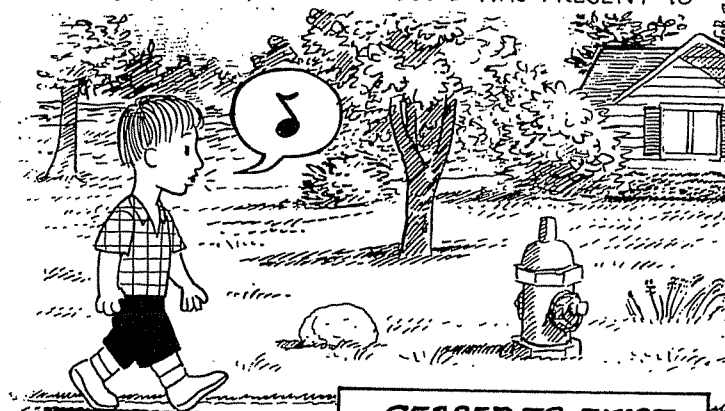


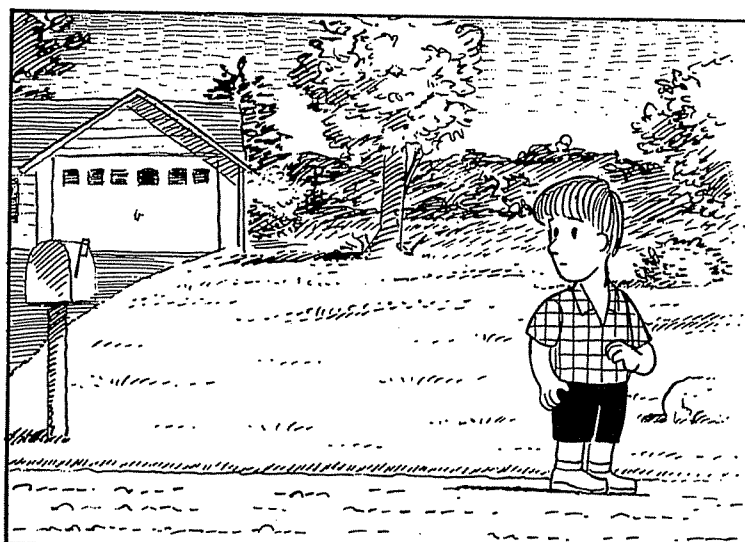
CHAPTER THREE

BLOOD IN THE GUTTER.

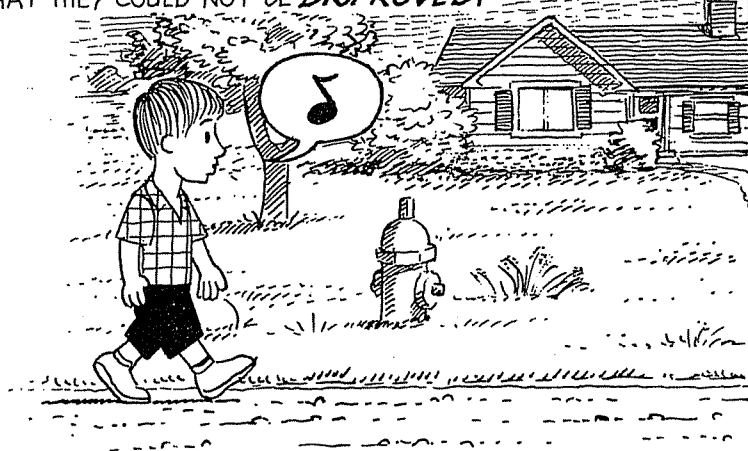
WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG, I HAD A RECURRENT *DAYDREAM* THAT THE *WHOLE WORLD* WAS JUST A *SHOW* PUT ON FOR MY *BENEFIT*, THAT UNLESS I WAS PRESENT TO *SEE* THINGS, THEY JUST--



--CEASED TO EXIST.



LATER IN LIFE, I FOUND OTHERS WHO HAD SIMILAR DAYDREAMS AS CHILDREN. NONE OF US EVER REALLY BELIEVED THESE THEORIES, BUT WE HAD ALL BEEN FASCINATED BY THE FACT THAT THEY COULD NOT BE DISPROVED!



EVEN TODAY, AS I WRITE AND DRAW THIS PANEL, I HAVE NO GUARANTEE THAT ANYTHING EXISTS OUTSIDE OF WHAT MY FIVE SENSES REPORT TO ME.*



I'VE NEVER BEEN TO MOROCCO, BUT I TAKE IT ON FAITH THAT THERE IS A MOROCCO!



I'VE NEVER SEEN THE EARTH FROM SPACE FIRSTHAND, YET I TRUST THAT THE EARTH IS ROUND.



I'VE NEVER BEEN IN THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET, YET I ASSUME IT HAS AN INTERIOR, THAT IT ISN'T JUST SOME BIG MOVIE SET!



IN THIS PANEL YOU CAN'T EVEN SEE MY LEGS, YET YOU ASSUME THAT THEY'RE THERE.



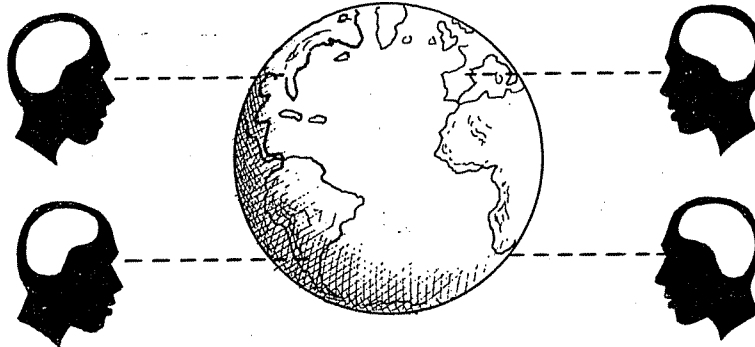
EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE NOT!



* NOT TO SAY OUR SENSES ARE ANY KIND OF GUARANTEE!

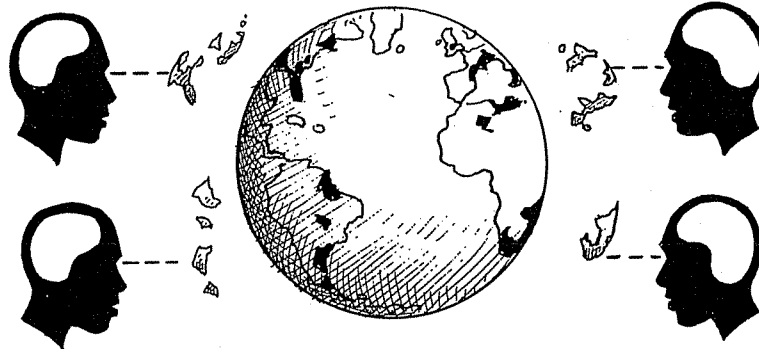
ALL OF US PERCEIVE THE
WORLD AS A *WHOLE* THROUGH
THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR
SENSES.

YET OUR SENSES CAN
ONLY REVEAL A WORLD
THAT IS *FRAGMENTED*
AND *INCOMPLETE*.



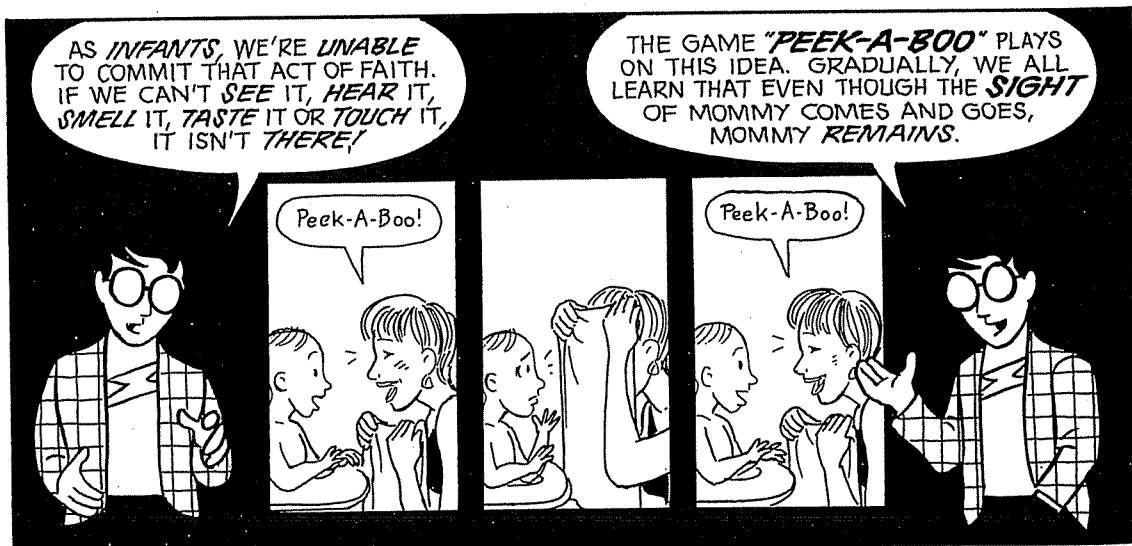
EVEN THE MOST *WIDELY*
TRAVELLED MIND CAN ONLY
SEE SO MUCH OF THE WORLD
IN THE COURSE OF A LIFE.

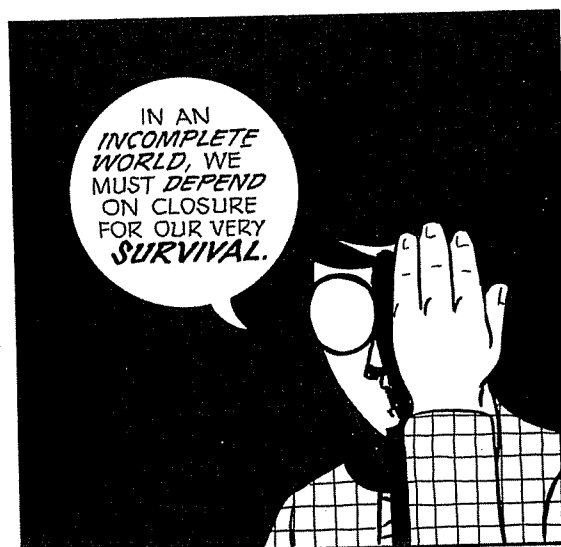
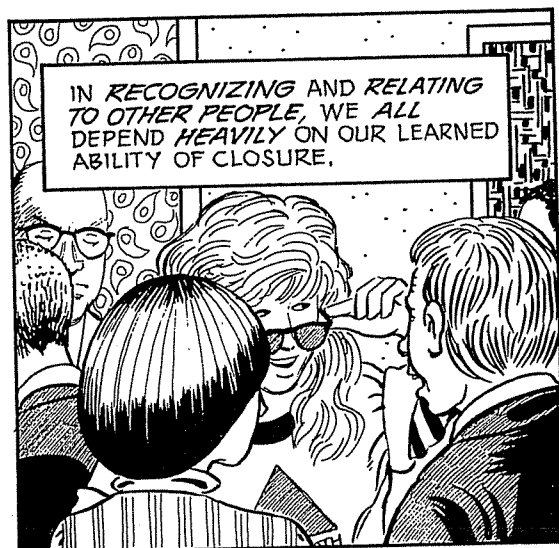
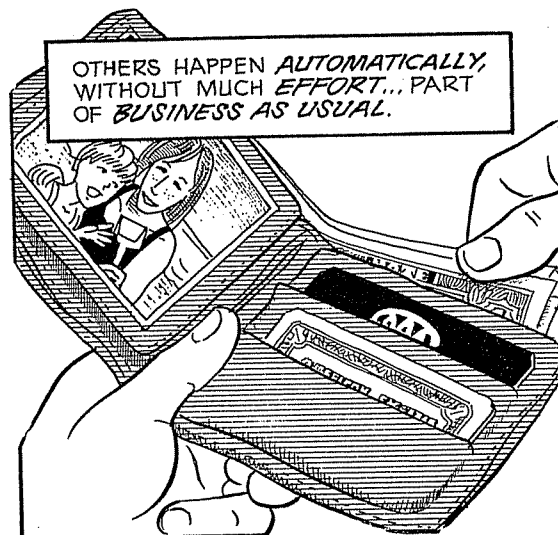
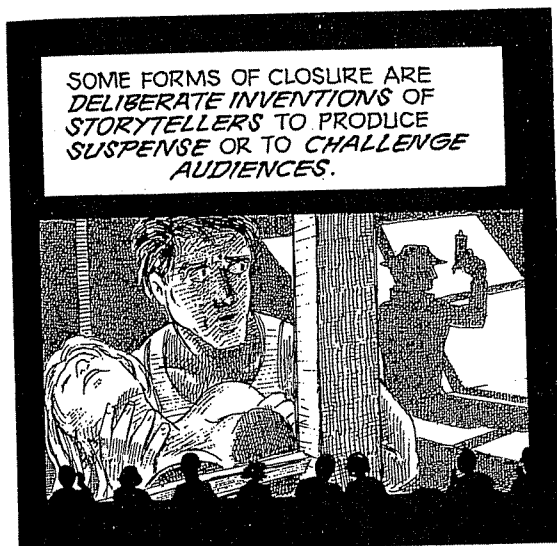
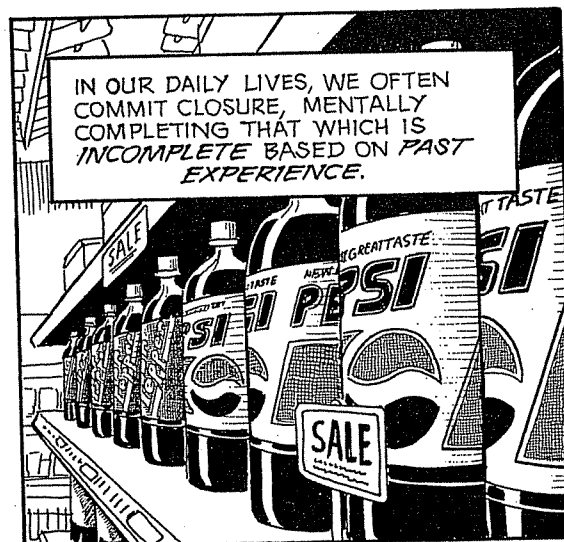
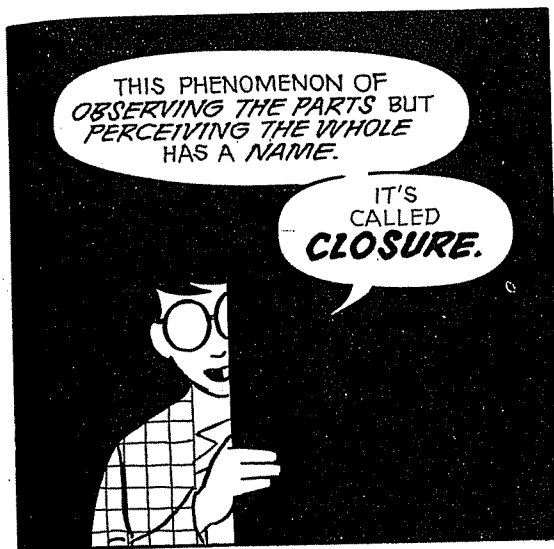
OUR PERCEPTION OF
"REALITY" IS AN ACT OF
FAITH, BASED ON MERE
FRAGMENTS.




AS *INFANTS*, WE'RE *UNABLE*
TO COMMIT THAT ACT OF FAITH.
IF WE CAN'T *SEE* IT, *HEAR* IT,
SMELL IT, *TASTE* IT OR *TOUCH* IT,
IT ISN'T *THERE*!

THE GAME "*PEEK-A-BOO*" PLAYS
ON THIS IDEA. GRADUALLY, WE ALL
LEARN THAT EVEN THOUGH THE *SIGHT*
OF MOMMY COMES AND GOES,
MOMMY *REMAINS*.







CLOSURE CAN TAKE MANY FORMS. SOME SIMPLE, SOME COMPLEX.

CLOSURE

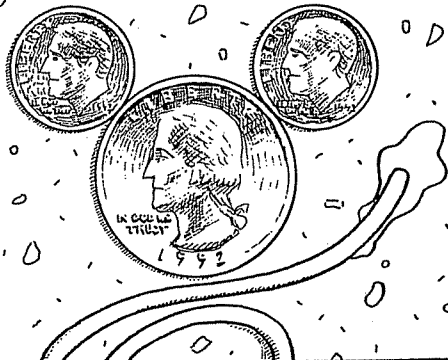
CLOSURE

CL S RE

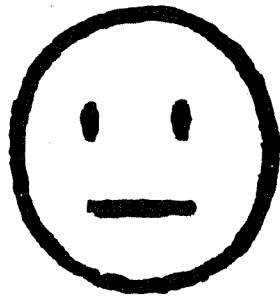
CLOSURE

CLOSURE

SOMETIMES, A MERE *SHAPE* OR *OUTLINE* IS ENOUGH TO TRIGGER CLOSURE.



THE MENTAL PROCESS DESCRIBED IN *CHAPTER TWO* WHEREBY THESE LINES BECOME A *FACE* COULD BE CONSIDERED CLOSURE.



EVERY TIME WE SEE A *PHOTOGRAPH* REPRODUCED IN A *NEWSPAPER* OR *MAGAZINE*, WE COMMIT CLOSURE.



OUR *EYES* TAKE IN THE *FRAGMENTED, BLACK-AND-WHITE IMAGE* OF THE "*HALF-TONE*" PATTERNS--

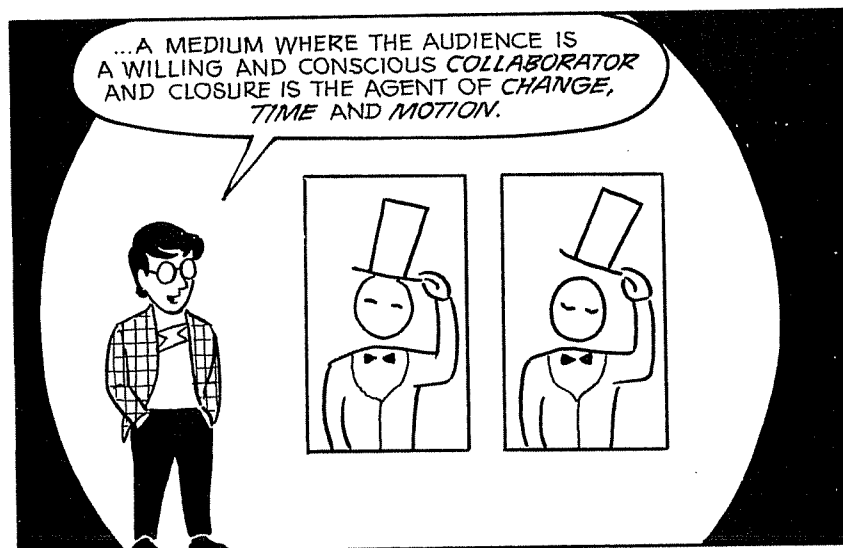
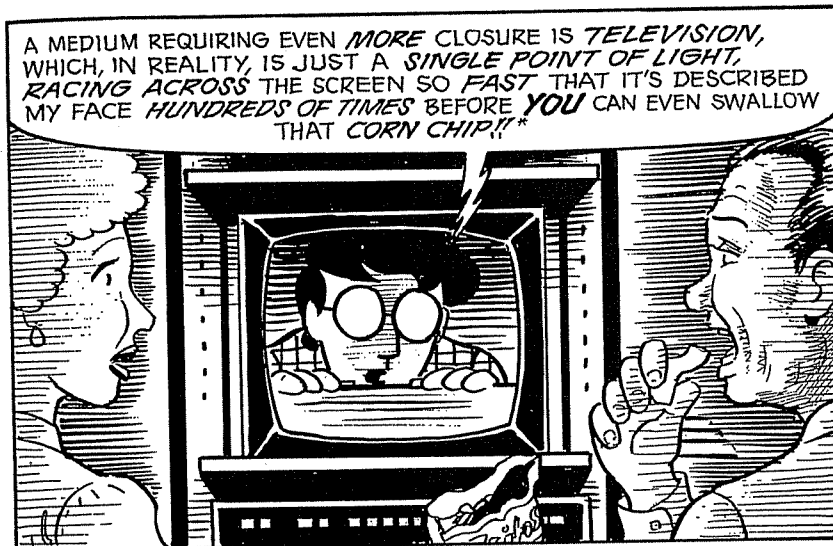
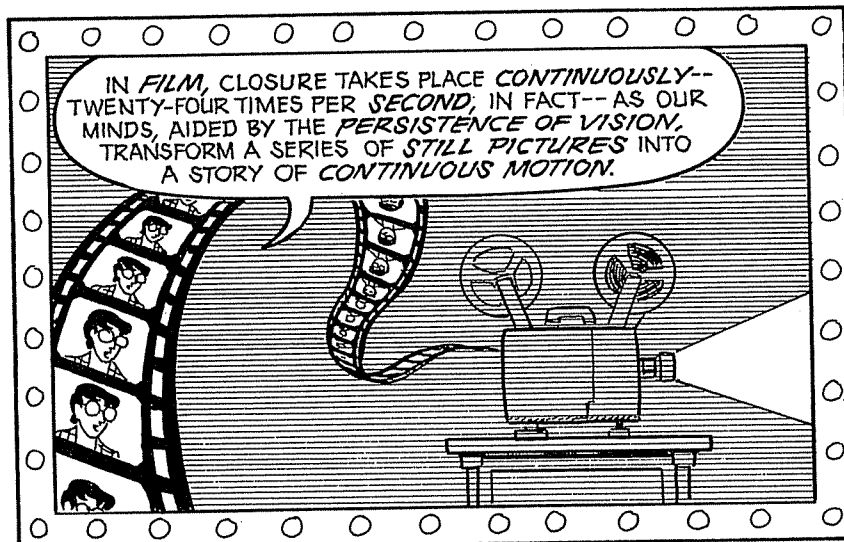


--AND OUR MINDS TRANSFORM IT INTO THE "*REALITY*"--



--OF THE *PHOTOGRAPH!*



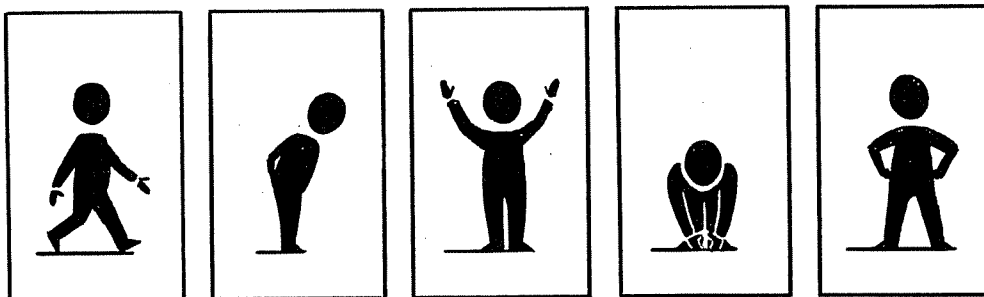


* MEDIA GURU TONY SCHWARTZ DESCRIBES THIS
AT LENGTH IN HIS BOOK *MEDIA, THE SECOND GOD*,
ANCHOR BOOKS, 1983.

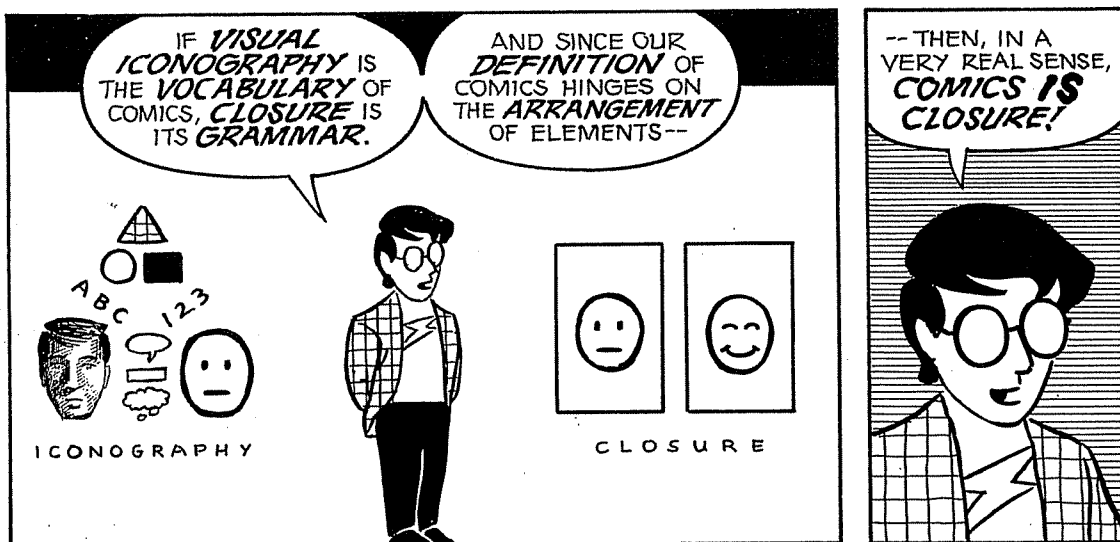


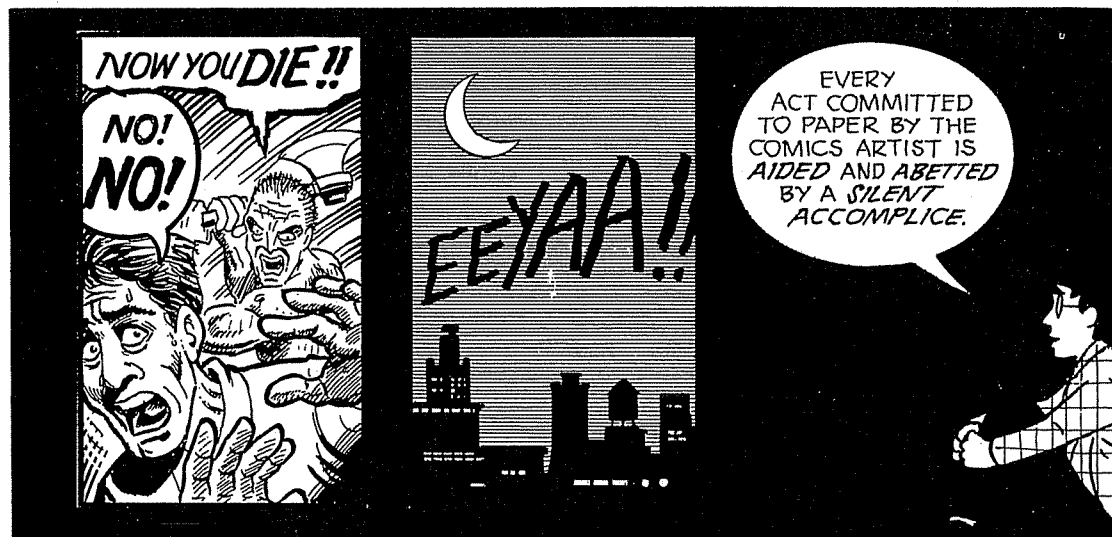
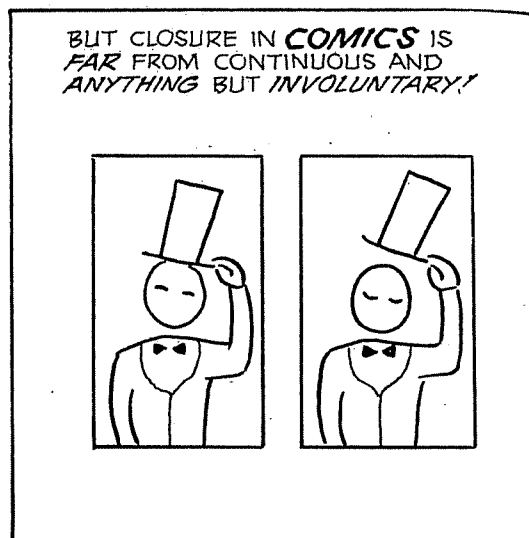
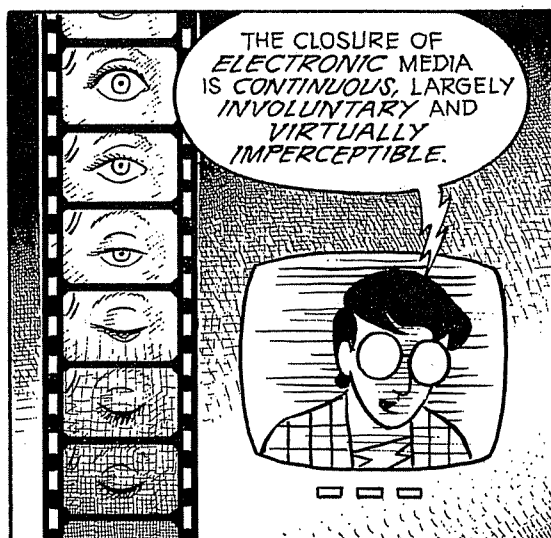


COMICS PANELS **FRACTURE** BOTH **TIME** AND **SPACE**, OFFERING A **JAGGED, STACCATO RHYTHM** OF **UNCONNECTED MOMENTS**.



BUT CLOSURE ALLOWS US TO **CONNECT** THESE MOMENTS AND **MENTALLY CONSTRUCT** A **CONTINUOUS, UNIFIED REALITY**.



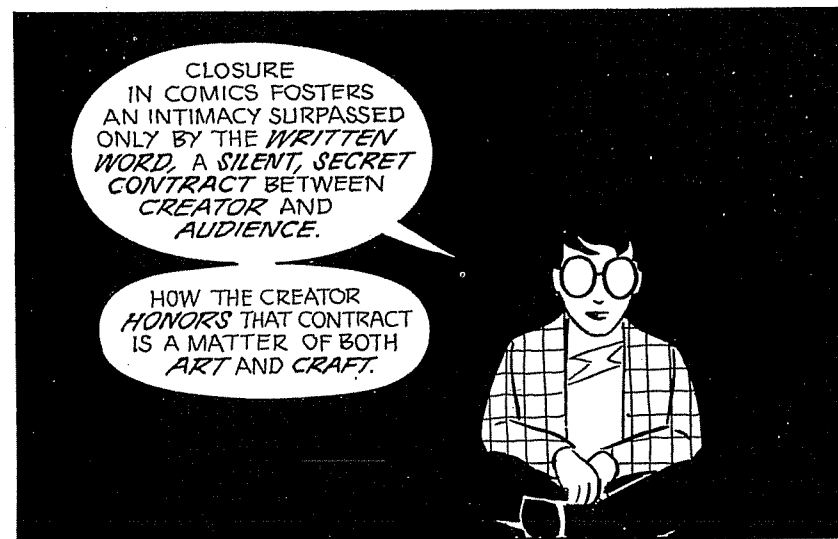
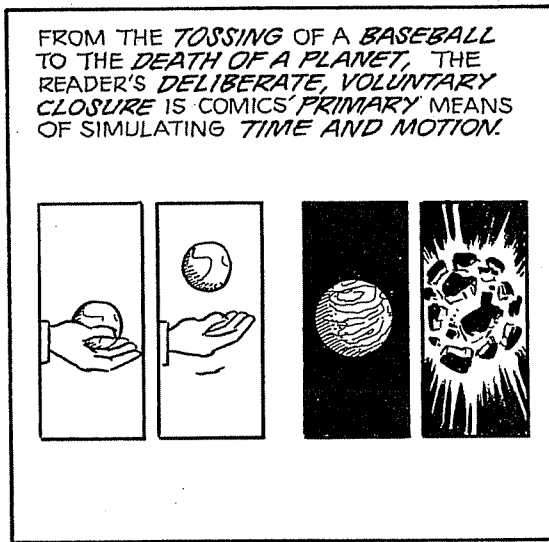
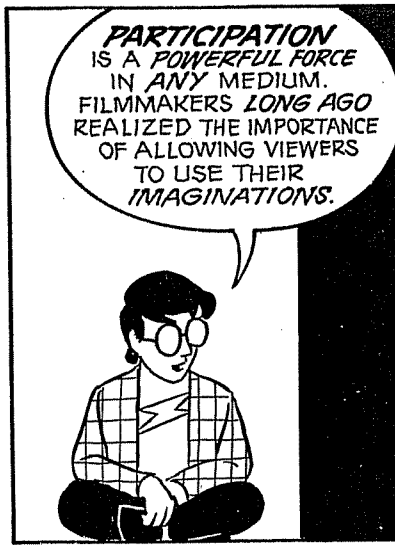


I MAY HAVE DRAWN AN *AXE* BEING RAISED IN THIS EXAMPLE, BUT I'M NOT THE ONE WHO LET IT *DROP* OR DECIDED HOW *HARD* THE BLOW, OR *WHO* SCREAMED, OR *WHY*.



THAT, DEAR READER, WAS YOUR SPECIAL CRIME, EACH OF YOU COMMITTING IT IN YOUR OWN *STYLE*.





MOST
PANEL-TO-PANEL
TRANSITIONS IN COMICS
CAN BE PLACED IN ONE
OF SEVERAL DISTINCT
CATEGORIES. THE **FIRST**
CATEGORY-- WHICH WE'LL
CALL **MOMENT-TO-TO**
MOMENT--REQUIRES
VERY **LITTLE**
CLOSURE.



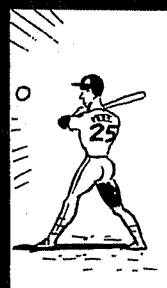
1.



NEXT
ARE THOSE
TRANSITIONS
FEATURING A SINGLE
SUBJECT IN DISTINCT
ACTION-TO-ACTION
PROGRESSIONS.



2.



THE NEXT TYPE TAKES US FROM **SUBJECT-TO-SUBJECT** WHILE STAYING WITHIN A SCENE OR IDEA. NOTE THE DEGREE OF **READER INVOLVEMENT** NECESSARY TO RENDER THESE TRANSITIONS **MEANINGFUL**.



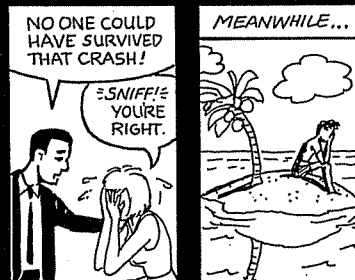
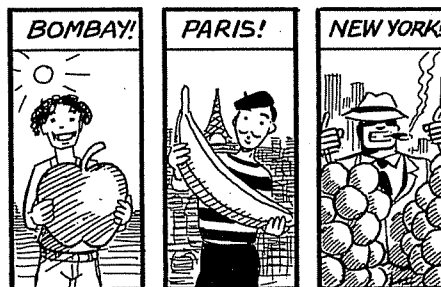
3.



DEDUCTIVE REASONING IS OFTEN REQUIRED IN READING COMICS SUCH AS IN THESE **SCENE-TO-SCENE** TRANSITIONS, WHICH TRANSPORT US ACROSS **SIGNIFICANT DISTANCES** OF TIME AND SPACE.



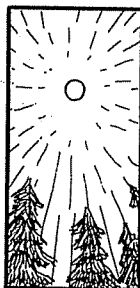
4.



A *FIFTH*
TYPE OF TRANSITION,
WHICH WE'LL CALL
ASPECT-TO-ASPECT,
BYPASSES *TIME* FOR THE
MOST PART AND SETS A
WANDERING EYE ON
DIFFERENT *ASPECTS*
OF A PLACE, IDEA
OR MOOD.



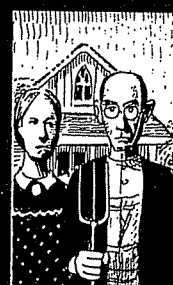
5.




AND
FINALLY, THERE'S
THE **NON-SEQUITUR**,
WHICH OFFERS NO
LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN PANELS
WHATSOEVER!



6.

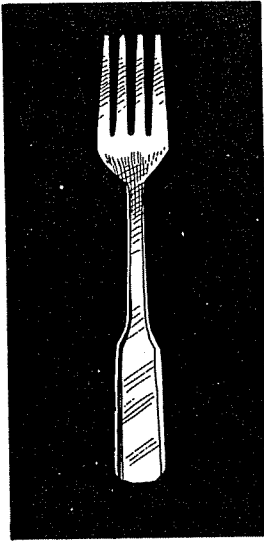


THIS *LAST* CATEGORY SUGGESTS AN INTERESTING *QUESTION*. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ANY SEQUENCE OF PANELS TO BE *TOTALLY UNRELATED* TO EACH OTHER?




PERSONALLY, I DON'T *THINK* SO.


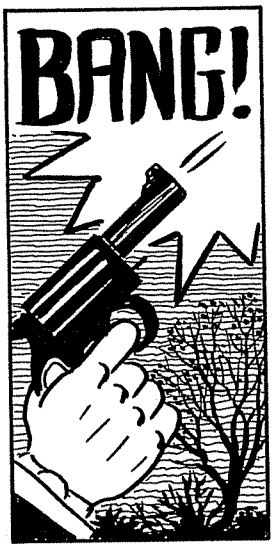
NO MATTER HOW *DISSIMILAR* ONE IMAGE MAY BE TO ANOTHER, THERE IS A KIND OF--

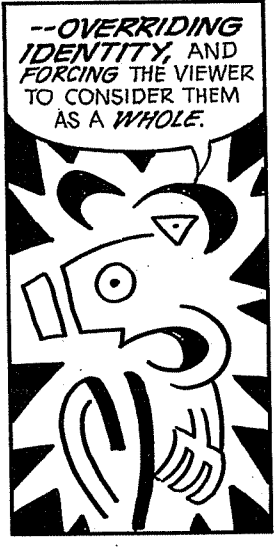
--*ALCHEMY* AT WORK IN THE SPACE BETWEEN PANELS WHICH CAN HELP US FIND *MEANING* OR *RESONANCE* IN EVEN THE MOST *JARRING* OF COMBINATIONS.



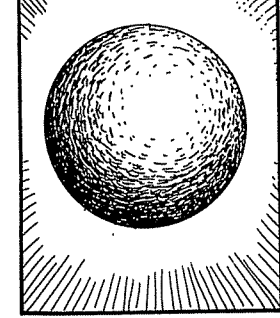
SUCH TRANSITIONS MAY NOT MAKE "*SENSE*" IN ANY TRADITIONAL WAY, BUT STILL A RELATIONSHIP OF *SOME SORT* WILL INEVITABLY *DEVELOP*.

BY CREATING A *SEQUENCE* WITH TWO OR MORE IMAGES, WE ARE *ENDOWING* THEM WITH A *SINGLE*--

HOWEVER *DIFFERENT* THEY HAD BEEN, THEY NOW BELONG TO A *SINGLE ORGANISM*.



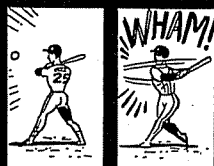

CLOSURE FOR *BLOOD*, GLITTERS FOR *VEINS*...




GE BICYCL PURC CE



1.
**MOMENT-
TO-
MOMENT**



2.
**ACTION-
TO-
ACTION**



3.
**SUBJECT-
TO-
SUBJECT**



4.
**SCENE-
TO-
SCENE**



5.
**ASPECT-
TO-
ASPECT**



6.
**NON-
SEQUITUR**

THIS SORT OF
CATEGORIZATION
IS AN *INEXACT SCIENCE*
AT *BEST*, BUT BY USING
OUR TRANSITION SCALE
AS A *TOOL* --

-- WE
CAN BEGIN
TO UNRAVEL SOME
OF THE MYSTERIES
SURROUNDING THE
INVISIBLE ART
OF *COMICS*
STORYTELLING!



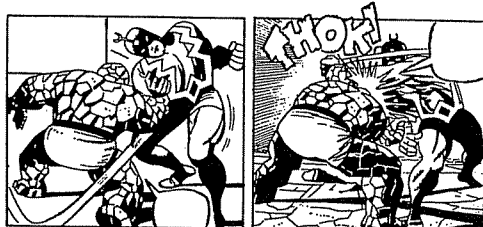
MOST *MAINSTREAM*
COMICS IN AMERICA
EMPLOY STORYTELLING
TECHNIQUES FIRST
INTRODUCED BY
JACK KIRBY, SO
LET'S START BY
EXAMINING THIS
LEE-KIRBY COMIC
FROM 1966.



ALTOGETHER, I COUNT
NINETY-FIVE
PANEL-TO-PANEL
TRANSITIONS.
LET'S SEE HOW
THEY BREAK DOWN,
PROPORTIONATELY



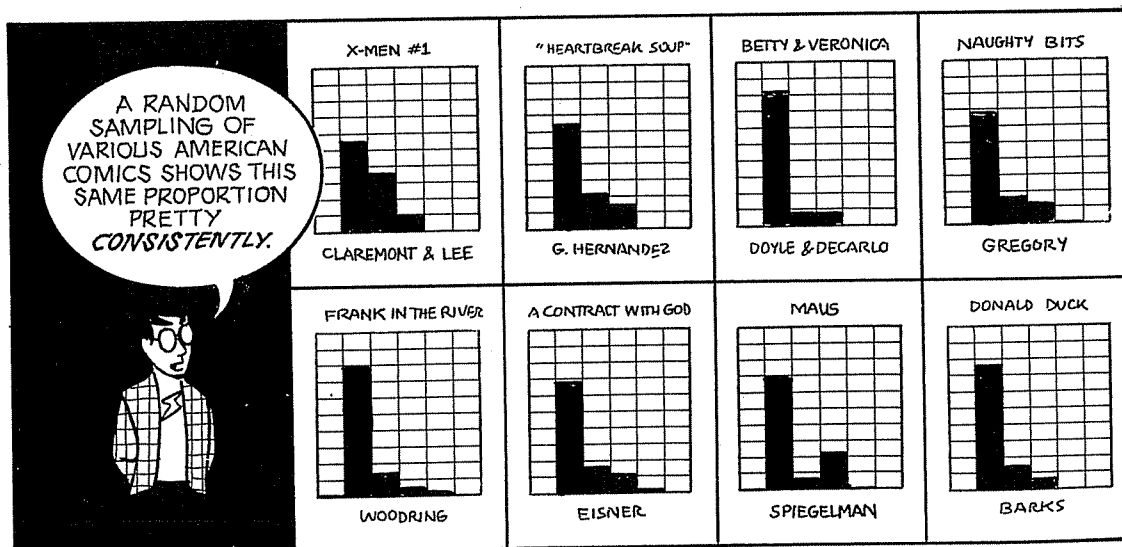
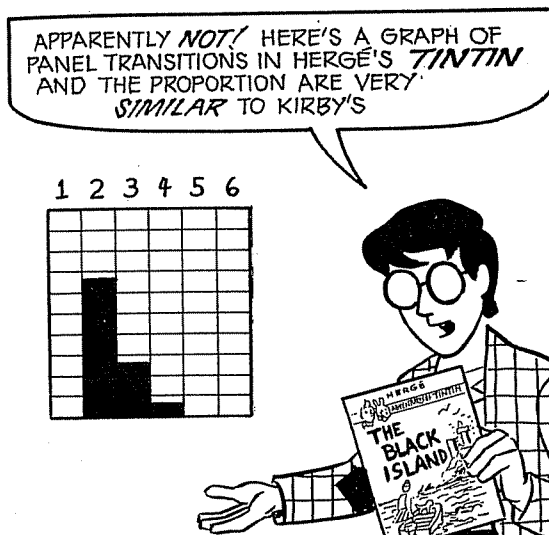
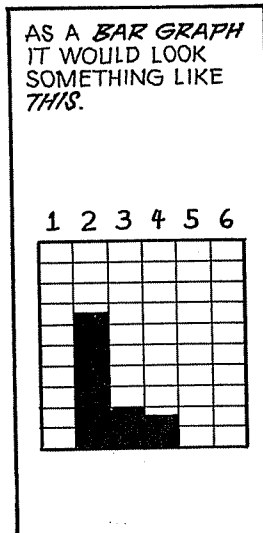
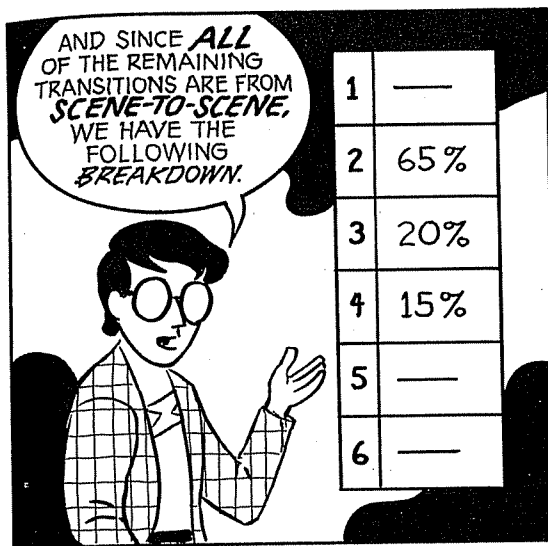
BY *FAR*, THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF
TRANSITION IN KIRBY'S ART IS **ACTION-
TO-ACTION**. I COUNT *SIXTY-TWO* OF
THEM IN THIS STORY-- ABOUT *SIXTY-
FIVE PERCENT* OF THE TOTAL NUMBER.



[TRACED AND SIMPLIFIED FOR CLARITY'S SAKE.]

SUBJECT-TO-SUBJECT TRANSITIONS
ACCOUNT FOR AN ADDITIONAL *NINETEEN--*
ABOUT *TWENTY PERCENT* OF THE TOTAL NUMBER





A SURVEY OF WELL-KNOWN EUROPEAN ARTISTS YIELDS *SIMILAR*, IF NOT *QUITE* AS UNIFORM, RESULTS.

WHAT CAN WE DEDUCE FROM THIS?

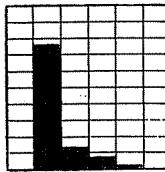


SQUEAK THE MOUSE



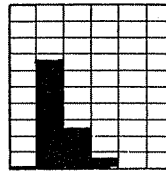
MATTIOLO

ASTERIX



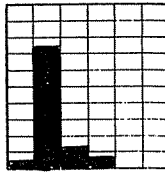
GOSCINNY & UDERZO

WELCOME TO AFLLOLO



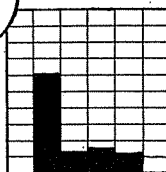
CRISTIN & MEZIERES

THE LONG TOMORROW



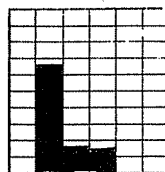
O'BANNON & MOEBIUS

"MANHATTAN"



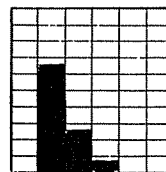
TARDI

CLIK!



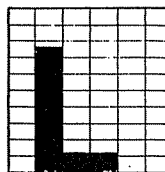
MANARA

THE BLACK ISLAND

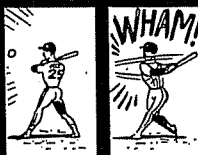


HERGÉ

"THE CLOCK STRIKES"



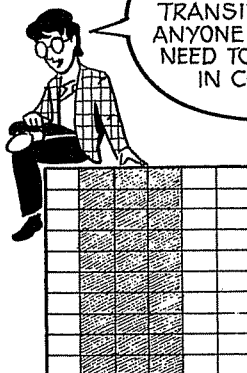
JOOST SWARTE



2

3

4



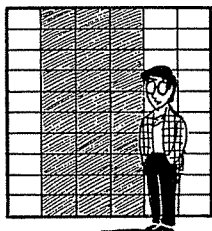
ARE THESE THREE TYPES OF TRANSITIONS ALL ANYONE SHOULD EVER NEED TO TELL A STORY IN COMICS?

IF WE CHOOSE TO SEE STORIES AS CONNECTED SERIES OF *EVENTS*, THEN THE PREDOMINANCE OF TYPES 2-4 ARE EASILY EXPLAINED.



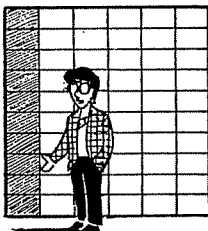
TYPES 2-4 SHOW THINGS *HAPPENING* IN *CONCISE, EFFICIENT* WAYS.

1 2 3 4 5 6



TYPE 1 SHOWS *ACTIONS* LIKE TYPE 2, BUT IT TENDS TO REQUIRE *SEVERAL PANELS* TO DO WHAT TYPE 2 DOES IN *TWO*--

1 2 3 4 5 6



1.



2.

--WHILE IN THE *FIFTH* TYPE, BY DEFINITION, NOTHING "HAPPENS" AT ALL!

1 2 3 4 5 6

AND, OF COURSE, NON-SEQUITURS ARE UNCONCERNED WITH *EVENTS* OR ANY *NARRATIVE* PURPOSES OF ANY SORT.

1 2 3 4 5 6

SOME *EXPERIMENTAL COMICS*, LIKE THOSE OF *ART SPIEGELMAN'S* EARLY PERIOD, EXPLORE A *FULL RANGE* OF TRANSITIONS--

--THOUGH GENERALLY IN THE SERVICE OF EQUALLY RADICAL STORIES AND SUBJECTS.

STORIES FROM SPIEGELMAN'S ANTHOLOGY BREAKDOWNS:

"DON'T GET AROUND MUCH ANYMORE" INTRODUCTION "MAUS" (ORIGINAL)

"SKINLESS PERKINS" "PRISONER ON THE HELL PLANET" "CRACKING JOKES"

FRONT AND BACK COVERS "ACE-HOLE, MIDGET DETECTIVE" "REAL DREAM" 1975

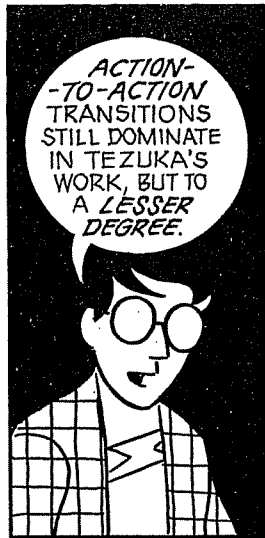
BUT BEFORE WE CONCLUDE THAT TYPES 2-4 HAVE A MONOPOLY ON *STRAIGHTFORWARD* STORYTELLING, LET'S TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT *OSAMU TEZUKA* FROM JAPAN.

TEZUKA IS A *FAR CRY* FROM THE EARLY SPIEGELMAN. HIS STORYTELLING IS CLEAR AND STRAIGHTFORWARD. *BUT LOOK AT HOW HE CHARTS!*

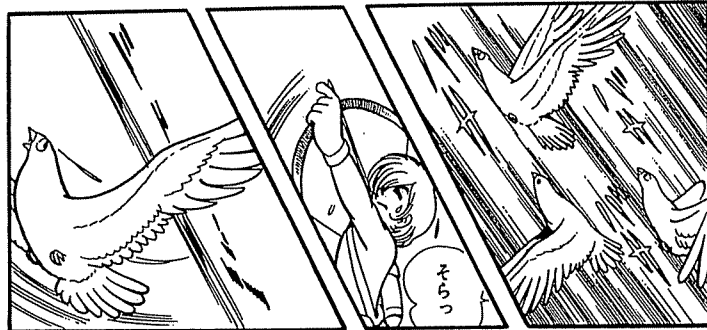
1 2 3 4 5 6

JUST WHAT IS *GOING ON* HERE?

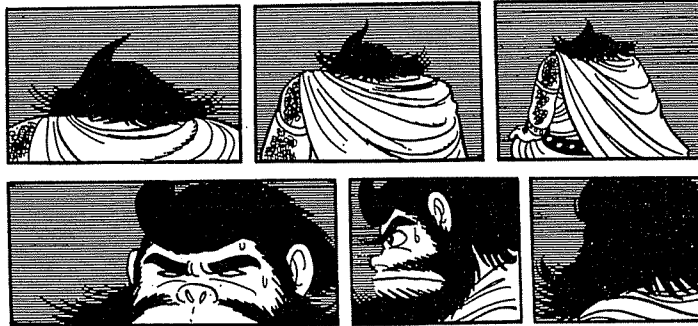
ART © OSAMU TEZUKA



IN FACT, *SUBJECT-TO-SUBJECT* TRANSITIONS ACCOUNT FOR NEARLY AS MANY AS ACTION.



HERE ALSO WE SEE OUR FIRST EXAMPLES OF *MOMENT-TO-MOMENT* TRANSITIONS.



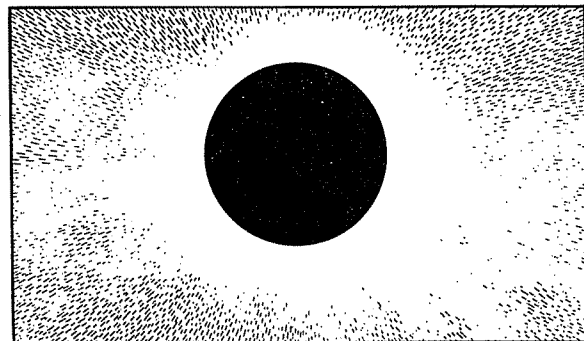
THOUGH THE LATTER TYPE ONLY ACCOUNTS FOR *FOUR PERCENT* OF THE TOTAL, SUCH SEQUENCES CONTRAST STRIKINGLY WITH THE WESTERN TRADITION! EXEMPLIFIED BY KIRBY AND HERGE.



ITTEL OT THSIR DAER OT REBMEVER

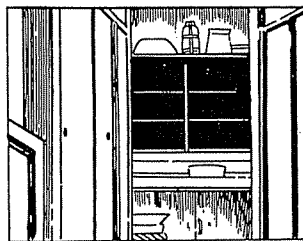


BUT, MOST STRIKING OF ALL IS THE *SUBSTANTIAL PRESENCE* OF THE *FIFTH* TYPE OF TRANSITION, A TYPE RARELY SEEN IN THE WEST.



ART © OSAMU TEZUKA

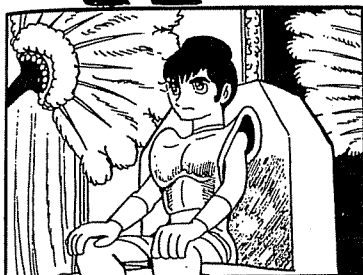
ASPECT-TO-ASPECT TRANSITIONS HAVE BEEN AN INTEGRAL PART OF JAPANESE MAINSTREAM COMICS ALMOST FROM THE VERY BEGINNING.



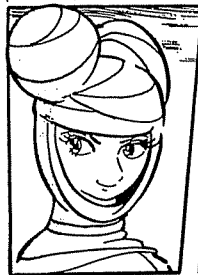
水木は夜の
古寺にいて
みることにした

ART © SHIGERU MIZUKI

MOST OFTEN USED TO ESTABLISH A MOOD OR A SENSE OF PLACE, TIME SEEMS TO STAND STILL IN THESE QUIET, CONTEMPLATIVE COMBINATIONS.



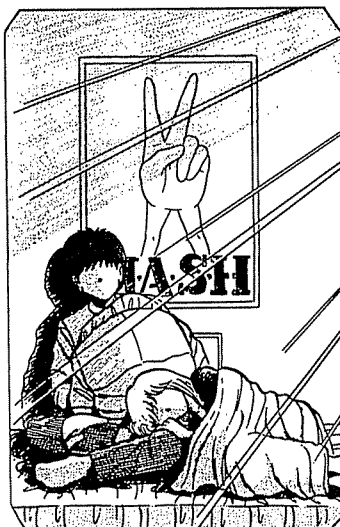
ART © OSAMU TEZUKA



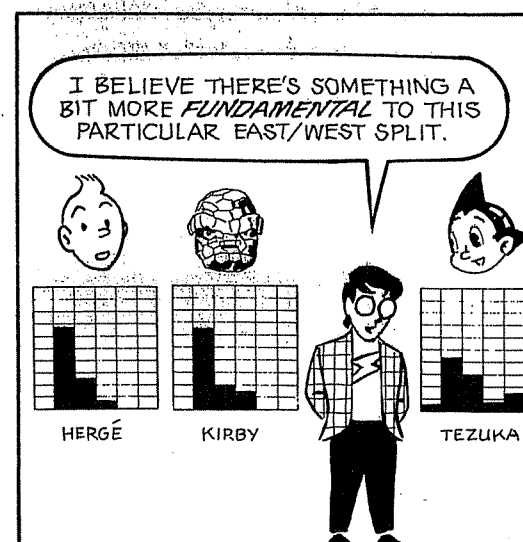
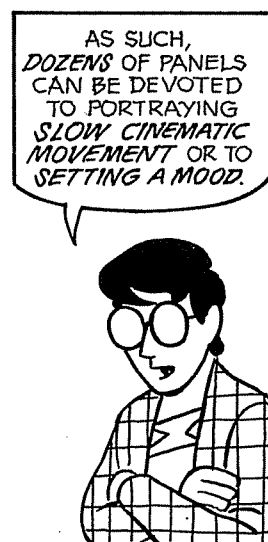
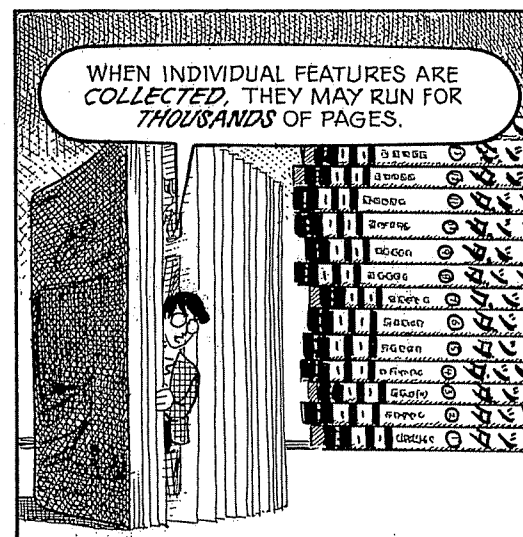
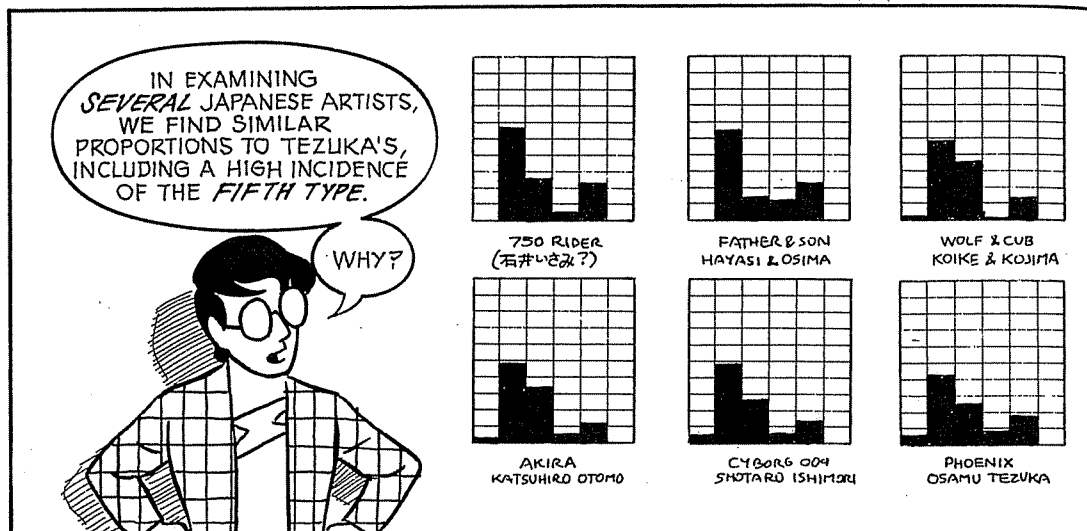
EVEN SEQUENCE, WHILE STILL AN ISSUE, SEEMS FAR LESS IMPORTANT HERE THAN IN OTHER TRANSITIONS.

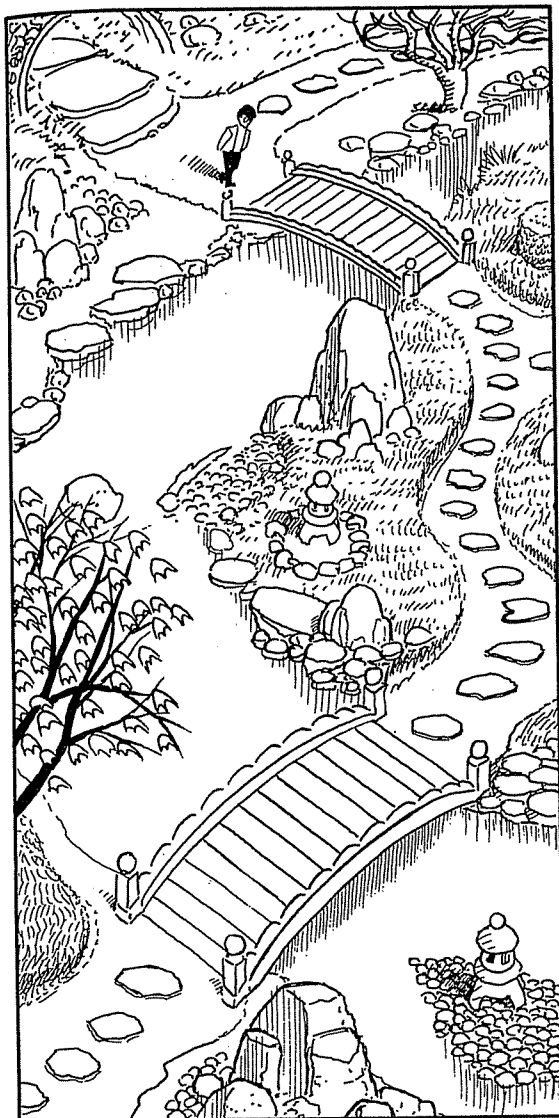


RATHER THAN ACTING AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN SEPARATE MOMENTS, THE READER HERE MUST ASSEMBLE A SINGLE MOMENT USING SCATTERED FRAGMENTS.



ART © H. SATO





TRADITIONAL WESTERN ART AND LITERATURE DON'T *WANDER* MUCH. ON THE WHOLE, WE'RE A PRETTY GOAL-ORIENTED CULTURE.



BUT, IN THE EAST, THERE'S A RICH TRADITION OF CYCLICAL AND LABYRINTHINE WORKS OF ART.



JAPANESE COMICS MAY BE *HEIRS* TO THIS TRADITION, IN THE WAY THEY SO OFTEN EMPHASIZE *BEING THERE* OVER *GETTING THERE*.

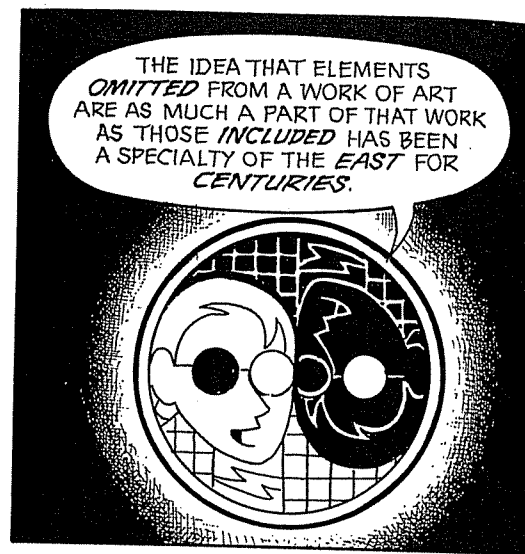


THROUGH THESE AND OTHER STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES, THE JAPANESE OFFER A VISION OF COMICS VERY *DIFFERENT* FROM OUR OWN.

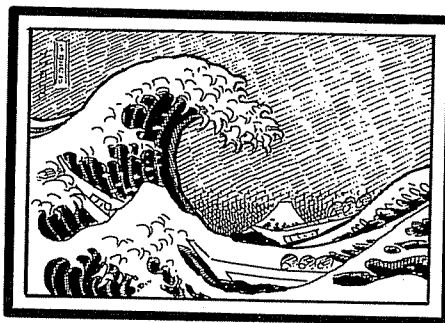


FOR IN *JAPAN* MORE THAN *ANYWHERE ELSE*, COMICS IS AN ART--



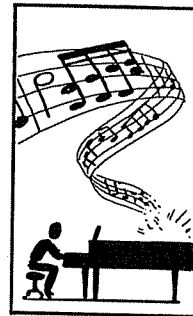


IN THE GRAPHIC ARTS THIS HAS MEANT
A GREATER FOCUS ON *FIGURE/GROUND*
RELATIONSHIPS AND "*NEGATIVE SPACE*."

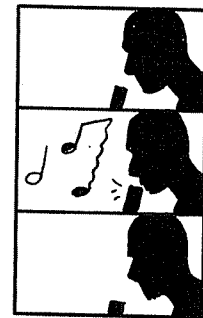


"THE GREAT WAVE OFF KANAGAWA" BY HOKUSAI (c.1829)
(TURN THIS PICTURE UPSIDE DOWN TO SEE THE OTHER
WAVE OF NEGATIVE SPACE...NATURE'S YIN AND YANG.)

IN MUSIC TOO, WHILE THE WESTERN
CLASSICAL TRADITION WAS EMPHASIZING
THE *CONTINUOUS*, *CONNECTED* WORLDS OF
MELODY AND HARMONY, EASTERN CLASSICAL
MUSIC WAS EQUALLY CONCERNED WITH THE
ROLE OF *SILENCE*!

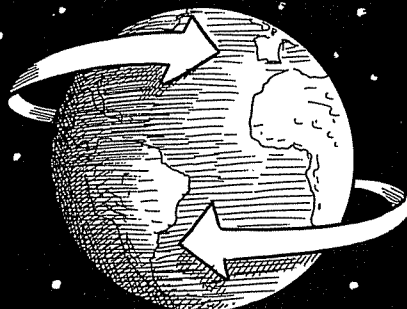


WEST

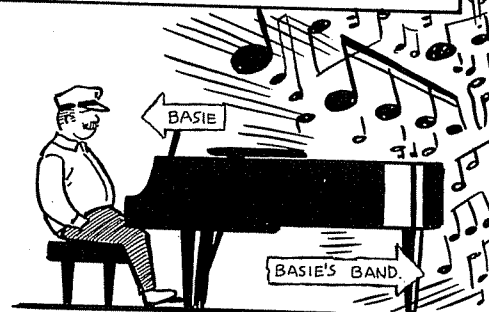


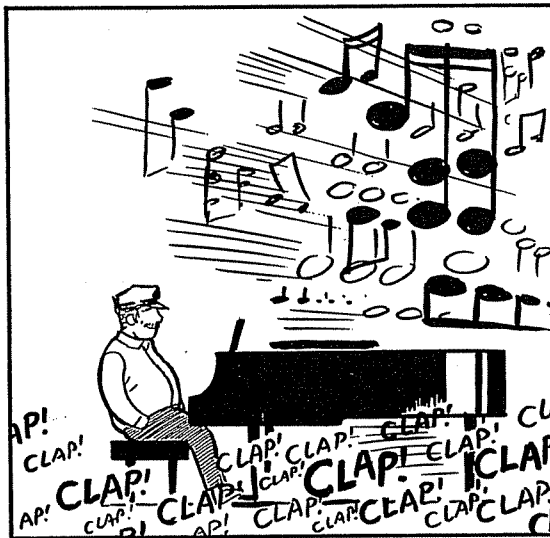
EAST

IN THE LAST *CENTURY* OR TWO, AS
WESTERN CULTURAL INFLUENCES SWEEPED
THE *EAST*, SO TOO HAVE *EASTERN* AND
AFRICAN IDEAS OF *FRAGMENTATION*
AND *RHYTHM* SWEEPED THE *WEST*.

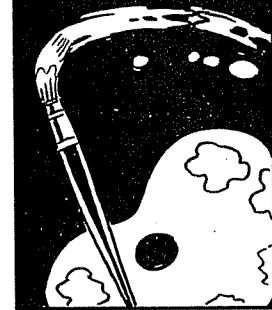


FROM *DEBUSSY* TO *STRAVINSKY* TO
COUNT BASIE, WESTERN MUSIC HAS
GRADUALLY INCORPORATED A STRONG
AWARENESS OF THE POWER OF
FRAGMENTATION AND *INTERVALS*.





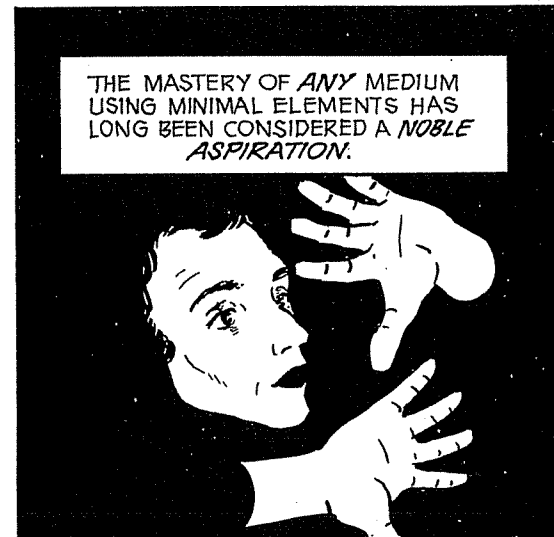
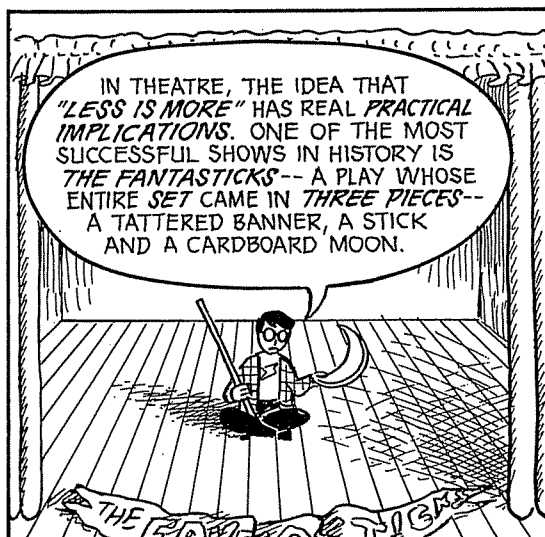
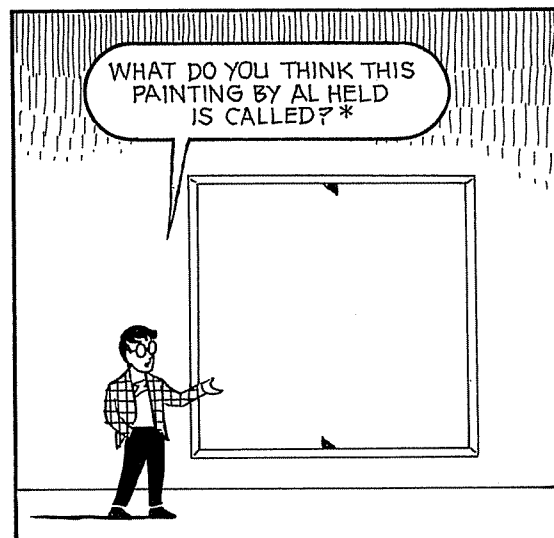
IN THE *VISUAL* ARTS, THE IMPACT OF EASTERN IDEAS WAS BOTH POWERFUL AND LASTING.



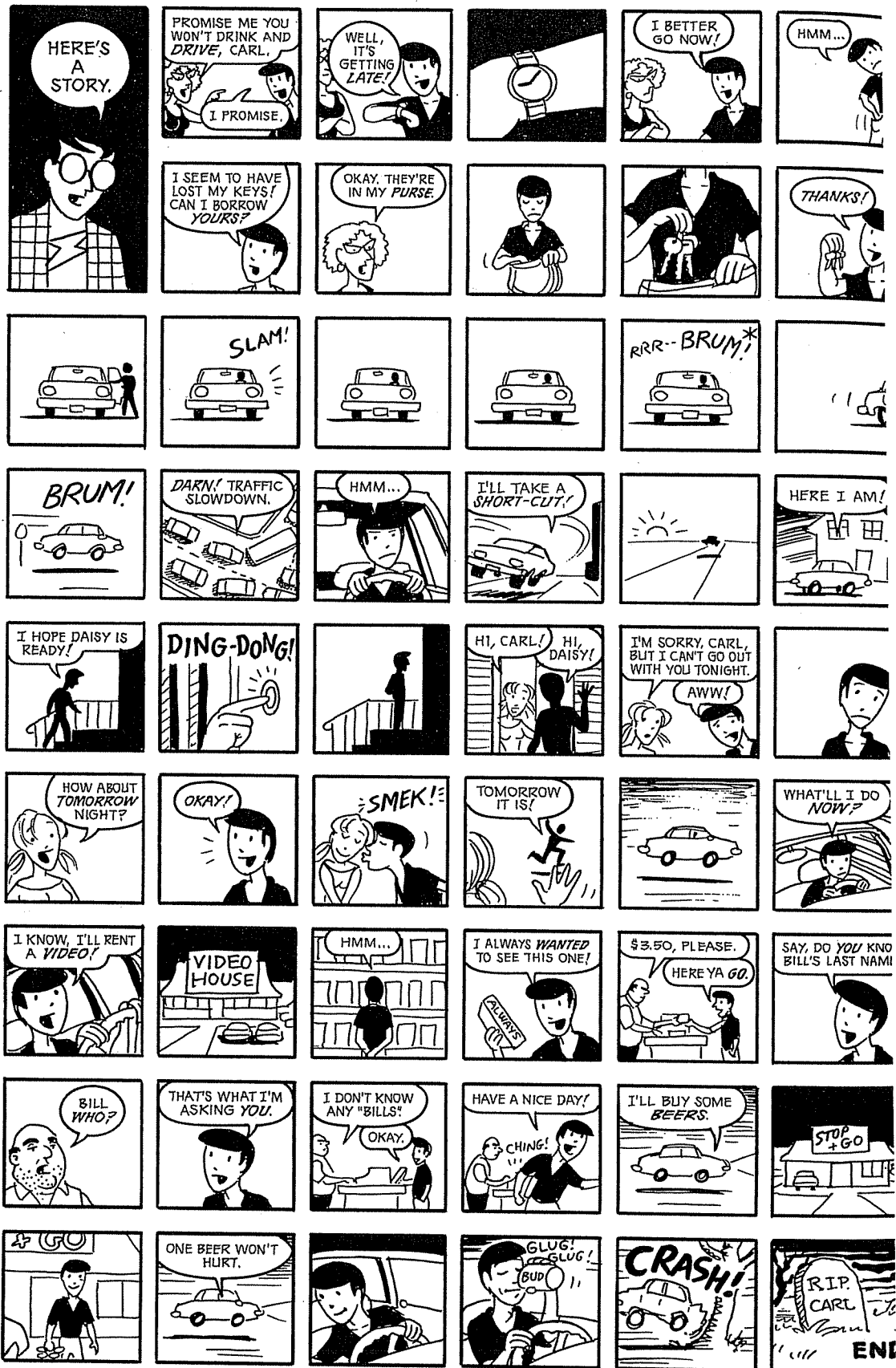
THE TRADITIONAL EMPHASIS IN WESTERN ART UPON THE PRIMACY OF *FOREGROUND* SUBJECTS AND *CONTINUOUSNESS* OF *TONES* GAVE WAY TO *FRAGMENTATION* AND A NEW AWARENESS OF THE *PICTURE PLANE*.



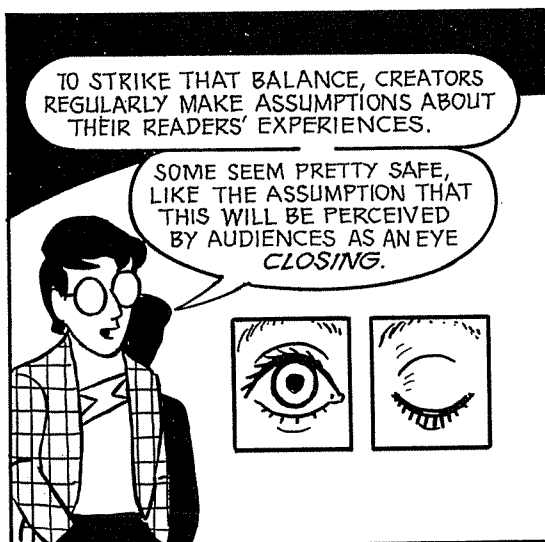
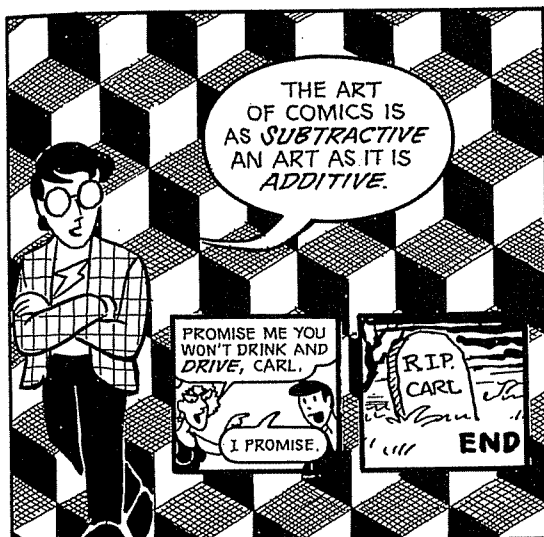
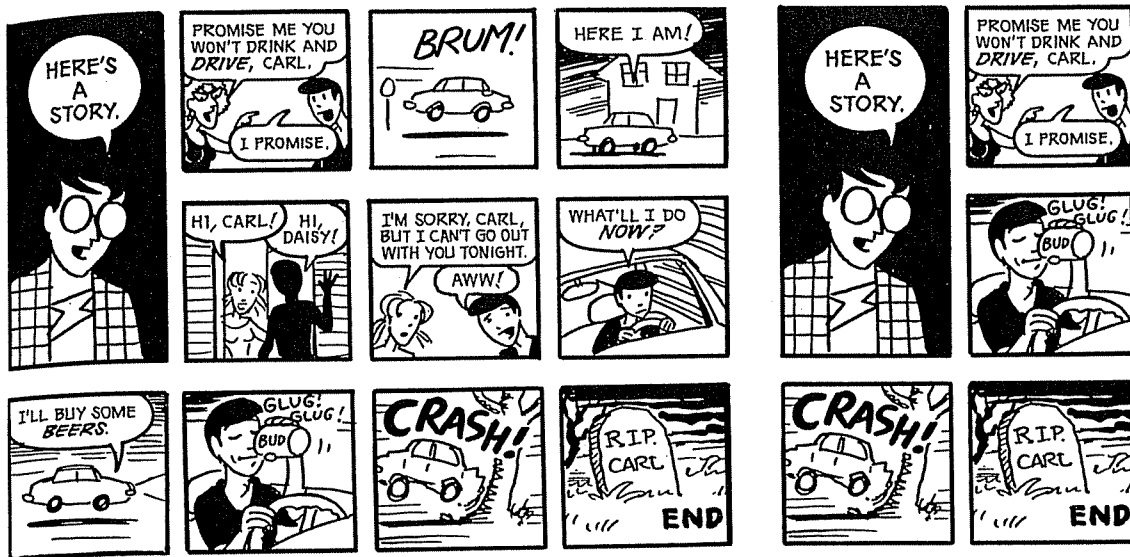
FACSIMILE OF "FIGURE" BY PABLO PICASSO 1948



*ANSWER: "THE BIG 'N'"
[SEE PAGE 216]

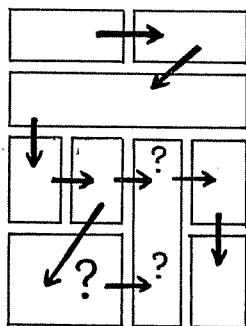


* "BRUM" APPEARS COURTESY OF M. FEAZELL



WE ASSUME AS **READERS** THAT WE WILL KNOW WHAT ORDER TO READ PANELS IN, BUT THE BUSINESS OF **ARRANGING** THOSE PANELS IS ACTUALLY QUITE **COMPLEX**.

SO COMPLEX, IN FACT, THAT EVEN **SEASONED PROS** WILL SOMETIMES **BLOW IT**.

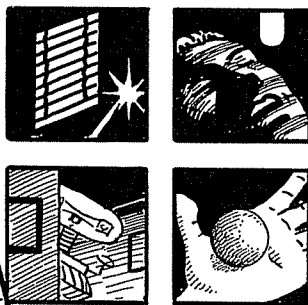


AS CLOSURE **BETWEEN** PANELS BECOMES MORE INTENSE, READER INTERPRETATION BECOMES FAR MORE **ELASTIC**.



AND **MANAGING** IT BECOMES MORE COMPLICATED FOR THE **CREATOR**

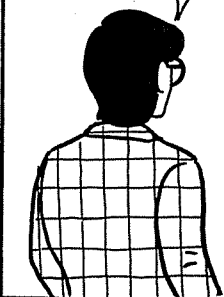
SOME ARTISTS CAN BE **DELIBERATELY AMBIGUOUS**, OF COURSE, AND OFFER US NO STRICT INTERPRETATION TO GO ON.



CLOSURE CAN BE A POWERFUL FORCE **WITHIN** PANELS AS WELL AS **BETWEEN** THEM, WHEN ARTISTS CHOOSE TO SHOW ONLY A SMALL **PIECE** OF THE PICTURE.



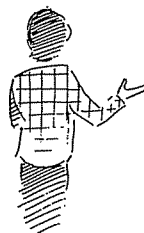
COMICS CAN BE **MADDENINGLY VAGUE** ABOUT WHAT IT SHOWS US.



BY SHOWING LITTLE OR NOTHING OF A GIVEN SCENE--



--AND OFFERING ONLY **CLUES** TO THE READER--



--THE ARTIST CAN TRIGGER ANY NUMBER OF IMAGES IN THE READER'S IMAGINATION.



READERS FACED
WITH PANELS LIKE *THESE*
WILL HAVE *SUBSTANTIALLY*
DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS.

CLAK! CLAK! CLAK!

BY CONSTRUCTING *WHOLE*
IMAGES BASED ON THESE
FRAGMENTS, READERS ARE
PERFORMING CLOSURE,
JUST AS--

WHOOSH!

≡ Splip Splip ≡

?

Ding! Ding!

UH-- JUST AS
READERS COMPLETE
AN ACTION OR
IDEA *BETWEEN--*

OW!

OW!

Ding! Ding!

≡ *AHEM!* ≡ I SAY,
JUST AS READERS
COMPLETE--

--AN
ACTION OR--
OW! OW!

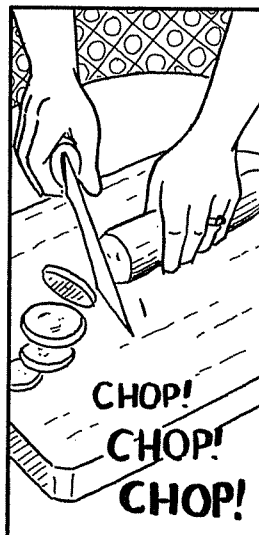
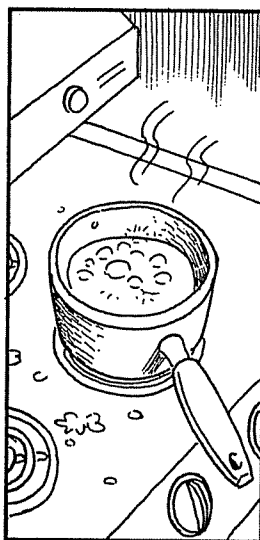
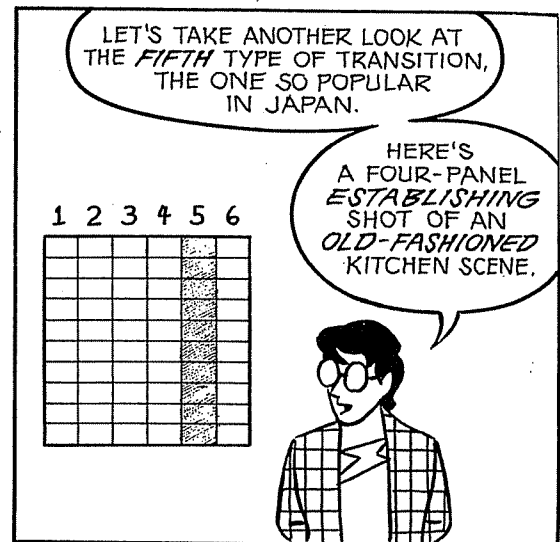
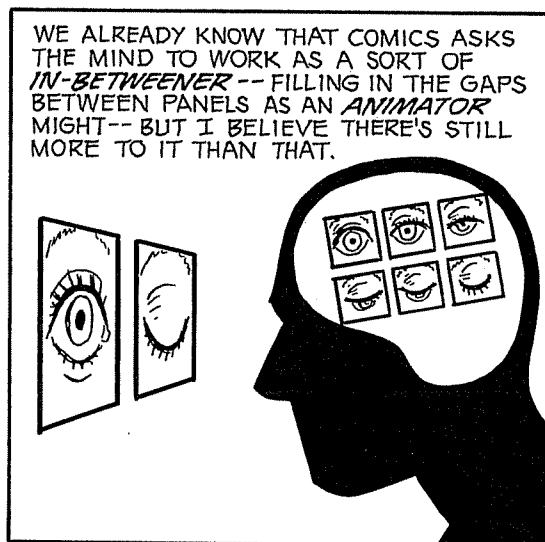
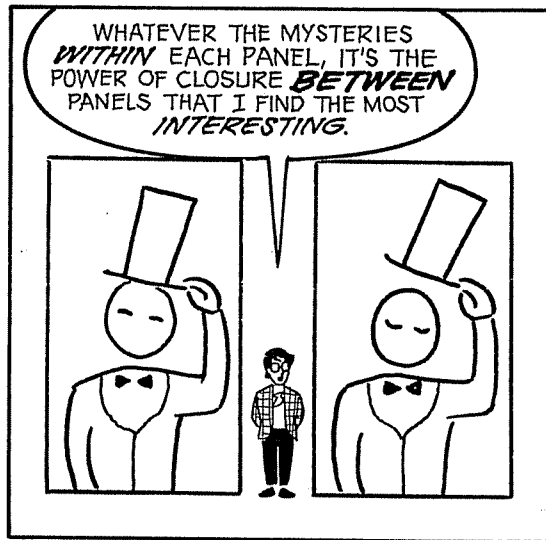
STOP THAT!

Ding! Ding!

OW!

Ding! Ding!


OW!



NOW, MOST OF YOU SHOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE **PERCEIVING** THAT YOU'RE IN A KITCHEN FROM THOSE FOUR PANELS **ALONE**.



WITH A **HIGH DEGREE OF CLOSURE**, YOUR MIND IS TAKING FOUR PICTURE **FRAGMENTS** AND CONSTRUCTING AN ENTIRE SCENE **OUT OF THOSE FRAGMENTS**.



BUT THE SCENE YOUR MIND CONSTRUCTS FROM THOSE **FOUR** PANELS IS A VERY **DIFFERENT PLACE** FROM THE SCENE CONSTRUCTED FROM OUR TRADITIONAL **ONE-PANEL** ESTABLISHING SHOT!



LOOK AGAIN.

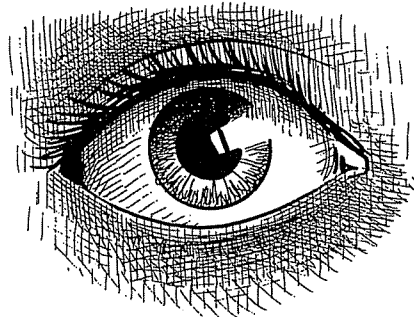
YOU'VE BEEN IN KITCHENS BEFORE, YOU KNOW WHAT A POT ON THE BOIL SOUNDS LIKE; DO YOU ONLY HEAR IT IN THAT **FIRST** PANEL?



AND WHAT ABOUT THE **CHOPPING** SOUND? DOES THAT ONLY LAST A **PANEL** OR DOES IT **PERSIST**? CAN YOU **SMELL** THIS KITCHEN? **FEEL** IT? **TASTE** IT?



COMICS IS A **MONO-SENSORY** MEDIUM. IT RELIES ON ONLY **ONE** OF THE SENSES TO CONVEY A **WORLD** OF EXPERIENCE.



BUT WHAT OF THE OTHER **FOUR**?

WE REPRESENT **SOUND** THROUGH DEVICES SUCH AS **WORD BALLOONS**.



WE REPRESENT **SOUND** THROUGH DEVICES SUCH AS **WORD BALLOONS**.

BUT ALL IN ALL, IT IS AN **EXCLUSIVELY VISUAL** REPRESENTATION.




WITHIN THESE PANELS, WE CAN ONLY CONVEY INFORMATION **VISUALLY**.

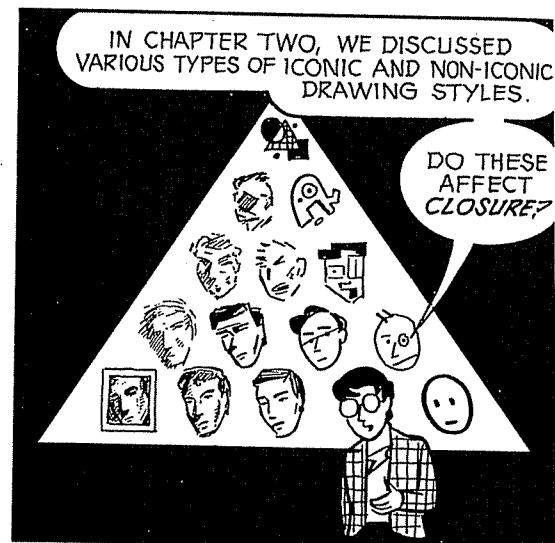
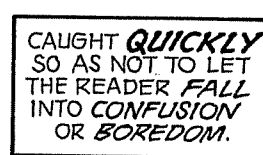


BUT **BETWEEN** PANELS, NONE OF OUR SENSES ARE REQUIRED AT ALL.



WHICH IS WHY **ALL** OF OUR SENSES ARE ENGAGED!





SINCE CARTOONS ALREADY EXIST AS CONCEPTS FOR THE READER, THEY TEND TO FLOW EASILY THROUGH THE CONCEPTUAL TERRITORY *BETWEEN* PANELS.



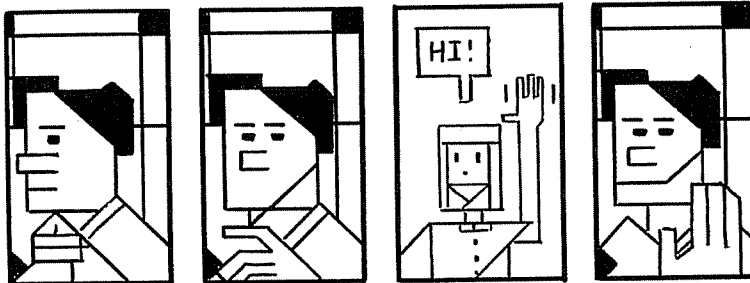
IDEAS FLOWING INTO ONE ANOTHER *SEAMLESSLY*.

BUT *REALISTIC* IMAGES HAVE A BUMPIER RIDE. THEIRS IS A PRIMARILY *VISUAL* EXISTENCE WHICH DOESN'T PASS EASILY INTO THE REALM OF IDEAS.



AND SO, WHAT SEEMED LIKE A CONTINUOUS SERIES OF MOMENTS IN THE LAST EXAMPLE, HERE LOOKS A LITTLE MORE LIKE A SERIES OF *STILL PICTURES*...

SIMILARLY, I THINK WHEN COMICS ART VEERS CLOSER TO CONCERNS OF THE *PICTURE PLANE*, CLOSURE CAN BE MORE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE, THOUGH FOR DIFFERENT REASONS.



NOW IT'S THE *UNIFYING PROPERTIES* OF *DESIGN* THAT MAKE US MORE AWARE OF THE PAGE AS A *WHOLE*, RATHER THAN ITS INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS, THE *PANELS*.

...TO *ME* ANYWAY. THESE THINGS ARE ALL *SUBJECTIVE!*



A GOOD RULE OF THUMB IS THAT IF READERS ARE PARTICULARLY *AWARE* OF THE ART IN A GIVEN STORY--

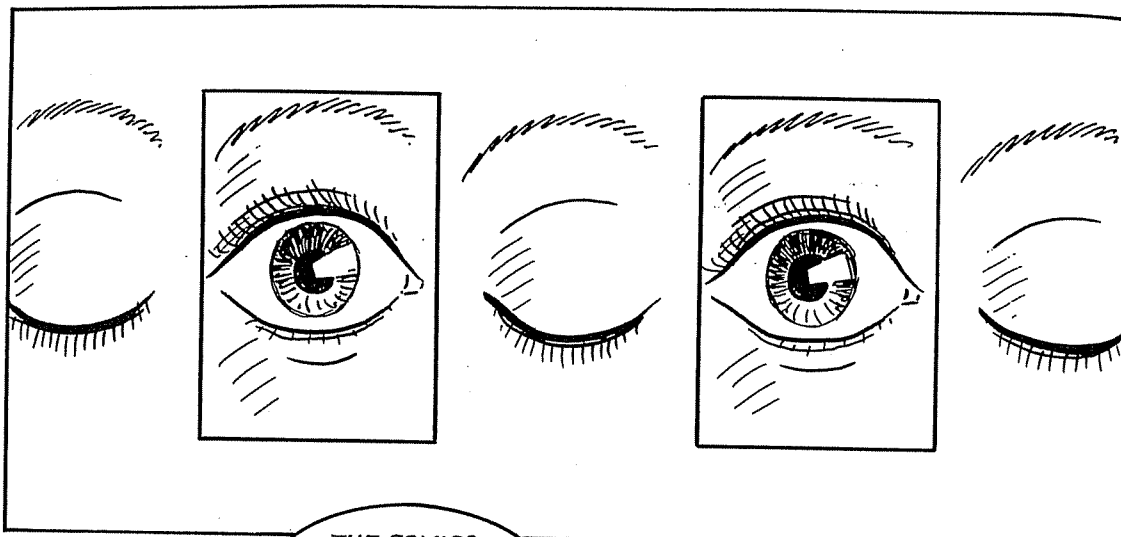


--THEN CLOSURE IS PROBABLY NOT HAPPENING WITHOUT SOME *EFFORT*.



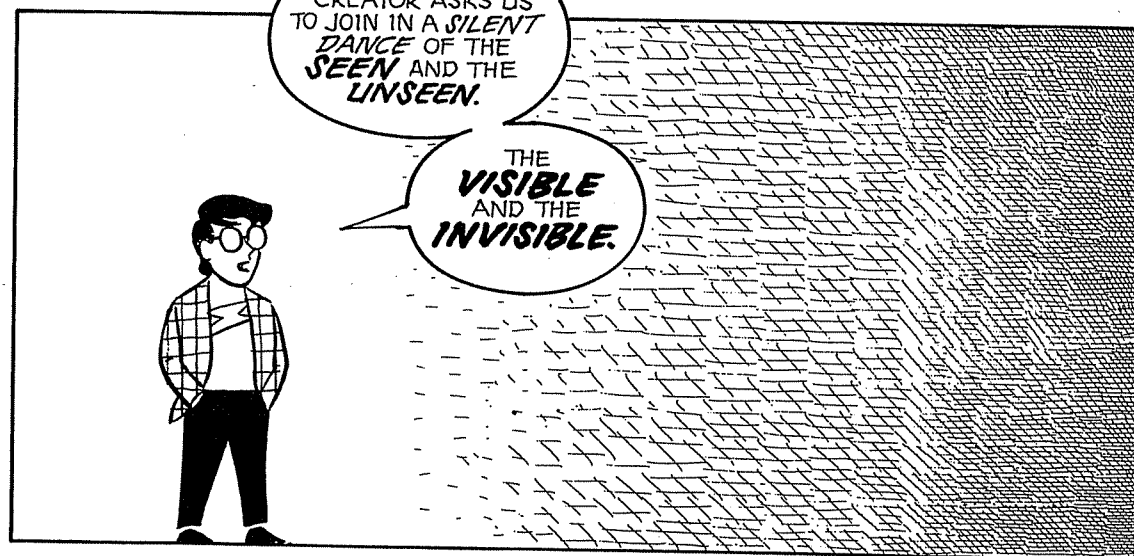
OF COURSE, MAKING THE READER *WORK* A LITTLE MAY BE JUST WHAT THE ARTIST IS *TRYING* TO DO. ONCE AGAIN, IT'S ALL A MATTER OF *PERSONAL TASTE*.



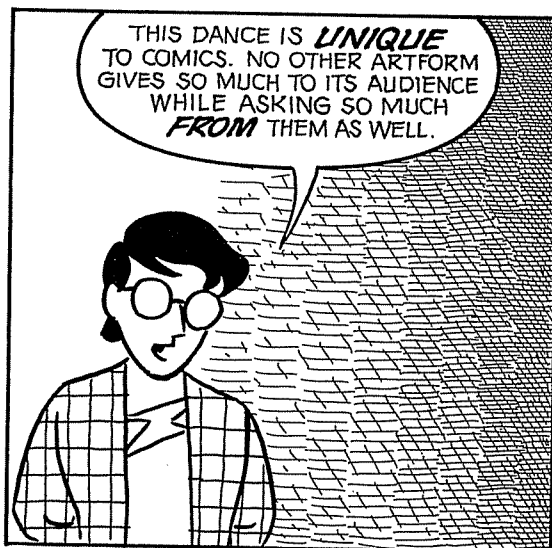


THE COMICS
CREATOR ASKS US
TO JOIN IN A *SILENT*
DANCE OF THE
SEEN AND THE
LINSEEN.

THE
VISIBLE
AND THE
INVISIBLE.



THIS DANCE IS *UNIQUE*
TO COMICS. NO OTHER ARTFORM
GIVES SO MUCH TO ITS AUDIENCE
WHILE ASKING SO MUCH
FROM THEM AS WELL.



THIS IS WHY I THINK IT'S
A MISTAKE TO SEE COMICS AS
A MERE *HYBRID* OF THE
GRAPHIC ARTS AND *PROSE*
FICTION.

WHAT
HAPPENS
BETWEEN THESE
PANELS IS A
KIND OF MAGIC
ONLY COMICS
CAN CREATE.

