

Societies have always been shaped more by the nature of the media by which men communicate than by the content of the communication • A new medium is never an addition to an old one, nor does it leave the old one in peace. It never ceases to oppress the older media until it finds new shapes and positions for them • There are no passengers on spaceship earth. We are all crew • The spoken word was the first technology by which man was able to let go of his environment in order to grasp it in a new way • The name of a man is a numbing blow from which he never recovers • The more the data banks record about each one of us, the less we exist • The user is the content • Where the whole man is involved there is no work. Work begins with the division of labor • An administrator in a bureaucratic world is a man who can feel big by merging his non-entity in an abstraction. A real person in touch with real things inspires terror in him • Art at its most significant is a Distant Early Warning System that can always be relied on to tell the old culture what is beginning to happen to it • Art is anything you can get away with • Good taste is the first refuge of the non-creative. It is the last-ditch stand of the artist • Great art speaks a language which every intelligent person can understand. The people who call themselves modernists today speak a different language • ...the world is like a continually-sounding tribal drum, where everybody gets the message all the time • The tendency of music in our time is to become environmental again. Electronic music is increasingly the sounds of the environment itself • Clothing is an extension of the skin • The alphabet was one thing when applied to clay or stone, and quite another when set down on light papyrus • The phonetic alphabet has a very peculiar set of characteristics. It is made up of phonemes, that is, bits that are meaningless • Before the invention of the phonetic alphabet, man lived in a world where all the senses were balanced and simultaneous • Schizophrenia may be a necessary consequence of literacy • The modes of life of nonliterate people were implicit, simultaneous and discontinuous, and far richer than those of literate man • I wouldn't have seen it if I hadn't believed it • We become what we behold. We shape our tools and then our tools shape us • Our Age of Anxiety is, in great part, the result of trying to do today's job with yesterday's tools and yesterday's concepts • The scientist rigorously defends his right to be ignorant of almost everything except his specialty • Automation... it is integral and decentralist in depth • For tribal man space was the uncontrollable mystery. For technological man it is time that occupies the same role • As technology advances, it reverses the characteristics of every situation again and again. The age of automation is going to be the age of 'do it yourself' • Any technology tends to create a new human environment... Technological environments are not merely passive containers of people but are active processes that reshape people and other technologies alike • As the unity of the modern world becomes increasingly a technological rather than a social affair, the techniques of the arts provide the most valuable means of insight into the real direction of our own collective purposes • Innumerable confusions and a feeling of despair invariably emerge in periods of great technological and cultural transition • The future masters of technology will have to be light-hearted and intelligent. The machine easily masters the grim and the dumb • Money is a poor man's credit card • Commercial society whose members are essentially ascetic and indifferent in social ritual has to be provided with blueprints and specifications for evoking the right tone for every occasion. • The printing press was at first mistaken for an engine of immortality by everybody except Shakespeare • Publication is a self-invasion of privacy • A typewriter is a means of transcribing thought, not expressing it • The Xerox machine is making every author into a publisher • They turn all consumers into producers • Books are an extension of the eye • Our first teaching machines. And during the renaissance, our only teaching machines • In the older, print culture, people were not 'with-it'. They were 'away from it', by themselves, with their private point of view • The assembly line, where things happen came to us from a book... The line, the individual event was the book; the field, the all-at-once, the tribal drum... the new medium • A successful book cannot afford to be more than 10% new • Far more thought and care go into the composition of any prominent ad in a newspaper or magazine than go into the writing of their features and editorials • There is absolutely no inevitability as long as there is a willingness to contemplate what is happening • You slip into your morning paper like a hot bath • If the nineteenth century was the age of the editorial chair, ours is the century of the psychiatrist's couch • When you go on, talk on the telephone, you are transformed. You become instantly available to your friend in Chicago... And this gives you a sort of dimension of an angel, ... a disembodied spirit. ..You used to think that it was the message that was sent, but now it's the sender... In dialogue, people undergo change. It isn't just the passing of gossip back and forth • The car has become an article of dress without which we feel uncertain, unclad, and incomplete • The car has become the carapace, the protective and aggressive shell, of urban and suburban man • Mass transportation is doomed to failure in North America because a person's car is the only place where he can be alone and think • American youth attributes much more importance to arriving at driver's license age than at voting age • The past went that-a-way. When faced with a totally new situation, we tend to attach ourselves to the objects, to the flavor of the most recent past. We look at the present through a rear view mirror. We march backwards into the future • The photograph reverses the purpose of travel, which until now had been to encounter the strange and unfamiliar • With the sheer speeding up the mechanical, it carried us from the world of sequence and connections into the world of creative configuration and structure. The message of the movie medium is that of transition from lineal connections to configurations • The function of music is to translate the sounds of the environment through language, to humanize the technology of the metropolis by translating those sounds in all their raucous disorder, translating them through the rhythms of a great language • Affluence creates poverty • When producers want to know what the public wants, they graph it as curves. When they want to tell the public what to get, they say it in curves • Television brought the brutality of war into the comfort of the living room. Vietnam was lost in the living rooms of America - not on the battlefields of Vietnam • It speaks, and yet says nothing • Today it is not the classroom nor the classics which are the repositories of models of eloquence, but the ad agencies • Ads are the cave art of the twentieth century • Advertising is an environmental striptease for a world of abundance • Advertising is the greatest art form of the 20th century • Historians and archaeologists will one day discover that the ads of our time are the richest and most faithful reflections that any society ever made of its entire range of activities • Ideally, advertising aims at the goal of a programmed harmony among all human impulses and aspirations and endeavors. Using handicraft methods, it stretches out toward the ultimate electronic goal of a collective consciousness • Today the tyrant rules not by club or fist, but disguised as a market researcher, he shepherds his flocks in the ways of utility and comfort • Madison Avenue is a very powerful aggression against private consciousness. A demand that you yield your private consciousness to public manipulation • All media exist to invest our lives with artificial perceptions and arbitrary values • The business of the advertiser is to see that we go about our business with some magic spell or tune or slogan throbbing quietly in the background of our minds • The modern Little Red Riding Hood, reared on singing commercials, has no objection to being eaten by the wolf • Advertising is a mechanical bride • Electronic Information is turning the world into a global village. Take lightbulbs...they're information • In this electronic age we see ourselves being translated more and more into the form of information, moving toward the technological extension of consciousness • The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village • One of the effects of living with electric information is that we live habitually in a state of information overload. There's always more than you can cope with • Electric light is totally radical, pervasive, and decentralized... it eliminates time and space factors in human association exactly as do radio, telegraph, telephone, and TV, creating involvement in depth • Darkness is to space what silence is to sound, i.e., the interval • Canada is the only country in the world that knows how to live without an identity • The new electronic independence re-creates the world in the image of a global village • The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village • Antipathy, dissimilarity of views, hate, contempt, can accompany true love • We are re-tribalising. Involuntarily we're getting rid of individualism • Societies have always been shaped more by the nature of the media by which men communicate than by the content of the communication • Politics will eventually be replaced by imagery. The politician will be only too happy to abdicate in favor of his image, because the image will be much more powerful than he could ever be • Appetite is essentially insatiable, and where it operates as a criterion of both action and enjoyment (that is, everywhere in the Western world since the sixteenth century) it will infallibly discover congenial agencies (mechanical and political) of expression • As the unity of the modern world becomes increasingly a technological rather than a social affair, the techniques of the arts provide the most valuable means of insight into the real direction of our own collective purposes • The content of one medium is usually the previous medium • TV sucks the brain right out of the skull...