finnegans Wake*, *Ulysses*, and *King Lear*. McLuhan refers to them constantly as examples of various theories in action.

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## **Teghan says**

A nice collection of his more important essays. Sometimes brilliant sometimes ridiculous. It can be difficult to get through, as all theory is, but its worth it. He was an excellent brain. Only critique is that he tended to think in a very Eurocentric manner so his theories about the 'global village' are not really that global at all.

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## **Dan says**

Marshall McLuhan is the Canadian media theorist who became famous in the sixties for coining phrases like "global village" and "the medium is the message." His work remains important for understanding the cultural changes as new technologies like the Internet transform our ways of getting information and communicating with one another.

The book includes essays, letters, interviews, aphorisms and excerpts from McLuhan's books, and the editors have selected and organized the material for maximum clarity; sometimes the same ideas are repeated, but in different contexts, and because of this redundancy, the reader is supplied with several different approaches to concepts like "hot" and "cold" media and to media as environment.

The text of *The Essential McLuhan* is visually interesting, deploying various devices of the printed page such as double columns, different font sizes and reproductions of advertisements--reflecting McLuhan's argument that print culture necessarily changes with the introduction of the electronic media.

McLuhan is a student of modernist literature, and of James Joyce in particular, and there is a lot of Joycean

wordplay in his style.

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