

Nomination form

International Memory of the World Register

1.0 Checklist

Nominees may find the following checklist useful before sending the nomination form to the International Memory of the World Secretariat. The information provided in italics on the form is there for guidance only and should be deleted once the sections have been completed.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Summary completed (section 1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nomination and contact details completed (section 2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Declaration of Authority signed and dated (section 2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | If this is a joint nomination, section 2 appropriately modified, and all Declarations of Authority obtained |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Documentary heritage identified (sections 3.1 – 3.3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | History/provenance completed (section 3.4) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bibliography completed (section 3.5) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organizations recorded (section 3.6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of owner completed (section 4.1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of custodian – if different from owner – completed (section 4.2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of legal status completed (section 4.3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of accessibility completed (section 4.4) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of copyright status completed (section 4.5) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Evidence presented to support fulfilment of the criteria? (section 5) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Additional information provided (section 6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of consultation with stakeholders completed (section 7) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Assessment of risk completed (section 8) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Summary of Preservation and Access Management Plan completed. If there is no formal Plan attach details about current and/or planned access, storage and custody arrangements (section 9) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other information provided – if applicable (section 10) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Suitable reproduction quality photographs identified to illustrate the documentary heritage. (300dpi, jpg format, full-colour preferred). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Copyright permissions forms signed and attached. Agreement to propose item(s) for inclusion on the World Digital Library if inscribed |

Nomination form International Memory of the World Register

Marshall McLuhan: The Archives of the Future

ID Code [2016-08]

1.0 Summary (max 200 words)

Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980) was a public intellectual and cultural theorist whose ground-breaking insights into electronic media changed how we perceive and understand the world today. Expressions he introduced like “the global village” and “the medium is the message” are widely recognised, quoted and misquoted, repeated in everyday speech, and officially incorporated into several languages. “McLuhanism” itself is now a word recognised by the *Oxford English Dictionary*. McLuhan has been called a “prophet of the digital age” who predicted the internet in a way that seems uncannily prescient today. His books have been translated into at least seventeen languages (Appendix B) and the centennial of his birth inspired dozens of events in at least twenty countries (Appendix C).

McLuhan’s personal archive and library comprise approximately 50 metres of archival documents in multiple media and 6,000 published items (mainly books), many heavily annotated in his hand, that are preserved by Library and Archives Canada and the University of Toronto Library. No other material so intimately reveals the evolution of his ideas foretelling the global impact of electronic media. In this sense, McLuhan’s documentary heritage is not only an archive of the past but an archive of the future.

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

This nomination is made jointly by Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and the University of Toronto Library (UTL).

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

LAC is the custodian and legal owner of the Marshall McLuhan archival collection. The Office of the Governing Council, University of Toronto, is the custodian and legal owner of the Marshall McLuhan research library.

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Dr Guy Berthiaume, Librarian and Archivist of Canada
Larry Alford, University Chief Librarian, University of Toronto

2.4 Contact details

Dr Guy Berthiaume

550 Blvd de la Cité
Gatineau, Quebec
Canada, K1A 0N4
819-934-5800
guy.berthiaume@canada.ca

Larry Alford
University of Toronto Libraries
Chief Librarian's Office
130 St George Street
Toronto, Ontario
Canada, M5S 1A5
416-978-2292
larry.alford@utoronto.ca

3.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

If inscribed, the exact title and institution(s) to appear on the certificate should be given

The documentary heritage being nominated is Marshall McLuhan's archival collection at LAC and his research library at UTL. The interlinked collections of LAC and UTL were originally kept by McLuhan at his University of Toronto office and his private residence. They date from the time of his undergraduate studies to his death. No further accruals are expected for either of the collections, which are complete and closed

The archival collection of Marshall McLuhan is held by LAC, Canada's national archives and library. It is catalogued in LAC's MIKAN intellectual control system (MIKAN # 98306). The material in the collection dates from 1871 to 1987 and includes:

- 43.6 metres of textual records
- 1 microfilm reel
- 375 photographs: colour and black and white
- 275 prints: offset lithographs, reproductions, photochemical process prints, serigraphs
- 17 drawings
- 1 watercolour
- 1 printing plate
- 58 audio cassettes
- 29 audio discs
- 2 audio reels
- 21 film reels
- 24 videocassettes
- 3 plaques
- 2 medals

McLuhan's correspondence and the manuscripts of his writings – books, articles, essays, and lectures – are the heart of the archival collection.

The correspondence is 7 metres in extent. McLuhan exchanged letters with a wide range of international writers, intellectuals, artists, and critics. This correspondence reveals the free-

flowing exchange of ideas, insight, and inspiration that characterized McLuhan's groundbreaking studies. His correspondents included Ezra Pound, Hilaire Belloc, Wyndham Lewis, Robertson Davies, Malcolm Muggeridge, William Jovanovich, Margaret Atwood, Clare Boothe Luce, Woody Allen, Buckminster Fuller, John Cage, Glenn Gould, Yousuf Karsh, John McHale, and York Wilson, Jacques Barzun, Cleanth Brooks, John Kenneth Galbraith, Walter Ong, George Steiner, Ted Carpenter, Peter Drucker, Northrop Frye, Eric Havelock, Hugh Kenner, Margaret Mead, Jane Jacobs, John Polanyi, David Riesman, Harry Skornia, Bernard Lonergan, and Jacques Maritain. His long-standing voluminous correspondence with Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau is of special importance because it dates from the era when mastering new media was essential in political life.

The manuscripts are 17 metres in extent. These include drafts of McLuhan's books and articles, research and outline notes, an exhaustive array of resource material, translations, publicity material, reviews and correspondence, which provide unique and irreplaceable insight into the development of his thought. Treasures include the early drafts of *The Mechanical Bride*, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, *Understanding Media* and other works, in which his transformative ideas first took shape. In these works, provocative concepts like "the global village" and "hot and cool media" emerge, evolve in successive drafts and are revealed fully-formed in publication.

McLuhan's research library is held by the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, the largest publicly accessible repository of rare books and manuscripts in Canada. McLuhan's library is catalogued in the University of Toronto's library catalogue (catalogue key 9127639; call number: mcluhan). Individual items in McLuhan's library date from 1698-1980. The collection is comprised of two inter-related parts:

- 1) 4720 books (some journals are included among that number) and 607 pamphlets. Many of these items were annotated by McLuhan.

This collection reflects McLuhan's wide-ranging professional and personal interests including literature, philosophy, mythology, history, theology and psychology. Many of the items in McLuhan's library were presented to him by their authors with inscriptions that document informal international professional networks of scholarship, friendship, admiration and influence. McLuhan wrote in his books as he read them and inserted letters, long notes and newspaper clippings. The fact that McLuhan's research library is preserved as a collection is especially significant because personal libraries are very often dispersed at their owner's death, leaving an incomplete documentation of an individual's intellectual influences and activities.

The vast majority of the books are in English, though a small number are in other languages including French, Italian and Latin. Throughout his life, McLuhan read with pen in hand and annotated the majority of the items in his library. He generally wrote on a book's end papers, but he sometimes underlined passages or wrote in the margins. McLuhan read voraciously and his intellectual life is made visible in his books. McLuhan's notes show his engagement with an author's ideas. Family and friends who also used the library sometimes added annotations. The UTL [finding aid](#) includes handwriting samples to help users identify who made the notes.

The way McLuhan annotated changed over time. As a student he often quoted long passages from other relevant works. By contrast, his later annotations tend to be shorter, making use of numerous abbreviations, and are entirely focused on the book at hand.

The library contains many singular treasures, including volumes by Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, and especially James Joyce, particularly *Finnegans Wake*, an inspirational text for much of McLuhan's thinking. There are five different editions of *Finnegans Wake* (including a rare first edition), each heavy with ink from McLuhan's many interlinear and

marginal annotations. The library also consists of books that relate directly to McLuhan's own work on communication and technology, including Lewis Mumford's *Technics and Civilization*, Harold Innis's *Empire and Communications*, and Sigfried Giedion's *Mechanization Takes Command*, all of which are heavily annotated by McLuhan. McLuhan's copy of Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (which McLuhan reviewed for *Renaissance and Reformation*) has McLuhan arguing with Eisenstein in his notes and in the margins of those pages in which she criticizes his non-linear presentation of historical events in *The Gutenberg Galaxy*.

- 2) 23 volumes of material, including notes, correspondence, manuscripts, newspaper clippings and other various ephemera that McLuhan laid into the books.

McLuhan enclosed research notes, correspondence and ephemera in his books. These items have been removed and are stored separately from the books. A [finding aid](#) for the added material indicates the publication and specific pages in which individual enclosures was found.

Marshall McLuhan's research library and archival collection comprehensively, uniquely and irreplaceably document one of the most influential modern thinkers. McLuhan's vision of a 'global village' embodies the spirit of collective heritage that UNESCO represents. These collections thus exemplify the vision and objectives of the Memory of the World Programme.

3.4 History/provenance

LAC purchased the Marshall McLuhan archival collection from his estate in 1984. The Government of Canada recognised McLuhan's significance by providing special funding for the purchase, in order to fend off any foreign bids and ensure that the collection remained in Canada as part of the nation's documentary heritage.

UTL purchased McLuhan's research library from Marshall McLuhan's son and frequent collaborator Eric McLuhan in 2013.

4.0 Legal information

4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

Marshall McLuhan's archival collection is owned by:

Library and Archives Canada
550 Blvd de la Cite
Gatineau, Quebec
Canada, K1A 0N4

Marshall McLuhan's research library is owned by:

The Governing Council
University of Toronto
27 King's College Circle
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 1A1, Canada

4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)

The custodian of the Marshall McLuhan archival collection is Library and Archives Canada.

The custodian of the Marshall McLuhan research library is the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

4.3 Legal status

LAC is the legal owner and administrator of Marshall McLuhan's archival collection.

The Office of the Governing Council is the legal owner of the Marshall McLuhan research library; UTL is the administrator of Marshall McLuhan's research collection.

4.4 Accessibility

The McLuhan archival collection may be consulted in LAC's reading room in central Ottawa by anyone from Canada and around the world. Researchers may also obtain copies for research purposes.

Items from McLuhan's research library may be consulted by anyone from Canada and around the world. University of Toronto faculty have been encouraged to use the McLuhan Library for teaching and seminars, and the books are featured prominently on UTL's social media. Researchers are permitted to make scans of the books and materials for research purposes using the in-house scanner.

The [website](#) created collaboratively between LAC and UTL as part of this submission significantly enhances the accessibility of the two collections. The website is hosted by LAC and can be accessed freely from anywhere. Digitized portions of the McLuhan archival collection and the McLuhan research library that have been attached to the website. These have been selected to enable users to visualize the important interconnections between two collections that are housed in separate institutions.

More material will be digitized and added to the website over time in agreement with the McLuhan estate and in accordance with copyright law.

4.5 Copyright status

The Marshall McLuhan archival collection: The McLuhan family retains ownership of copyright, but the purchase agreement gives LAC the right to ‘provide copies of the McLuhan Collection or portions thereof to Canadian institutions for addition to their research facilities.’ This provision allowed LAC to microfilm a large portion of the McLuhan archival collection.

Marshall McLuhan’s research library: The copyright status of the published materials varies according to the date of publication and the date of death of the individual authors. The McLuhan family retains copyright on McLuhan’s annotations.

LAC and UTL have collaborated closely with the estate of Marshall McLuhan to secure all necessary copyright permissions for submitting these two collections for inclusion in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.

5.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

5.1 Authenticity.

All the archival material is unique because it was created and collected by McLuhan. The published works in McLuhan’s research library are similarly unique. They were owned, read and used by him while he developed his ideas. His annotations provide concrete evidence of the development of his ideas. They are a map of McLuhan’s intellectual interests and thought process.

The identity and provenance of both collections has been reliably established without any doubt since they were received directly from the estate of Marshall McLuhan.

5.2 World significance

McLuhan was a global intellectual and cultural celebrity. He was a big thinker across many cultures whose ideas founded the new fields of Media Studies, Communications Studies and Cultural Studies (Appendix A). His writings inaugurated a discourse on media that Jean Baudrillard proclaimed a new age, a new epistemology. The archival and published material at LAC and UTL is unique and irreplaceable to the world, given that it is comprised of original material created, annotated, and disseminated by McLuhan throughout his career, as he directly engaged in and influenced the cultural, intellectual, and social context of his time.

Material that was not created by McLuhan but collected by him as part of his intellectual development and research is equally irreplaceable. McLuhan’s interests make this material a cross-section of a crucial moment of change in 20th century cultural history that supports research in many disciplines. McLuhan annotated the published items in his research library heavily. These notations document how particular works inspired him intellectually. Many of the works in McLuhan’s research library also have significant iconic, emotional and financial value in that they are presentation copies inscribed by their authors, such as the architect and designer R. Buckminster Fuller, the anthropologist Ashley Montagu and the painter and writer Wyndham Lewis. Such presentation copies and their inscriptions are unique evidence of the international exchange of ideas during the twentieth century, providing unique insights into

mutual influences between McLuhan and his peer networks.

McLuhan's archival collection and research library complement one another to give very significant, intimate insights into his creative process and the evolution of his thinking. McLuhan's unpublished notes challenge readers to navigate and receive insight into the full range of his thinking across many domains. The significance of this documentary heritage comes in part from McLuhan's continuing status, thirty-five years after his death, as one of the most influential and globally important figures across a range of cultural and technological domains. His influence is in fact increasing in the information age; there is renewed interest in his work, leading to the appearance of new critical editions and translations into additional languages.

McLuhan's ideas centrally inspired the 1967 World's Fair in Montreal, known as Expo 67. Many commentators called Expo "McLuhan's Fair," because the overall theme of 'Man and His World' was directly derived from McLuhan. This was concretely embodied in the Expo pavilions, which were decorated with numerous quotes from McLuhan's writings. McLuhan's ideas influenced the development of IMAX film technology, which was featured at Expo. The French translation of McLuhan's book *The Gutenberg Galaxy* was launched at Expo, and inspired debates about "macluhanisme" in France. The French sociologist Jean Baudrillard argued that McLuhan's ideas were central to understanding the modern era. He wrote that "the media is no longer recognizable as such and the merging of the medium and the message is the first great formula of this new age."

Evidence of the foundational impact of McLuhan's ideas on modern thought includes:

- his books have been translated into at least 17 languages and are found in national collections throughout the globe;
- his most famous aphorism, 'global village,' is recognised as 'village planétaire' in *Le dictionnaire Larousse*, and as 'Globales Dorf' in the German *Duden* dictionary;
- his name is an eponym for the school of thought he created, and derivations such as 'McLuhanesque,' 'McLuhanism,' 'McLuhanite,' and 'McLuhanise' are recognised by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED);
- the OED also cites McLuhan as a source for the etymology and usage of 346 words.

Marshall McLuhan's international impact on communication theory and media ecology is comparable to that exerted in other domains by individuals whose records have already been registered by UNESCO. These include the Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, the scientist and theologian Emmanuel Swedenborg, the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the Philippine ethno-musicologist José Maceda, the Barbadian political activist Nita Barrow, the Saint Lucian economist Sir William Arthur Lewis and the Trinidadian academic and statesman Eric Williams.

5.3 Comparative criteria:

Does the heritage meet any of the following tests? (It must meet at least one of them.)

1 Time

McLuhan's archival collection and library are extremely evocative of their time. The period in which he worked, the 1940s to the late 1970s, coincided with the emergence of the modern

mass media, most notably television and the earliest computers. McLuhan was one of the very first and most important academics to study the impact of media and the nascent advertising industry on individuals and society. He was a leading figure in several global intellectual networks: he interacted with not only other academics, but also a wide range of other groups from Catholic thinkers in the Post-Vatican II era to counter-cultural activists to ad men and business theorists. McLuhan's participation in these networks is reflected in his archives and research library collection through correspondence, inscriptions in books, and other records. As a result, McLuhan's archives and research library are very evocative of the most important intellectual, cultural, religious, corporate and media discourses of his time.

McLuhan accumulated voluminous files of clippings of advertisements, articles, jokes, pictures and posters from contemporary newspapers and magazines. These both influenced the development of his ideas and document how they were incorporated into everyday life. McLuhan's clipping collection illuminates him as a cultural archaeologist and archivist. In addition to being of his time, McLuhan was also very far ahead of his time. His ideas were often received with scepticism by his contemporaries. The Canadian poet Judith Fitzgerald wrote that "a number of his [McLuhan's] observations baffled and astonished audiences at the time – the outrageousness of some of them tempted his apoplectic critics to describe his theories as 'McLuhanacy.' Now, in the first decade of the new millennium they seem perfectly intelligible." He foresaw the impact of networked electronic information in 1962 when he wrote that "a computer as a research and communication instrument could enhance retrieval, obsolesce mass library organization, retrieve the individual's encyclopedic function and flip into a private line to speedily tailored data of a saleable kind." McLuhan invented the idea that people "surf" for information, a phrase now regularly used in reference to the internet. As a result, the global relevance of McLuhan's archives and research library is tied not only to the era in which they were produced, but also to the information society that he foresaw and in which we live.

2 Place

McLuhan's archives and research library document the intellectual life and social networks in each place he lived. In particular, the collections provide insight into university life in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom from the 1920s until McLuhan's death in 1980. Perhaps the most significant place documented is the Centre for Culture and Technology, which was founded at the University of Toronto in 1963. The Centre was one of the most important intellectual centres in 1960s Canada. It was at the forefront of 'cool Canada,' hosting weekly public lectures at which participants debated current ideas and theories. These lectures were attended by everyone from Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and internationally known artists like Glenn Gould to undergraduate students and the wider public. The Centre also became the physical focus for a global intellectual network known as the 'Toronto School' of communications theory. The leading members of this network included McLuhan, Harold Innis, Robertson Davies, Eric Havelock, Northrop Frye and Walter Ong.

McLuhan's archives and research library also document the following places:

- Madison Avenue in New York at the dawn of the advertising age, through his work as a corporate media consultant;
- San Francisco, because he was idolized by and involved with the 1960s counter-cultural movement;
- The Vatican, during the Vatican II-era, through his work as an official communications advisor to the Pope; and

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- Montreal, as the inspiration for Expo 67, an event many people consider to have contributed to the birth of modern Canada.

3 People

McLuhan's archives and research library document his life, professional networks, intellectual activities and far-reaching influence. He brought together networks of scholars and *avant-garde* thinkers in the 1950s and 60s in part through his widely-circulated publications like the *DEW-line Newsletter* and *Explorations*. He was invited to participate in the 1963 Delos Symposium, a global gathering in Greece to discuss human settlement and society. Ideas developed at Delos were subsequently adopted by international organizations.

The archives and research library collections are filled with evidence of the people with whom McLuhan interacted throughout the world, from intellectuals and theologians to students, media and cultural figures, writers, journalists and world leaders. Documentation about his interactions with internationally renowned cultural figures like Woody Allen, for instance, shed light on celebrity culture. As such, his research library and archival collection document the activities of many of the most influential men and women of the mid-twentieth century.

4 Subject and theme

McLuhan created new discourses about communications, technology, history, popular culture, modernism, design, urbanism and theology. His archives and research library comprehensively document his foundational contributions to the development of the fields of communications theory, cultural studies and media studies. His achievements represent a very significant historical and intellectual development in the understanding of the effects of technology on modern society. McLuhan's theories are centrally important for understanding the digital age. This has given McLuhan's theories increasing credibility in the twenty-first century as society is fundamentally transformed by digital devices.

5 Form and style

McLuhan's archives and research library document his transformative impact on the form and style of books and publishing. Books like *The Mechanical Bride* were innovative in design and layout, combining text, cartoons, photographs and images. McLuhan's inventive combinations of text, fonts, characters and images included styles drawn from comic books – a medium which he was among the first scholars to take seriously. McLuhan's books and newsletters are studied today as ground-breaking exercises in postmodern book design. Although McLuhan's ideas were sometimes extremely complex, his use of appealing and innovative forms of visual presentation made them accessible to the public. His 1967 book *The Medium is the Massage* ushered in a new genre of publishing that Jeffrey Schnapp and Adam Michaels called 'The Electric Information Age Book.' This term identifies mass-market paperbacks published in the sixties and seventies that were directly influenced by McLuhan in their incorporation of verbal and visual collages and innovative uses of typography. This revolutionized the idea of the physical book.

McLuhan's impact continues to resonate in new discourses about forms of media. For instance, Scott McCloud's seminal book about how to read and interpret comic books is entitled *Understanding Comics*, in direct homage to McLuhan's *Understanding Media*.

6 Social/ spiritual/ community significance

McLuhan's intellectual thought and practice reflected the spiritual questions of his era. He converted to Catholicism in 1937 and from then on was quite involved in ongoing debates about faith, especially in the post-Vatican II discussions about the future of the Church.

McLuhan's involvement in these discussions is documented in his archives and research library through correspondence with theologians such as Bernard Lonergan, Walter Ong, and Jacques Maritain. He was appointed by the Vatican as Consultor to the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications in 1973.

McLuhan's significance to the community in which he lived is documented in his archives and research library through records related to the public seminars he held at the University of Toronto and a film he made with the internationally important urban theorist Jane Jacobs to oppose the building of a freeway across the heart of the city of Toronto.

6.0 Contextual information

6.1 Rarity

The archival collection consists of original, unique material related to ground-breaking research by one of the most influential thinkers of the twentieth century. The books in the research library provide insight into McLuhan's diverse personal and academic interests, from Catholicism to the environment and communications theory to James Joyce. Although the majority of the books in the research library are not rare *per se*, McLuhan's ownership of the items along with his copious marginal notations and comments on the texts make these copies unique. The materials McLuhan laid into the books, including manuscripts (both published and unpublished) and correspondence, also enhance the rarity of the research library collection.

6.2 Integrity

McLuhan's archive and research library are remarkably rich since they comprehensively document his entire life, including his academic training, teaching, research and writing, as well as his various professional, scholarly and social networks. The most significant material was created at the time that McLuhan was actively researching and writing. McLuhan's archive and research library represent the blocks with which he built many of his insights and ideas.
