

What is a Comic?

Definitions & Terms of Art

Short Course Sessions

- April 4: Anatomy of Comics
- April 11: History of (American and British) Comics
- April 18: Comic Emotions
- April 25: Heroes and Heroines in Print and Film

Course Goals

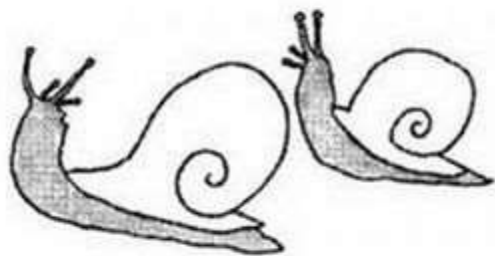
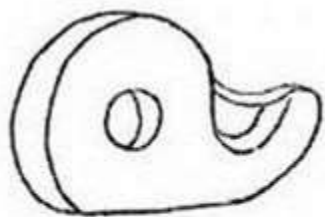
To understand:

- A history of comics
- Important texts and developments
- Terms of art
- Reading and interpretative strategies
- How to appreciate the medium

Comic or Not?







S.GROSS

"I don't care if she is a tape dispenser. I love her."



*Tragic the Mangled and torn Thoughts
 The in the Heart of Wretched Death,
 Her soul Remembrance had to Death
 Turners from help, and all Death
 the Place.*

*She still appearing in an agonizing
 state of Soul, which she had been three
 The ghost of her, & still in Anger
 No will the Recovery of her Day.*

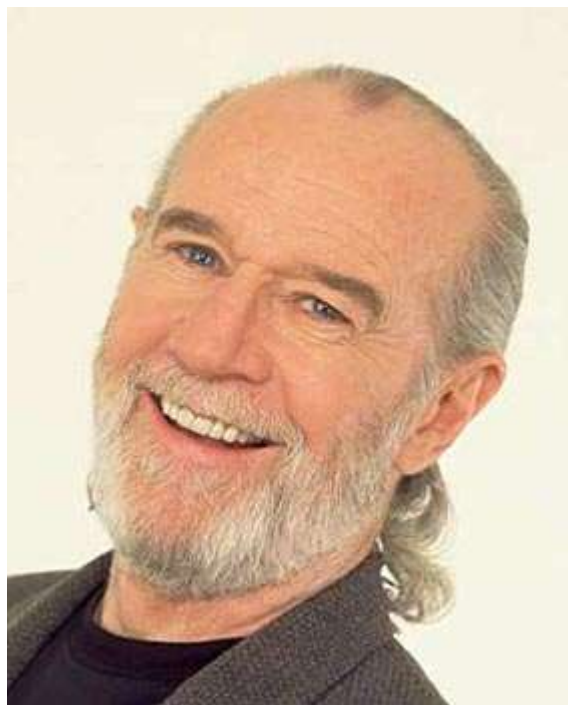
*Not in the quality of Death, which
 is the same as the last, which she had
 to the same, but all from every Death,
 And from Death, & a second Death.*

*She still, & onward,
 And every part of Heaven, which
 to her, & all, which she had,
 from Heaven, & all, which she had.*

*Within the Heart, & all,
 And from the Heart, & all, which she had,
 from Heaven, & all, which she had,
 from Heaven, & all, which she had.*

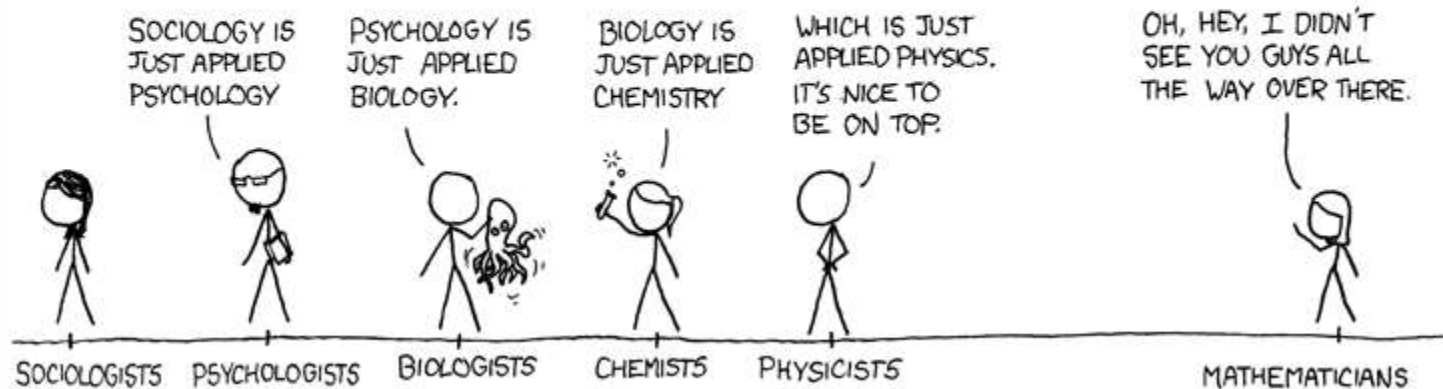






FIELDS ARRANGED BY PURITY

→
MORE PURE







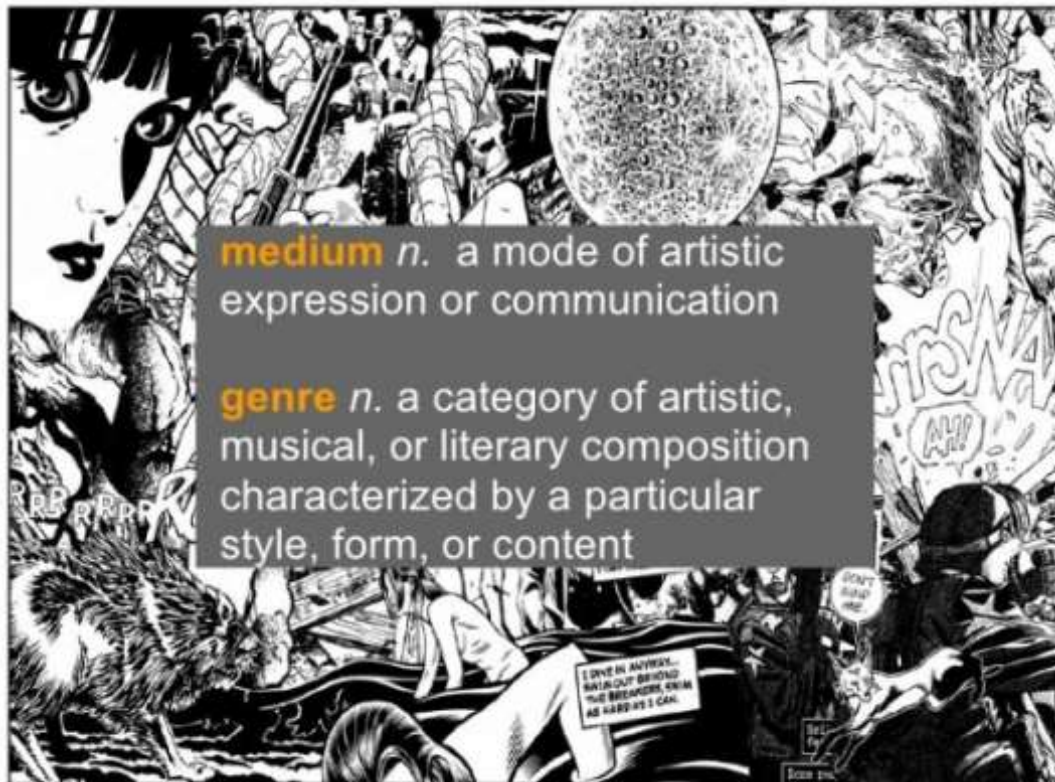


THE NIGHT SEEMED FILLED WITH
A THOUSAND EMPTY ETERNITIES...

I... I CAN'T
STAND IT... I... I'LL
APOLOGIZE TOMORROW...
AFTER ALL-- IT WAS HIS FIRST
SUCCESS... HE WAS EXCITED...
FORGETFUL--

Definitions



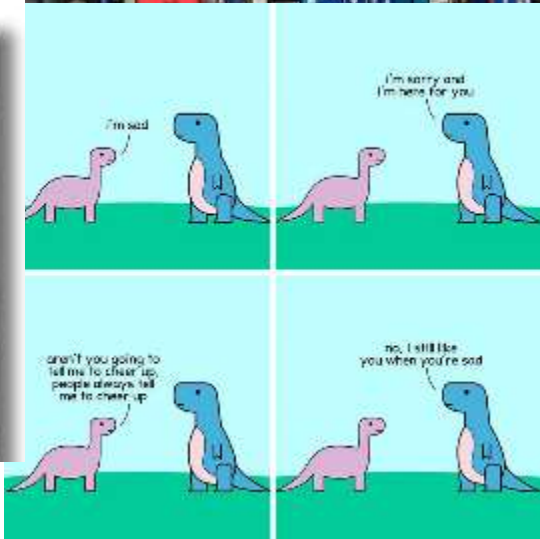


medium *n.* a mode of artistic expression or communication

genre *n.* a category of artistic, musical, or literary composition characterized by a particular style, form, or content



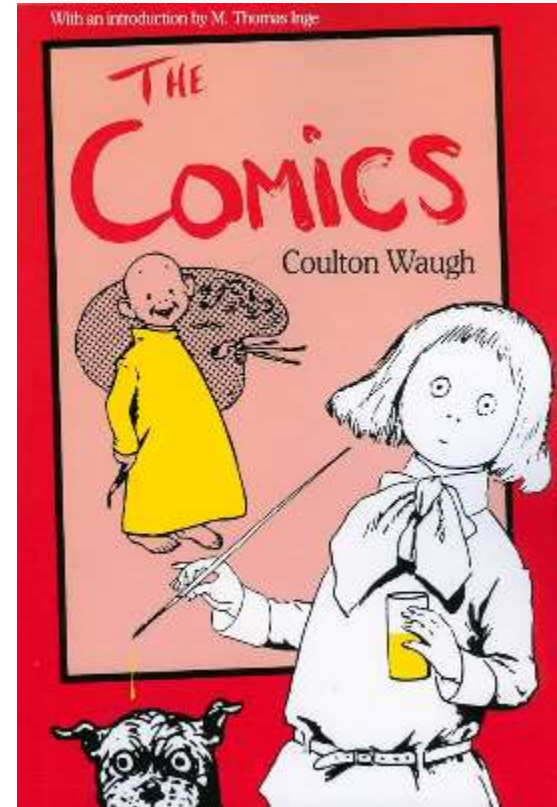
SUNDAY COMICS





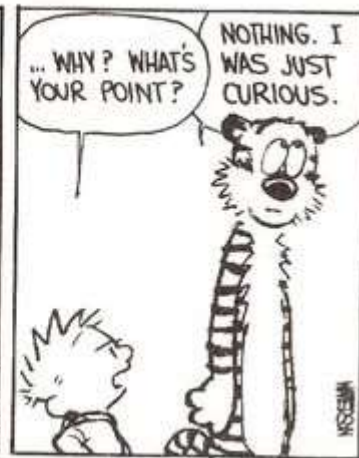
Definitions (take two)

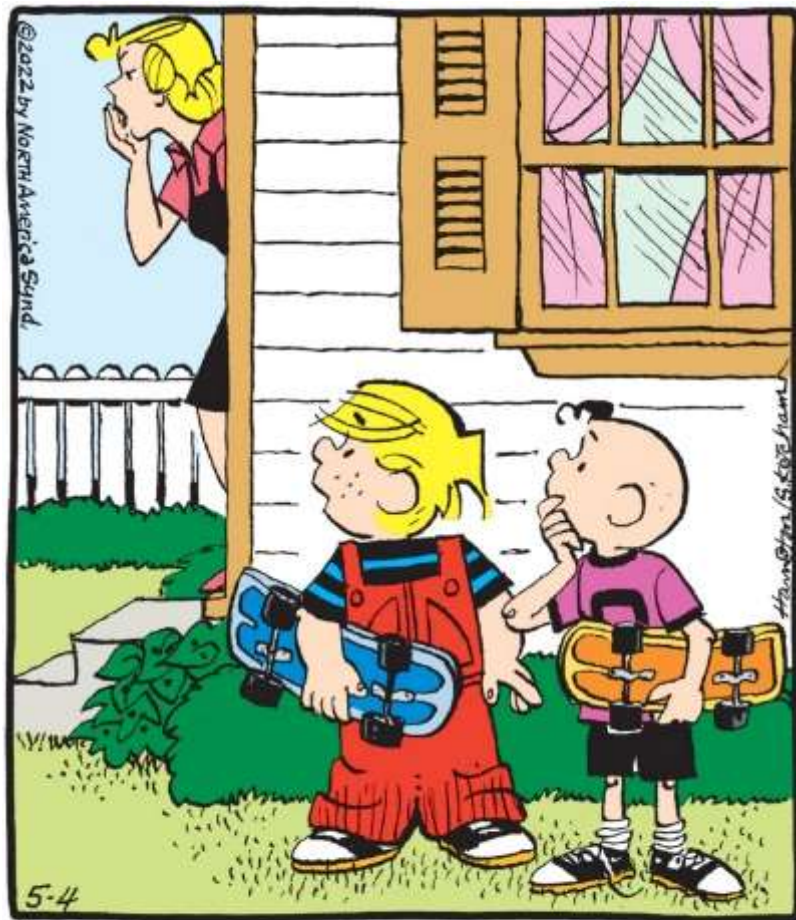
1) sequence of pictures that tell a story or joke, 2) words incorporated into the picture usually in the form of speech balloons, and 3) continuing characters. (1947)



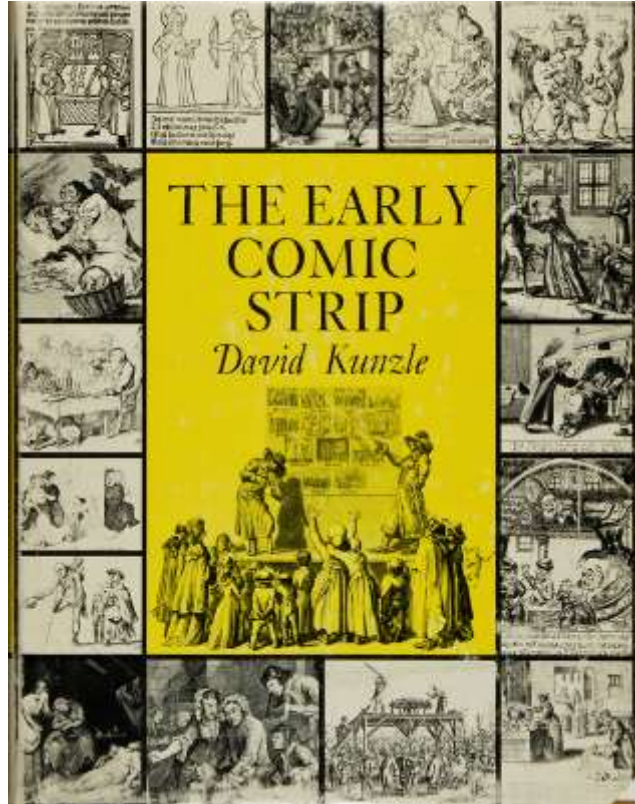


LOOK AT ME. I'M SMART! I DON'T NEED 11½ MORE YEARS OF SCHOOL! IT'S A COMPLETE WASTE OF MY TIME!





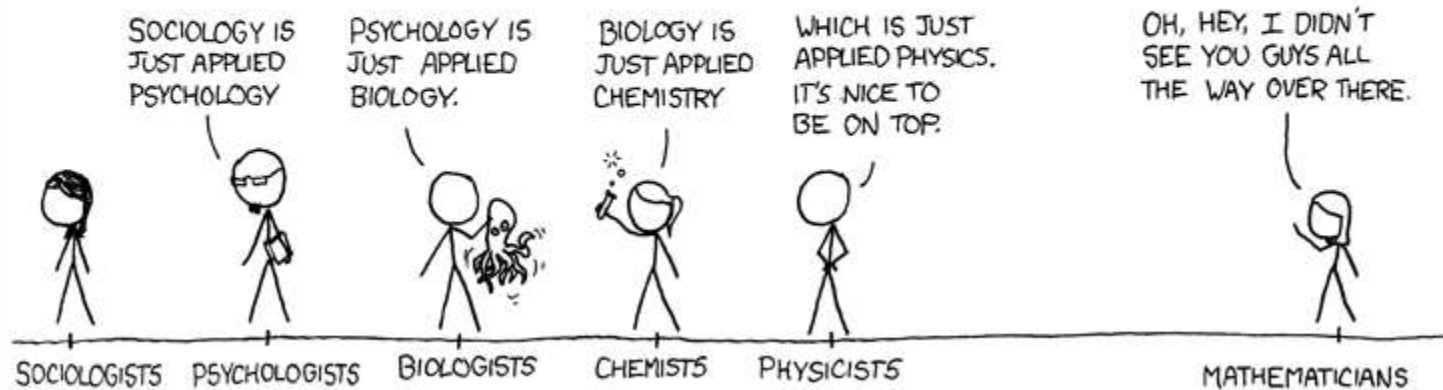
“UH-OH! SHE USED ALL THREE OF MY NAMES.
THAT SPELLS TROUBLE!”

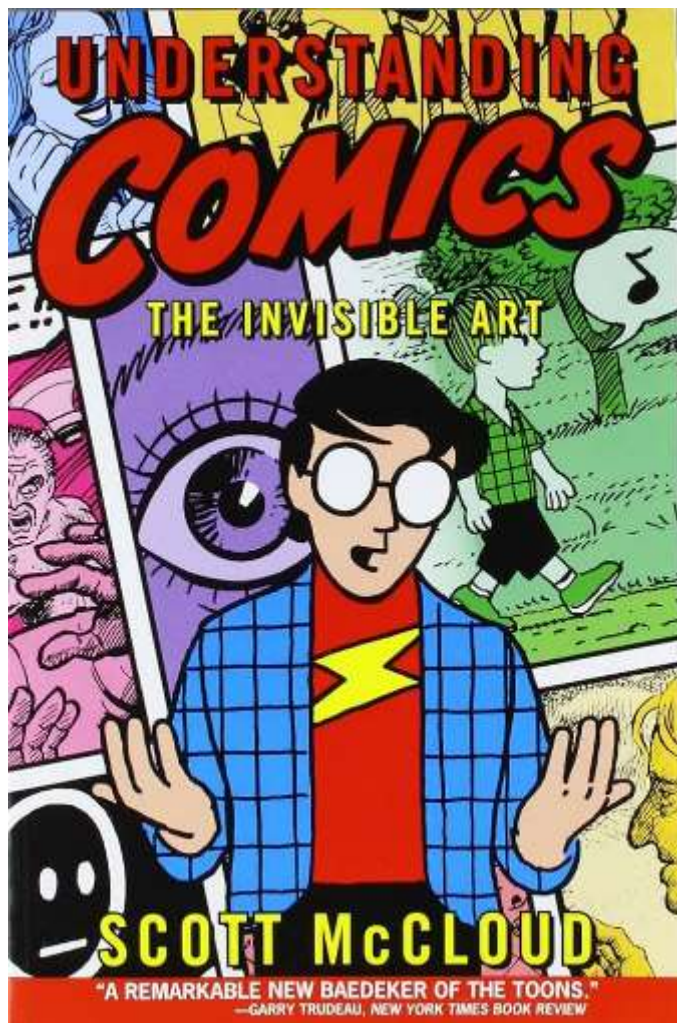


1) There must be a sequence of separate images; 2) There must be a preponderance of image over text; 3) The medium in which the strip appears and for which it was originally intended must be reproductive, that is, in printed form, a mass medium; 4) The sequence must tell a story which is both moral and topical. (1973)

FIELDS ARRANGED BY PURITY

→
MORE PURE





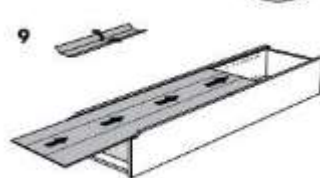
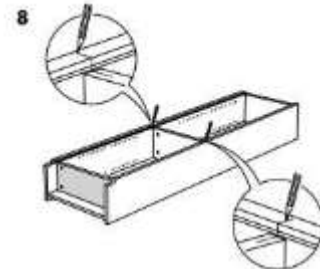
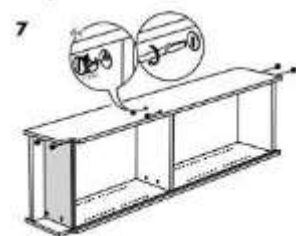
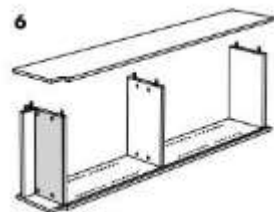
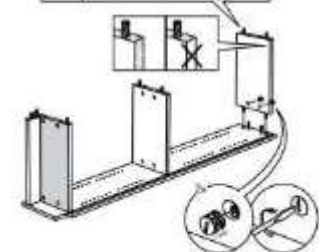
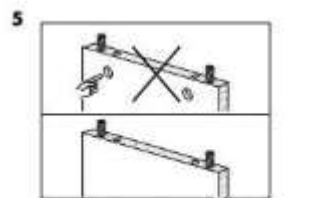
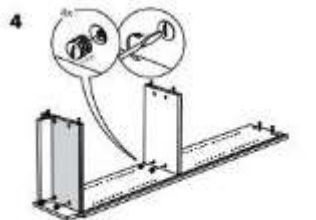
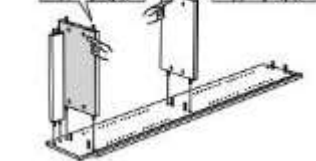
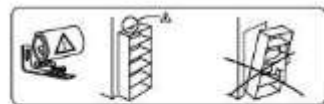
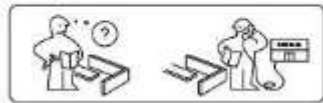
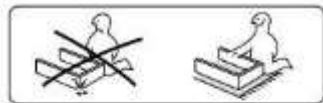
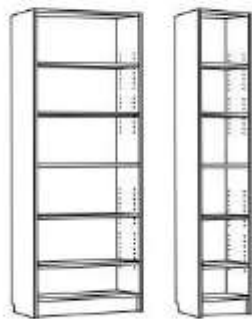
adv.

com·ics (kom'iks)**n.** plural in form, used with a singular verb. **1.** Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer. **2.** Superheroes in bright colorful costumes, fighting dastardly villains who want to conquer the world, in violent sensational pulse-pounding action sequences! **3.** Cute, cuddly bunnies, mice and rotund bears, dancing to bad fro-hippy-hop, hippy-hop. **4.** Corruptor of our Nation's Youth.

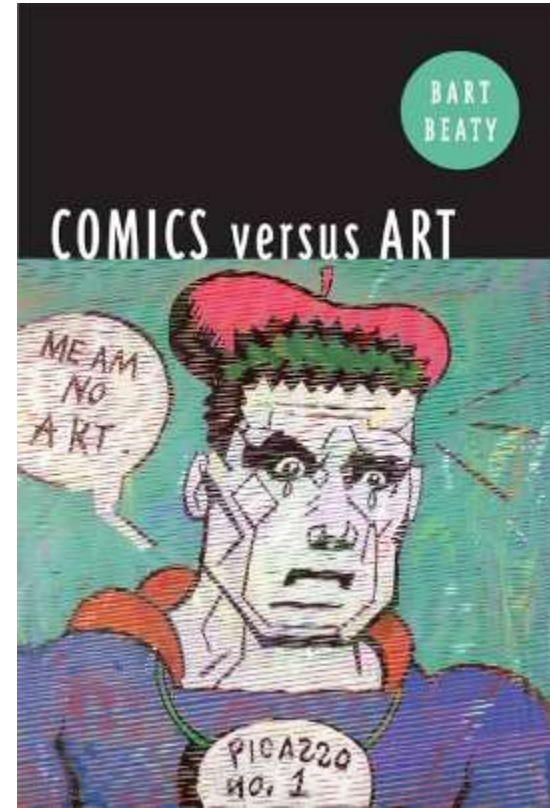
com·ing (kum'ing)**adj.**



BILLY



“objects recognized by [or presented to] the comics world as comics” (2012)



BASIC COMICS ANATOMY



GUTTER



Tugging the Marquis's coat and thought
 He on the skirt of Whitting's thought
 Her maid Remembrance's back to fetch
 Turners from left, and right, about
 the Place.

She still apprehensives some more
 Lines of such Nature that shall stop
 The flight of Air, & call it Air,
 No odd the Reveries of her Day.

All in the quality of which we find
 As Pleasure's mist but leaving blind
 As Pleasure's mist, all from every youth
 And Justice, Truth, & honest Truth.

Allons, allons, & onward,
 And every eye of Heaven admires,
 No less of God, Religion, Love,
 Than, Heaven, All to Heaven's self.

Beyond the Field, across the River,
 And gives the Title to mad Progress
 Through the World, & Heaven's self,
 London, & the Parliament Hill, & the City.



"... I know it when I see it ..."



Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart

(*Jacobellis v. Ohio*, 1964)

Terms of Art



THIS PHENOMENON OF
*OBSERVING THE PARTS BUT
PERCEIVING THE WHOLE*
HAS A NAME.

IT'S
CALLED
CLOSURE.



IN OUR DAILY LIVES, WE OFTEN
COMMIT CLOSURE, MENTALLY
COMPLETING THAT WHICH IS
INCOMPLETE BASED ON *PAST*
EXPERIENCE.



-- THERE LIES
A MEDIUM OF
COMMUNICATION
AND EXPRESSION
WHICH USES CLOSURE
LIKE *NO OTHER...*



... A MEDIUM WHERE THE AUDIENCE IS
A WILLING AND CONSCIOUS *COLLABORATOR*
AND CLOSURE IS THE AGENT OF *CHANGE,*
TIME AND MOTION.







1.
*MOMENT-
TO-
MOMENT*



2.
*ACTION-
TO-
ACTION*



3.
*SUBJECT-
TO-
SUBJECT*



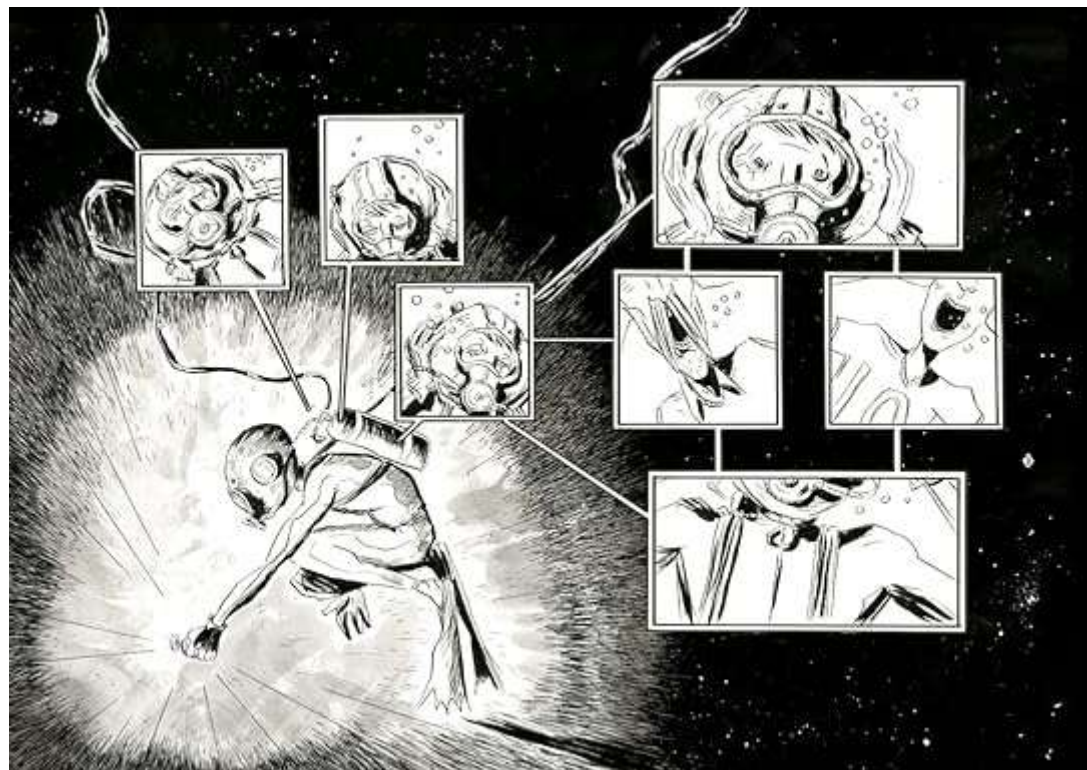
4.
*SCENE-
TO-
SCENE*



5.
*ASPECT-
TO-
ASPECT*



6.
*NON-
SEQUITUR*



Comics might be defined as a hybrid word-and-image form in which two narrative tracks, one verbal and one visual, register temporality spatially. Comics moves forward in time through the space of the page, through its progressive counter point of presence and absence: packed panels (also called frames) alternating with gutters (empty space). Highly textured in its narrative scaffolding, comics doesn't blend the visual and the verbal - or use one simply to illustrate the other - but is rather prone to present the two nonsynchronously; a reader of comics not only fills in the gaps between panels but also works with the often disjunctive back-and-forth of *reading* and *looking* for meaning. (2008)

Comics as Literature? Reading Graphic Narrative

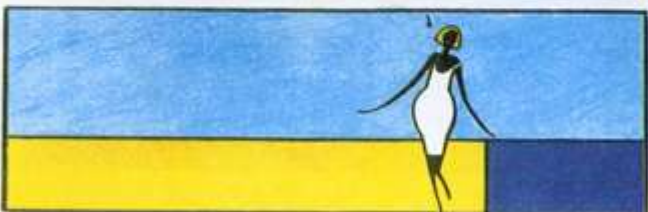
HILLARY CHUTE

L A ORILLA



E L I S A C

F O S L I A C C I O



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Wrap Up

- What makes a comic?
- Medium / Form / Genre
- Terms of art
- Closure