

# RIGHT WAY TO INVESTIGATE WHAT'S LEFT

**Right Hand, Left Hand**

**By Chris McManus**

**(Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20)**

THE young woman sitting opposite me in the office is a Marlborough-handed, gammy-fisted, dolly-pawed watty.

But it's okay, she won't be slapping my face for being insulting.

Or, at least, if she does, she will be using her left hand, because that's what all those words mean.

The question is: why are the majority of us right-handed while a significant minority go the other way? For that matter, why is the heart on the left side of our bodies?

McManus is the expert on all of this stuff and has plenty of serious science and clever theories to impart.

He also explodes a few myths. Sorry all you southpaws, but you're not more creative or intelligent than

right-handers. On the other hand, you can forget that story about lefties being likely to die earlier.

He can also explain why the Muppets are left-handed.

Apparently, this is not because Jim Henson was a leftie himself but because the puppeteers need to use their right hands to control the

heads, leaving the left to control the hands.

Alas, the famous left-handed gunslinger Billy the Kid was really a right-hander, the confusion having grown up because of another reversed photograph.

The Queen Mother and Prince William are left-handed but was George VI really a left-hander who was forced to use his right, a trauma that led to him stammering?

If you can't tell your left from your right, then this fascinating book could be for you.