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## Ch. 1: Setting the Record Straight



## Ch. 2: The Vocabulary of Comics

FILM CRITICS WILL SOMETIMES DESCRIBE A *LIVE-ACTION* FILM AS A "CARTOON" TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE STRIPPED-DOWN *INTENSITY* OF A SIMPLE STORY OR VISUAL STYLE.

ALTHOUGH THE TERM IS OFTEN USED *DISPARAGINGLY*, IT CAN BE EQUALLY WELL APPLIED TO MANY *TIME-TESTED CLASSICS*. SIMPLIFYING CHARACTERS AND IMAGES TOWARD A *PURPOSE* CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR STORYTELLING IN *ANY* MEDIUM.

CARTOONING ISN'T JUST A WAY OF *DRAWING*, IT'S A WAY OF *SEEING!*

THE ABILITY OF CARTOONS TO *FOCUS* OUR ATTENTION ON AN IDEA IS, I THINK, AN IMPORTANT PART OF THEIR SPECIAL POWER, BOTH IN COMICS AND IN DRAWING GENERALLY.

BUT I BELIEVE THERE'S SOMETHING *MORE* AT WORK IN OUR MINDS WHEN WE VIEW A CARTOON--ESPECIALLY OF A HUMAN FACE--WHICH WARRANTS FURTHER INVESTIGATION.

ONE

A FEW

THOUSANDS

MILLIONS

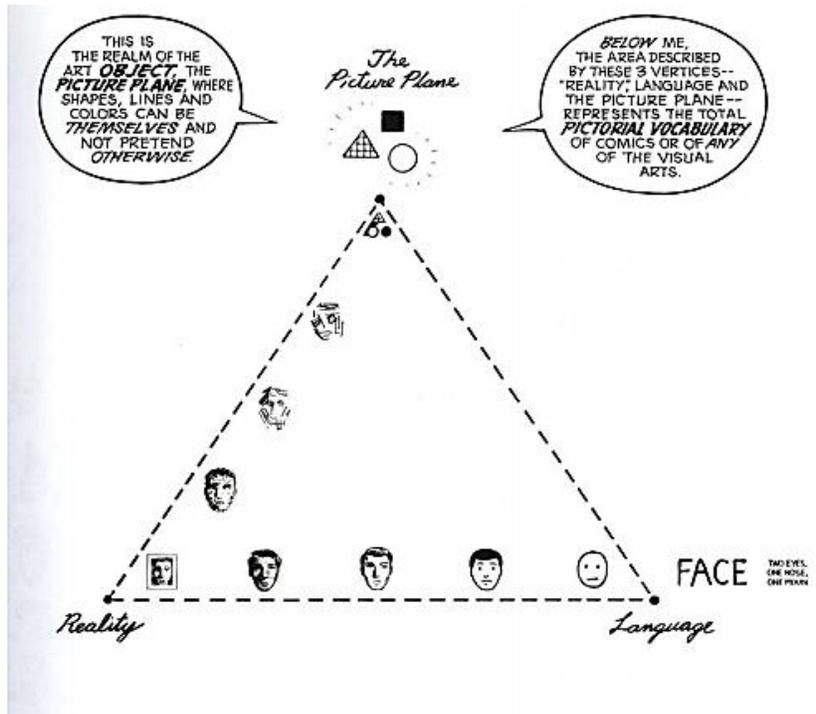
(NEARLY) ALL

ANOTHER IS THE *UNIVERSALITY* OF CARTOON IMAGERY. THE MORE CARTOONY A FACE IS, FOR INSTANCE, THE MORE PEOPLE IT COULD BE SAID TO *DESCRIBE*.

WHAT ARE YOU REALLY SEEING?

THE FACT THAT YOUR MIND IS *CAPABLE* OF TAKING A *CIRCLE*, *TWO DOTS* AND A *LINE* AND TURNING THEM INTO A *FACE* IS NOTHING SHORT OF *INCREDIBLE!*

BUT STILL *MORE* INCREDIBLE IS THE FACT THAT YOU CANNOT *AVOID* SEEING A FACE HERE. YOUR MIND WON'T *LET* YOU!



HEY!! COME TA THINK OF IT... WHAT ABOUT THAT WALKIN' TIME BOMB??

THAT'S RIGHT!! IF HE'S STILL LOOSE... THERE'S NO TELLIN' WHAT'LL HAPPEN!!

IN THE MID-SIXTIES, JACK KIRBY, ALONG WITH STAN LEE, STAKED OUT A MIDDLE GROUND OF ICONIC FORMS WITH A SENSE OF THE REAL ABOUT THEM, BOLSTERED BY A POWERFUL DESIGN SENSE.

ART: JACK KIRBY AND JOE SINNOTT (MY FACSIMILE)  
SCRIPT: STAN LEE.

TODAY, MANY AMERICAN MAINSTREAM COMICS STILL FOLLOW KIRBY'S LEAD FOR STORYTELLING, BUT THE DESIRE FOR MORE REALISTIC ART AND MORE ELABORATE SCRIPTS HAS PUSHED ART AND STORY FURTHER APART IN MANY CASES.

A FIGHT STARTED ON HIS DOORSTEP, HE PUT A STOP TO IT. FAR AS ANYONE KNOWS, ALL THE SURVIVORS ARE PRETTY MUCH OKAY.

WAY YOU TALK, NICHOLAS. FOLKS EXPECT HIM TO START NUKIN' MAMA RUSSIA ANY MOMENT.

### Ch. 3: Blood in the Gutter



		<b>1.</b> MOMENT- TO- MOMENT
		<b>2.</b> ACTION- TO- ACTION
		<b>3.</b> SUBJECT- TO- SUBJECT
		<b>4.</b> SCENE- TO- SCENE
		<b>5.</b> ASPECT- TO- ASPECT
		<b>6.</b> 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.



AND SINCE **ALL** OF THE REMAINING TRANSITIONS ARE FROM **SCENE-TO-SCENE**, WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING **BREAKDOWN**.

1	—
2	65%
3	20%
4	15%
5	—
6	—

AS A **BAR GRAPH** IT WOULD LOOK SOMETHING LIKE **THIS**.

THIS EMPHASIS ON **ACTION-TO-ACTION** STORY TELLING SUITS MOST PEOPLE'S IDEAS ABOUT **KIRBY**, BUT IS HE **UNIQUE** IN THIS RESPECT?

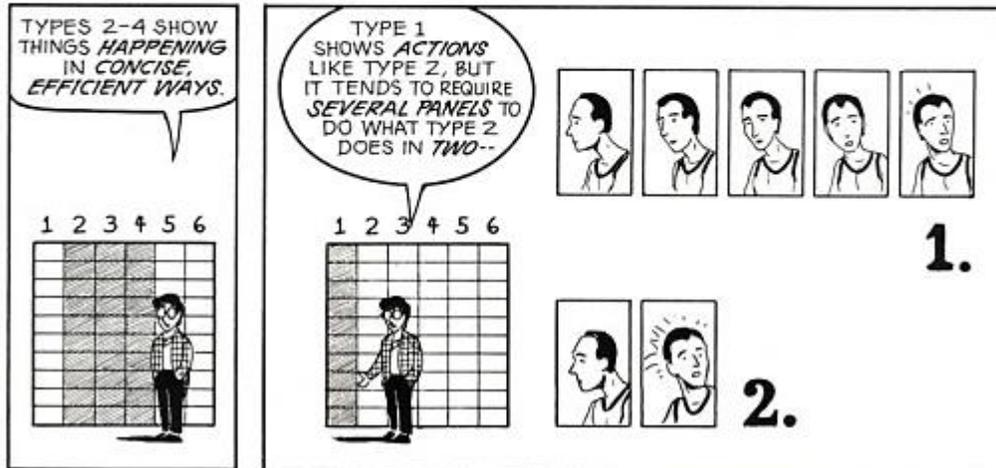
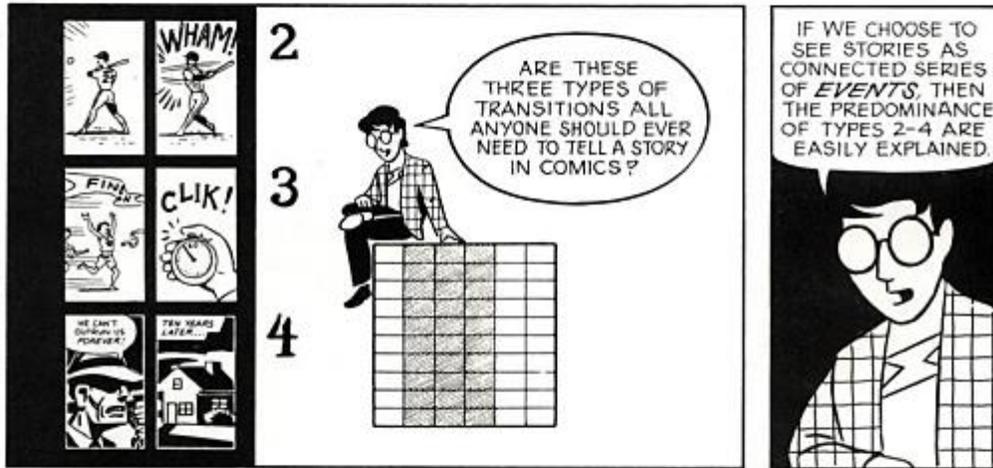
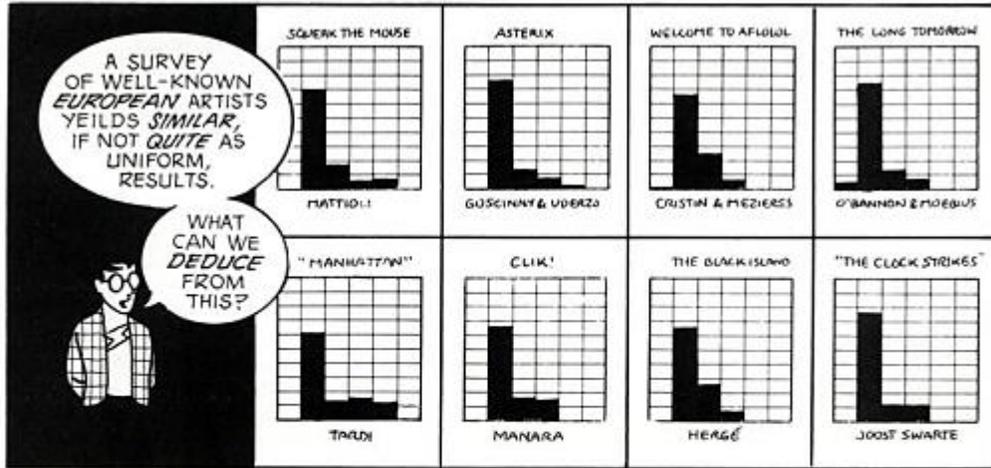
APPARENTLY **NOT!** HERE'S A GRAPH OF PANEL TRANSITIONS IN HERGÉ'S **TINTIN** AND THE PROPORTION ARE VERY **SIMILAR** TO KIRBY'S

NOW, HERGÉ'S AND KIRBY'S STYLES ARE **NOT** SIMILAR! IN FACT, THEY'RE **RADICALLY DIFFERENT!!**

IS THERE SOME KIND OF **UNIVERSAL PROPORTION** AT WORK HERE, OR IS THERE ANOTHER **COMMON LINK?** MAYBE A SIMILARITY OF **GENRES?**

A RANDOM SAMPLING OF VARIOUS AMERICAN COMICS SHOWS THIS SAME PROPORTION PRETTY **CONSISTENTLY**.

<p>X-MEN #1</p> <p>CLAREMONT &amp; LEE</p>	<p>"HEARTBREAK SOUP"</p> <p>G. HERNANDEZ</p>	<p>BETTY &amp; VERÓNICA</p> <p>DOYLE &amp; DECARLO</p>	<p>NAUGHTY BITS</p> <p>GREGORY</p>
<p>FRANK IN THE RIVER</p> <p>WOODRING</p>	<p>A CONTRACT WITH GOD</p> <p>EISNER</p>	<p>MAUS</p> <p>SPIEGELMAN</p>	<p>DONALD DUCK</p> <p>GARKS</p>



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

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

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

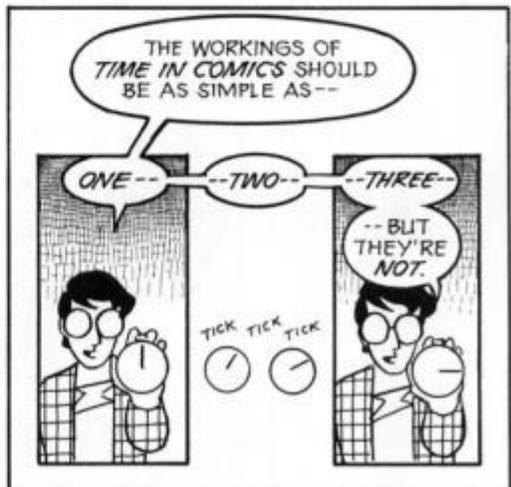
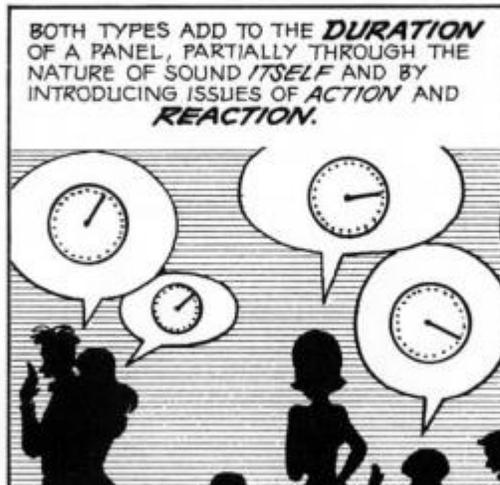
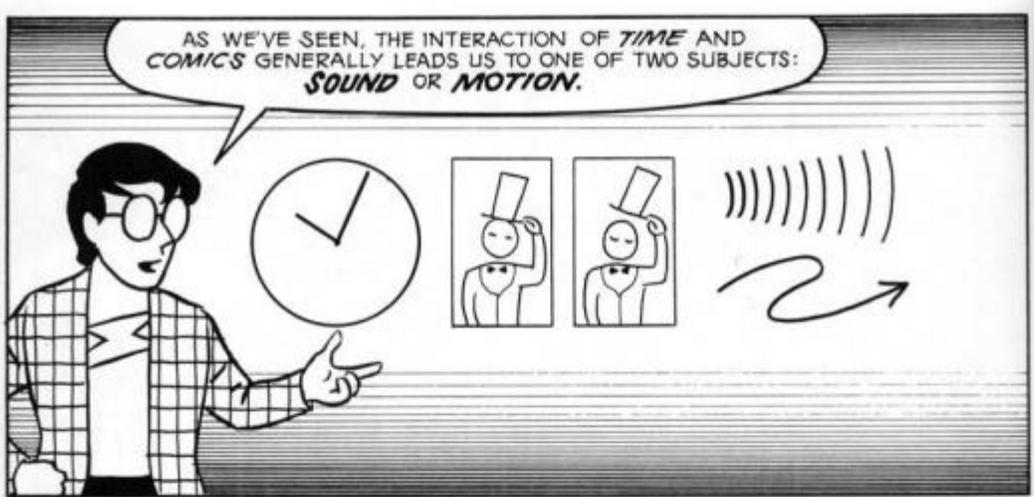
BUT BEFORE WE CONCLUDE THAT TYPES 2-4 HAVE A MONOPOLY ON *STRAIGHTFORWARD* STORYTELLING, LET'S TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT *OSAMU TEZUKA* FROM JAPAN.

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

JUST WHAT IS *GOING ON* HERE?

ILLUSTRATION BY LISA

## Ch. 4: Time Frames



IN THE BEGINNING, MOTION LINES--OR "ZIP-RIBBONS" AS SOME CALL THEM-- WERE *WILD, MESSY*, ALMOST *DESPERATE* ATTEMPTS TO REPRESENT THE PATHS OF MOVING OBJECTS THROUGH SPACE.



OVER THE YEARS, THESE LINES BECAME MORE *REFINED AND STYLIZED*, EVEN *DIAGRAMMATIC*.



EVENTUALLY, IN THE HANDS OF *HEROIC FANTASY* ARTISTS LIKE *BILL EVERETT* AND *JACK KIRBY*--



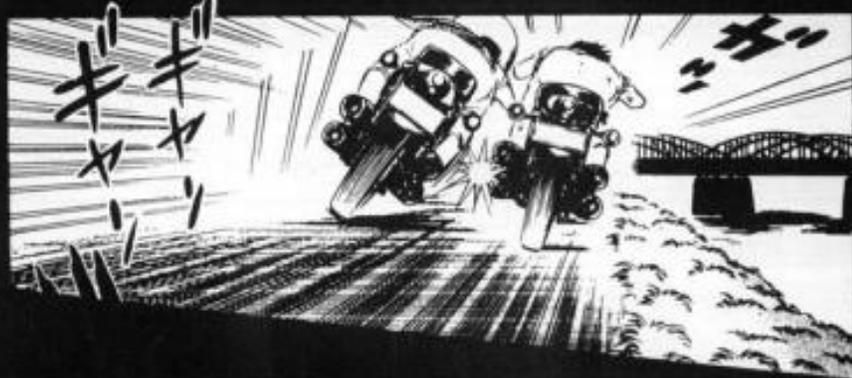
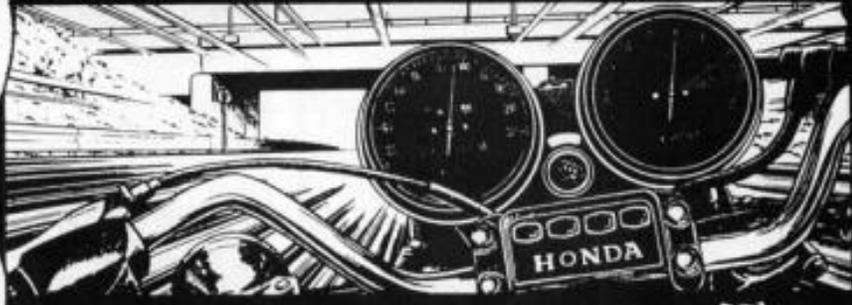
--THOSE SAME LINES BECAME *SO* STYLIZED AS TO ALMOST HAVE A *LIFE* AND *PHYSICAL PRESENCE ALL THEIR OWN!*



"**SUBJECTIVE MOTION**," AS I CALL IT, OPERATES ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT IF **OBSERVING** A MOVING OBJECT **CAN** BE INVOLVING, **BEING** THAT OBJECT SHOULD BE **MORE** SO.

JAPANESE ARTISTS, STARTING IN THE LATE 60's, BEGAN PUTTING THEIR READERS "IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT" WITH PANELS LIKE **THESE**.

AND STARTING IN THE **MID-EIGHTIES**, A FEW **AMERICAN** ARTISTS BEGAN TO ADOPT THE EFFECT IN THEIR OWN WORK, UNTIL BY THE EARLY **NINETIES** IT HAS BECOME FAIRLY COMMON.



## Ch. 5: Living in Line

<p>IN <i>DICK TRACY</i>, FOR EXAMPLE, CHESTER GOULD USED <b>BOLD LINES, OBTUSE ANGLES AND HEAVY BLACKS</b> TO SUGGEST THE MOOD OF A <b>GRIM, DEADLY WORLD OF ADULTS</b>--</p>	<p>-- WHILE THE <b>GENTLE CURVES AND OPEN LINES</b> OF <b>CARL BARKS' <i>UNCLE SCROOGE</i></b> CONVEY A FEELING OF <b>WHIMSY, YOUTH AND INNOCENCE</b>.</p>	<p>IN <b>R. CRUMB'S</b> WORLD, THE <b>CURVES OF INNOCENCE ARE BETRAYED</b> BY THE <b>NEUROTIC QUILL-LINES</b> OF <b>MODERN ADULTHOOD</b>, AND LEFT <b>PAINFULLY OUT OF PLACE</b>--</p>	<p>-- WHILE IN <b>KRYSTINE KRYTTRE'S</b> ART, THE <b>CURVES OF CHILDHOOD AND THE MAD LINES OF A <i>MUNCH</i></b> CREATE A <b>CRAZY TODDLER LOOK</b>.</p>
			
<p>IN THE <b>MID-1960s</b> WHEN THE <b>AVERAGE MARVEL READER WAS PRE-ADOLESCENT</b>, POPULAR INKERS USED <b>DYNAMIC BUT FRIENDLY LINES</b> A LA <b>KIRBY/SINNOTT</b>.</p>	<p>BUT WHEN MARVEL'S READER BASE <b>GREW INTO THE ANXIETIES OF ADOLESCENCE</b>, THE <b>HOSTILE, JAGGED LINES</b> OF A <b>ROB LIEFELD</b> STRUCK A MORE <b>RESPONSIVE CHORD</b>.</p>	<p>FOR <b>DECADES</b> OF COLOR COMIC BOOKS, THE <b>SIGNATURE STYLES</b> OF INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS LIKE <b>NICK CARDY</b> HAVE INFUSED <b>PERSONAL EXPRESSION</b> INTO <b>EVERY STORY</b>--</p>	<p>-- WHILE <b>JULES FEIFFER'S UNEVEN LINES</b> DID <b>BATTLE</b> WITH THEMSELVES IN A <b>PANTOMIME</b> OF THE <b>INNER STRUGGLES</b> OF <b>MODERN LIFE</b>.</p>
			
<p>IN <b>JOSÉ MUÑOZ'S</b> WORK, <b>DENSE PUDDLES OF INK AND FRAYING LINEWORK</b> COMBINE TO EVOKE A WORLD OF <b>DEPRAVITY AND MORBID DECAY</b>--</p>	<p>-- WHILE <b>JOOST SWARTE'S CRISP ELEGANT LINES</b> AND <b>JAZZY DESIGNS</b> SPEAK OF <b>COOL SOPHISTICATION AND IRONY</b>.</p>	<p>IN <b>SPIEGELMAN'S "PRISONER ON THE HELL PLANET,"</b> <b>DELIBERATELY EXPRESSIONISTIC LINES</b> DEPICT A <b>TRUE-LIFE HORROR STORY</b>.</p>	<p>AND IN <b>EISNER'S MODERN WORK</b> A <b>FULL RANGE</b> OF LINE STYLES CAPTURE A <b>FULL RANGE</b> OF <b>MOODS AND EMOTIONS</b>.</p>
			

SEE PAGE 216 FOR COPYRIGHT INFORMATION.



NOW, IF PICTURES CAN, THROUGH THEIR RENDERING, REPRESENT **INVISIBLE** CONCERNS SUCH AS *EMOTIONS* AND THE *OTHER SENSES*--



--THEN THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PICTURES AND OTHER TYPES OF ICONS LIKE LANGUAGE WHICH **SPECIALIZE** IN THE INVISIBLE MAY SEEM A BIT *BLURRY*.

IN FACT, WHAT WE'RE SEEING IN THE *LIVING LINES* OF THESE PICTURES IS *THE PRIMORDIAL STUFF* FROM WHICH A *FORMALIZED LANGUAGE* CAN **EVOLVE!**

I'LL GIVE YOU AN **EXAMPLE**.

LET'S SAY I WANTED TO SMOKE THIS **PIPE**--

--ASSUMING IT **IS** A PIPE--

--AND I LIT IT WITH A MATCH LIKE SO:



Ch. 6: Show and Tell

WORDS AND PICTURES IN COMBINATION MAY NOT BE MY *DEFINITION* OF COMICS, BUT THE COMBINATION HAS HAD *TREMENDOUS INFLUENCE* ON ITS *GROWTH*.

**com-ics** (kom'iks) *n.* plural form, used with a singular verb. Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey an idea and/or to produce an emotional response in the viewer.

1. Superheroes in costumes, fighting villains who want to take over the world, or violent superheroes.



A HUGE RANGE OF HUMAN EXPERIENCES CAN BE *PORTRAYED* IN COMICS THROUGH EITHER WORDS OR PICTURES.



AS A RESULT--AND DESPITE ITS MANY *OTHER* POTENTIAL USES -- COMICS HAVE BECOME *FIRMLY IDENTIFIED* WITH THE ART OF *STORYTELLING*.



AND *INDEED*, WORDS AND PICTURES HAVE *GREAT* POWERS TO TELL STORIES WHEN CREATORS FULLY EXPLOIT THEM *BOTH*.

ROMANCE  
DADA  
HORROR  
SURREALISM  
HISTORICAL FICTION  
FOLK TALES  
EROTICA  
MYSTERY  
RELIGIOUS TOPICS  
SATIRE  
STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS  
ADAPTATIONS  
SOCIAL ALLEGORY  
EPIC POETRY  
BLANK VERSE  
BIOGRAPHY  
SEQUENTIAL ART




AND SO FAR, WE'VE ONLY SEEN THE *TIP OF THE ICEBERG!*



AS CHILDREN, WE "SHOW AND TELL" *INTERCHANGEABLY*, WORDS AND IMAGES COMBINING TO TRANSMIT A *CONNECTED SERIES OF IDEAS*.

IT'S NOT ONE OF *THESE* THINGS.




THE DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH WORDS AND PICTURES CAN *COMBINE* IN COMICS IS VIRTUALLY *UNLIMITED*.



BUT LET'S TRY TO BREAK IT DOWN INTO SOME DISTINCT *CATEGORIES*.



FIRST, WE HAVE THE **WORD SPECIFIC** COMBINATIONS, WHERE PICTURES **ILLUSTRATE**, BUT DON'T SIGNIFICANTLY **ADD** TO A LARGELY **COMPLETE** TEXT.

WE STUMBLED BACK TO THE APARTMENT SHORTLY BEFORE DAWN, **VOMITING** EVERY 20 YARDS.

JUDY GAVE ME HER KEYS AND SMILED.

THE **UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION** WAS ADOPTED BY THE **SECOND CONTINENTAL CONGRESS** IN 1787 AND PUT INTO EFFECT IN 1789.

THEN THERE ARE **PICTURE SPECIFIC** COMBINATIONS WHERE WORDS DO LITTLE MORE THAN ADD A **SOUNDTRACK** TO A VISUALLY TOLD SEQUENCE.

HE **DID IT!**

MMM... MMM...

AND, OF COURSE, **DUO-SPECIFIC** PANELS IN WHICH BOTH WORDS AND PICTURES SEND ESSENTIALLY THE **SAME MESSAGE**.

**GRIM-FACED, GEORGE** LIFTED HIS LOLLYPOP.

**BUT THE CAPTAIN'S MIGHTY BLOW MISSES ITS INTENDED TARGET!**

**BLAST! HE DODGED MY PUNCH AND I STRUCK THIS BRICK WALL!**

HA! I DODGED YOU!

I FEEL SO SAD!

...THOUGHT AMY.

ANOTHER TYPE IS THE **ADDITIVE** COMBINATION WHERE WORDS **AMPLIFY** OR **ELABORATE** ON AN IMAGE OR **VICE VERSA**.



MY HEAD FEELS LIKE A **SMASHED PUMPKIN!**



HOW D'YA LIKE MY **NEW THREADS, BABE?**



IS THIS THE SAME **JUPITER** OF MY YOUTH?



IN **PARALLEL** COMBINATIONS, WORDS AND PICTURES SEEM TO FOLLOW VERY DIFFERENT COURSES--WITHOUT **INTERSECTING**.



"TALKED TO **BILL** YET?"

"**SALLY** DID. WHY?"

"THE **TEST RESULTS** CAME BACK. ALL **NEGATIVE**."

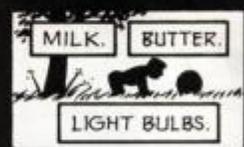
"**REALLY?** THAT'S **GREAT!**"

WELL...



PEPPER. CEREAL.

MILK. BUTTER. LIGHT BULBS.



STILL ANOTHER OPTION IS THE **MONTAGE** WHERE WORDS ARE TREATED AS INTEGRAL **PARTS** OF THE PICTURE.

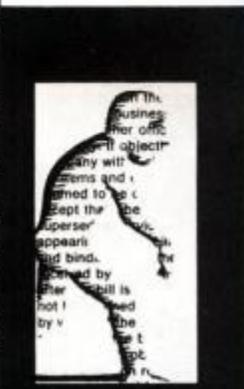


CASH FLOW BOTTOM LINE ANNUAL REPORT



**HAPPY!**

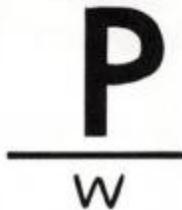
at the business for one object any with arms and to be kept the 'perser' appears and bind. covered by the ball is not 1 by v



PERHAPS THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF WORD/PICTURE COMBINATION IS THE **INTERDEPENDENT**, WHERE WORDS AND PICTURES GO **HAND IN HAND** TO CONVEY AN IDEA THAT NEITHER COULD CONVEY **ALONE**.



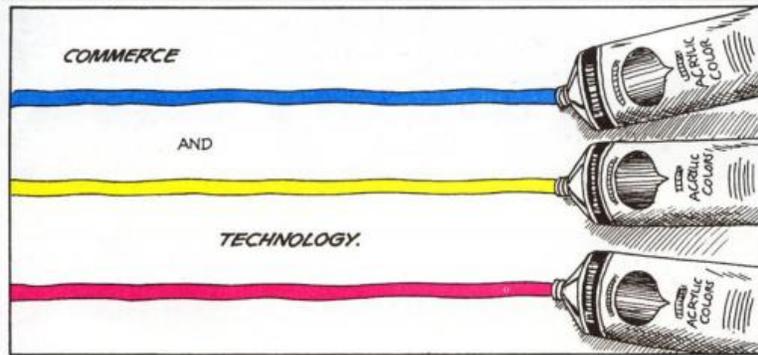
INTERDEPENDENT COMBINATIONS AREN'T ALWAYS AN **EQUAL BALANCE** THOUGH AND MAY FALL **ANYWHERE** ON A SCALE BETWEEN TYPES ONE AND TWO.



GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE MORE IS SAID WITH **WORDS**, THE MORE THE PICTURES CAN BE FREED TO GO EXPLORING AND **VICE VERSA**.



## Ch. 8: A Word About Color



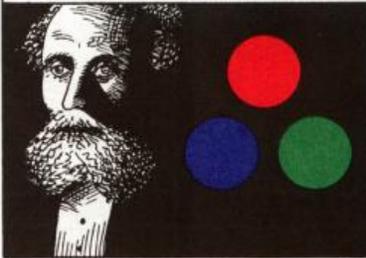
NOW **ALL** ASPECTS OF COMICS HISTORY HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY **COMMERCE** MONEY HAS A TREMENDOUS EFFECT ON WHAT IS AND **ISN'T** SEEN.



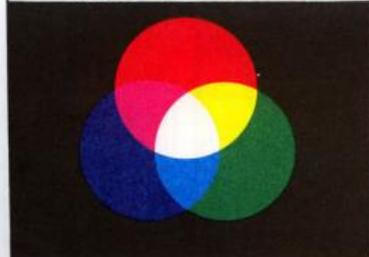
BUT **COLOR** IN COMICS HAS ALWAYS BEEN UNUSUALLY **SENSITIVE** TO THE **SHIFTING TIDES OF TECHNOLOGY.**



THE TECHNOLOGY OF COLOR REPRODUCTION WAS FIRST ANTICIPATED IN **1861** WHEN SCOTTISH PHYSICIST **SIR JAMES CLERK-MAXWELL** ISOLATED WHAT WE NOW CALL **THE THREE ADDITIVE PRIMARIES.**



THESE COLORS -- ROUGHLY, **RED, BLUE** AND **GREEN** -- WHEN PROJECTED TOGETHER ON A SCREEN IN **VARIOUS COMBINATIONS**, COULD REPRODUCE EVERY COLOR IN THE **VISIBLE SPECTRUM.**



THEY WERE CALLED **ADDITIVE** BECAUSE THEY LITERALLY **ADDED UP** TO PURE **WHITE LIGHT.**

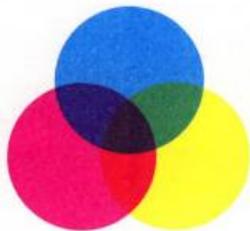


EIGHT YEARS LATER, FRENCH PIANIST **LOUIS DUCOS DU HAURON\*** DEvised THE IDEA OF THREE **SUBTRACTIVE** PRIMARIES.



\*WHOM I **DON'T** HAVE A PICTURE OF.

**THESE** COLORS -- **CYAN, MAGENTA** AND **YELLOW\*** -- CAN **ALSO** MIX TO PRODUCE ANY HUE IN THE **VISIBLE SPECTRUM**, BUT RATHER THAN **ADDING** LIGHT, THESE THREE DO IT BY **FILTERING IT OUT!**

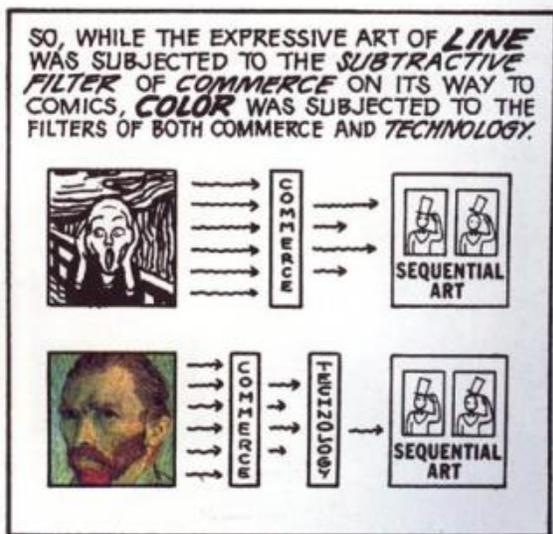
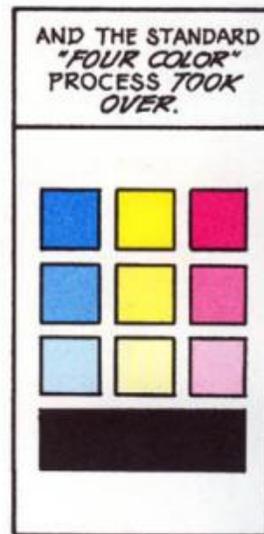


THIS **SUBTRACTIVE** EFFECT WAS ACHIEVED THROUGH **TRANSPARENT SUBSTANCES** SUCH AS **CELLOPHANE, COLORED GLASS, WATER COLORS** --



--OR **PRINTERS' INK!**





\* FOR OPAQUE PIGMENTS: RED, YELLOW AND BLUE. I KNOW, IT'S TOTALLY WEIRD.



TO COUNTERACT THE DULLING EFFECTS OF NEWSPRINT AND TO STAND OUT FROM THE COMPETITION, COSTUMED HEROES WERE CLAD IN **BRIGHT, PRIMARY COLORS** AND FOUGHT IN A **BRIGHT PRIMARY WORLD!**

THE COLORS WERE PICKED FOR **STRENGTH** AND CONTRASTED STRONGLY WITH ONE ANOTHER, BUT ON MOST PAGES NO ONE COLOR **DOMINATED**.

WITHOUT THE **EMOTIONAL IMPACT** OF **SINGLE-COLOR SATURATION**, THE **EXPRESSIVE POTENTIAL** OF AMERICAN COLOR COMICS --

-- WAS OFTEN **CANCELLED OUT** TO AN **EMOTIONAL GREY**.

AS ALWAYS, THERE WERE SOME **EXCEPTIONS**, BUT THIS WAS THE **OVERALL TREND**.

HOWEVER, WHILE COMICS COLORS WERE LESS THAN **EXPRESSIONISTIC**, THEY WERE FIXED WITH A NEW **ICONIC** POWER. BECAUSE COSTUME COLORS REMAINED EXACTLY THE SAME, PANEL AFTER PANEL, THEY CAME TO **SYMBOLIZE** CHARACTERS IN THE MIND OF THE READER.

MANY SEE THE SUPERHERO AS A FORM OF **MODERN MYTHOLOGY**. IF SO, THIS ASPECT OF COLOR MAY PLAY A PART.

SYMBOLS ARE THE STUFF OF WHICH **GODS** ARE MADE.

**ANOTHER** PROPERTY OF FLAT COLORS IS THEIR TENDENCY TO EMPHASIZE THE **SHAPE** OF OBJECTS, BOTH **ANIMATE** AND **INANIMATE**--

-- AS ANY CHILD WHO HAS EVER "COLORED-BY-NUMBERS" KNOWS INSTINCTIVELY.



THESE COLORS **OBJECTIFY** THEIR SUBJECTS. WE BECOME MORE AWARE OF THE **PHYSICAL FORM** OF OBJECTS THAN IN **BLACK AND WHITE**.

A GAME IN MOTION BECOMES A BALL IN AIR. A FACE SHOWING EMOTION BECOMES A HEAD AND TWO HANDS.



THE WORLD TAKES ON THE CHILDHOOD REALITY OF THE **PLAYGROUND** AND RECALLS A TIME WHEN SHAPE **PRECEDED** MEANING. OBLONG SWING SETS. CYLINDRICAL JUNGLE GYMS. THE WONDER OF **THINGS!**



DOESN'T IT **FOLLOW** THEN THAT THE MASTERS OF **FLAT-COLOR** COMICS ARE, ABOVE ALL, MASTERS OF **FORM** AND **COMPOSITION**?



**KIRBY.**



**MCCAY.**



**COLE.**



FROM **STEVE DITKO** TO **CARL BARKS** TO **J. CRAIG RUSSELL**, THAT LOVE OF SHAPES PERSISTS IN WORLDS FAIRLY **GLOWING** WITH THE MYSTERY OF **FIRST ENCOUNTERS**.

ANY WONDER THEN THAT COMICS IN AMERICA HAS BEEN SO RELUCTANT TO **"GROW UP"**?





