Philosophical Position Paper

This position paper is using the works of Marshall McLuhan who was said to be the “Priest of Popcult and Metaphysician of Media” according to the Playboy Interview in 1969. Using Marshall McLuhan’s work as a guide to discuss my position of how computing technology, educational and entertainment, has impacted teaching and learning.

Teaching in the classroom has come a long way from chalkboards and manuscript to computers and software. Students are now being immersed with technology in the classroom. Teachers are working very hard trying to incorporate all the technology they can in daily lessons. The age of paper and pencil has moved to digital and paperless. Children are learning earlier and earlier how to use technology with playing games on iPhones and watching and listening to cartoons on other electronic devices.

In an excerpt from the Playboy Interview McLuhan says:

“all media- in and of themselves and regardless of the messages they communicate—exert a compelling influence on man and society. Prehistoric, or tribal, man existed in a harmonious balance of the senses, perceiving the world equally through hearing, smell, touch, sight, and taste. But technological innovations are extensions of human abilities and senses that alter this sensory balance—an alteration that, in turn inexorably reshapes the society that created the technology. There have been three technological innovations; the invention of the phonetic alphabet, which jolted tribal man out of his sensory balance and gave dominance to the eye; the introduction of movable type in the 16th Century, which accelerated this process; and the invention of the telegraph in 1844, which
heralded an electronics revolution that will ultimately retribalize man by restoring his sensory balance.” (Playboy, 1969)

“People are beginning to understand the nature of their new technology, but not yet nearly enough of them—and not nearly well enough. (McLuhan-Playboy, 1969) Educators are realizing that there is so much to be learned from the use of technology in able to teach it in a classroom. Computers that are used in a classroom for games and entertainment are not being used to the extent of their capacity. Students are being instructed using more technology in the classroom so that they will be better equipped to enhance their career paths.

McLuhan says “Because of today’s terrific speed-up of information moving, we have a chance to apprehend, predict and influence the environmental forces shaping us—and thus win back control of our own destinies.” (Playboy, 1969) McLuhan spoke with fervency about the power of technology and how we can use it for shaping us in the right way. Teachers have the ability to shape and mold the students of the future. Technology in the classroom is a must and used appropriately and effectively it will equip the students to become up to speed in the work force.

“If we don’t adapt our educational system to their needs and values, we will see only more dropouts and more chaos.” (McLuhan-Playboy 1969)
Works Cited