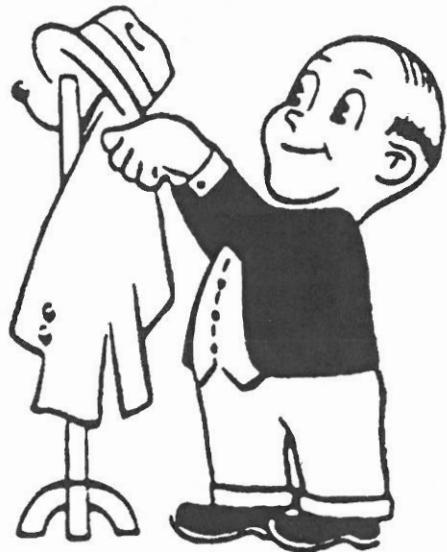


9. PICTURES HAVE NO EFFECTS, ONLY ATTITUDES

This is 9th of 24 lessons, and in almost every case so far, pictures have been used as examples of types to be described and analyzed. While these lessons have been largely reliant on words to explain effects, the pictures have been placed center stage, somewhat distorting their significance and the text's essential role. Pictures function here like willing puppets posing and performing for the critical voice behind them.

In a conventional codex book where type is disciplined into "justified" galleys with uniform typeface and leading, the visual effects of typography are meant to support the idea that the book's form is a neutral, sober presence. When text is rendered in "print," it becomes a sign of knowledge. The calculations of the book's design recede so that the author's voice is all the reader must consider.



12 PT. SPARTON BOLD CONDENSED with BOLD COND. ITALIC

Type is the voice through which your printed salesmen speak. T
TYPE IS THE VOICE THROUGH WHICH YOUR PRINTED SALESMEN
1234567890\$

(Type sample from the *New York Journal American*
type style manual, c. 1960)



In 24 IDEAS, various shifts in typography are meant to project different voices, or at least different intensities of expression. The Author has many moods. But despite various distractions and bids for attention it is still a question whether the book ever escapes the domination of one insistent voice for very long. Parenthetically, this picture of an archer, which literally takes a stance in relation to the text block, is in fact an element in a set of international signs that function as a typeface: print masquerading as image.

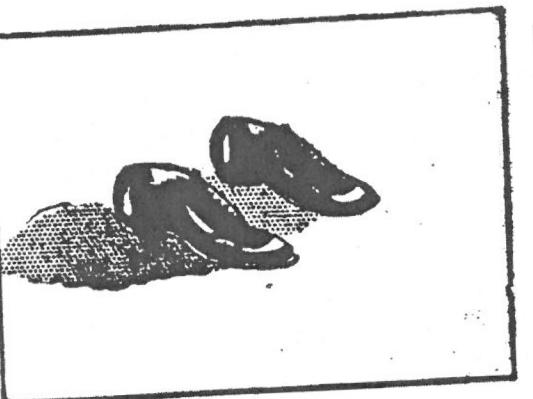
(Pause)

The dictionary describes a non sequitur as "an inference or conclusion that does not follow from the premises." Here are some pictures that propose disconnection from the responsibility to mean something coherent, but they are still being asked to raise an important question: Is a visual non sequitur a conceptual fact, or just a sign of cognitive exhaustion? Can a picture ever resist a definitive interpretation and just express an attitude?



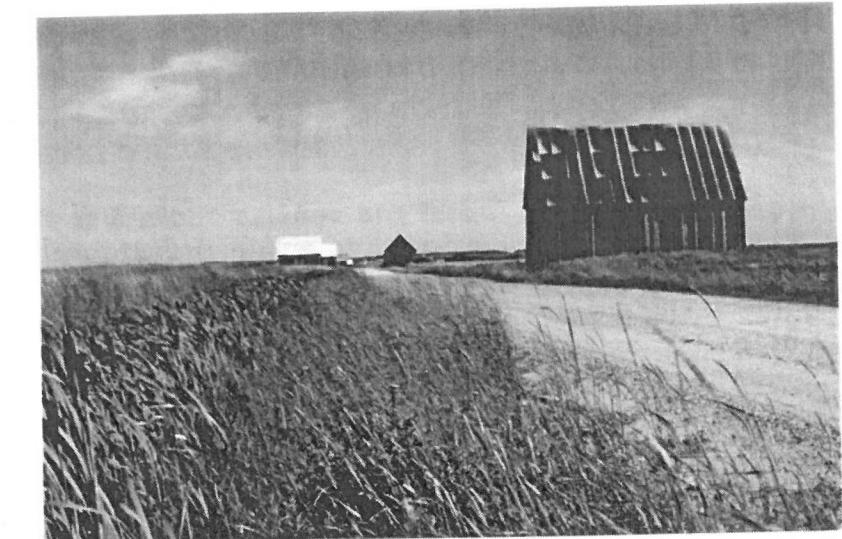
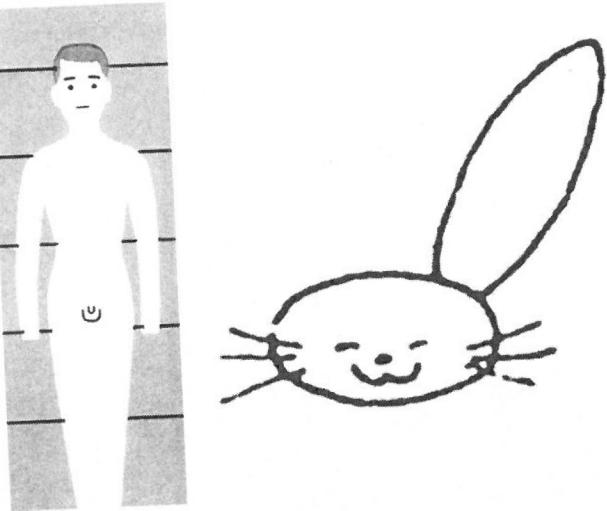
CLOSURE IN COMICS FOSTERS AN INTIMACY SURPASSED ONLY BY THE
WRITTEN WORD, A SILENT, SECRET CONTRACT BETWEEN
CREATOR AND AUDIENCE.

(McCloud, 69)



Everyday perception and interpretation is fueled by the forced eliding of inconsistencies and the synthesis of partial knowledge. The mechanism of "closure"--the reading between fragments, the leap across the graphic gutter--analyzed by Scott McCloud in *Understanding Comics* is not only the central principle of comic book law, but the conceptual glue that makes

chronologies of events seem tangible, purposeful, coherent: this happened next; ten years have passed. Closure brings narrative and event, cause and effect into effective use. It makes them believable. Therefore, signs of irrelevance and dislocation threaten the principle that things *must* fit-- somehow and somewhere--that coherence is not an illusion masking disorder, but the way things are supposed to be.



10. "A PICTURE IS A MODEL OF REALITY"

The delicate and hermetic world of the souvenir is a world of nature idealized; nature is removed from the domain of struggle into the domestic sphere of the individual and the interior. (Stewart, *On Longing*, 198)

Nostalgia is a sadness without an object, a sadness which creates a longing that of necessity is inauthentic because it does not take part in lived experience. (200)

This 1994 postcard photo of Sackville, New Brunswick, pictures a dirt road leading the eye in one-point perspective to an iconic peaked roof farmhouse in the distance. Soothing in both its understated depiction of rural beauty and its pointed reference to landscape painting, it is the Pachelbel's Canon of postcards, pretty enough to provide unassailable middlebrow aesthetic pleasure: the soft focus of the various farm buildings in the middle ground and the distance, the close tonalities of earth colors and the mottled blue sky. No signs of rural poverty here. When I saw this card in a discount pharmacy, it called out "picturesque," so I bought it.



Souvenirs can distort and trivialize local expressions with or without local encouragement, and be more a record of the tourist's tastes and values than hyped regional marketing, but retrieving the exotic or the picturesque for service at home also extends the narrative of the souvenir into new terrain.