

# Thoughts about the Modern Global Village

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Read the following quotations and *summarize* each one in your own words. Then write your *opinion* of each quotation.

"The new electronic independence recreates the world in the image of a global village." ~ Marshall McLuhan, communications thinker, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, 1962

"If the world is becoming a global village, it will also take on the feature of real village life, including cliques, lifelong feuds, and impassable social barriers." ~ Northrop Frye, Canadian writer, "Communications," *Cultural Critic*, 9 July 1970

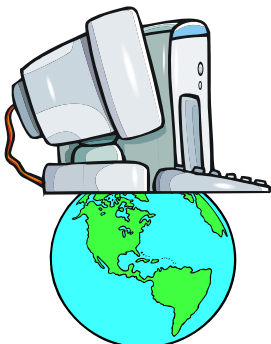


"Never before in history has the disparity between the rich and the poor, the comfortable and the starving, been so extreme; never before have the privileged societies possessed weapons so powerful that their employment in the defence of privilege would destroy the haves and the have-nots indiscriminately. We are faced with an overwhelming challenge. In meeting it, the world must be our constituency." ~ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Remarks, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 13 May 1968

"It's hard to be globally minded when you're sleeping under a bridge." ~ Murray Dobbin, commentator and critic of globalization, "Right of Reply," *The Canadian Forum*, December 1992

"The classical scope of responsibility—to one's own person, to one's family, to one's community and nation—must be broadened. Not even the biblical admonition of responsibility to all human beings is sufficiently broad. The new responsibility must be more. It must extend to all space and through all time. It must be one inclusive of persons far beyond our own national frontiers; it must encompass the physical planet and all its ingredients—water and air, non-renewable resources, living organisms; it must extend into the future not just for months or years, but for decades."

~ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Remarks, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, 12 May 1974



"The global village is not created by the motor car or even by the airplane. It's created by instant electronic information movement." ~ Marshall McLuhan

"Computers are merely ingenious devices to fulfill unimportant functions. The computer revolution is an explosion of nonsense." ~ Neil Postman

11 September was the dark side of this new age of global interdependence. If you don't want to live with barbed wire around your children and grandchildren for the next hundred years, then it's not enough to defeat the terrorist. We have to make a world where there are fewer potential terrorists and more partners. And that responsibility falls primarily upon the wealthy nations to spread the benefits and shrink the burdens.

There are changes that poor countries have to make within that to make progress possible. It's no accident that most of these terrorists come from countries that aren't democracies. If you're never required to take responsibility for yourself, then you're kept in a state of permanent immaturity where it's easy to convince you that your distress is caused by someone else's success.

So this is a fight we have to make everywhere. Which will be more important in the 21st century—our differences or our common humanity? Think about how important your differences are to you. Think about how we all organise our lives in little boxes—man, woman, British, American, Muslim, Christian, Jew, Tory, Labour, New Labour, Old Labour, up, down. We have to organise that, but somewhere along the way, we finally come to understand that our life is more than all these boxes we're in. And that if we can't reach beyond that, we'll never have a fuller life.

~ Bill Clinton, former president of the United States, in the Dimpleby Memorial Lecture at the Institute of Education in London, 18 December 2001.

Some modern media critics have said that the following quote from Charles Dickens, which was written in his novel about the French Revolution, applies very well to the modern information age of mass media and instant electronic communications. Discuss in your group how you feel about Dickens' idea.



It was the age of wisdom; it was the age of foolishness,  
It was the epoch of belief; it was the epoch of incredulity,  
It was the season of Light; it was the season of Darkness,  
It was the spring of hope; it was the winter of despair.  
We had everything before us,  
We had nothing before us.

~ Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*