

attention span and the desire ever to find out "how," or "why," or even if it's all true!

Television Compresses Time

The unquestioned illogic of going from the studio (CUT) to a live scene on location (CUT) to a suspended head talking (CUT) to graphics appearing on the screen (CUT) without ever seeing how any of it got there has made us believe in—and expect—magic.

This technological mastery compresses *natural* time. We want information *now* and grow impatient with normal, human methods.

TV Reinforces Information

Using graphics and descriptive written words to identify and clarify, television news teaches us that "If you don't catch on, we'll help you." "Don't bother listening hard, we'll tell you again." Even when pictures are shown, a voice off-camera explains them.

Visuals Are the Message

Words and *people* are no longer the primary message givers. Now *pictures* tell. Human tellers corroborate and embellish as introducers and voice-overs but are no longer the major source of information. Television has taught the viewer to expect *visual* proof, not to take anyone's *word* for it.

What Looks True Is Not True

Since pictures are edited by the reporter, and their content and point of view chosen by reporter, cameraman, director, and/or producer, what we see is not pure truth. It's technologically altered. Time and reality are distorted with quick, unconnected shots of a scene and close-ups impossible to do with the naked eye. Now, tellers of tales used to edit truth for impact, too, leaving it to our imaginations to fill in the picture. But today TV shows what *look* like authentic pictures, thus convincing us they're true and that *that's* the whole story.

The "Talking Head" Taboo

A "talking head" (close-up of a person just talking) is considered so boring that it's generally given thirty seconds or less on the air.