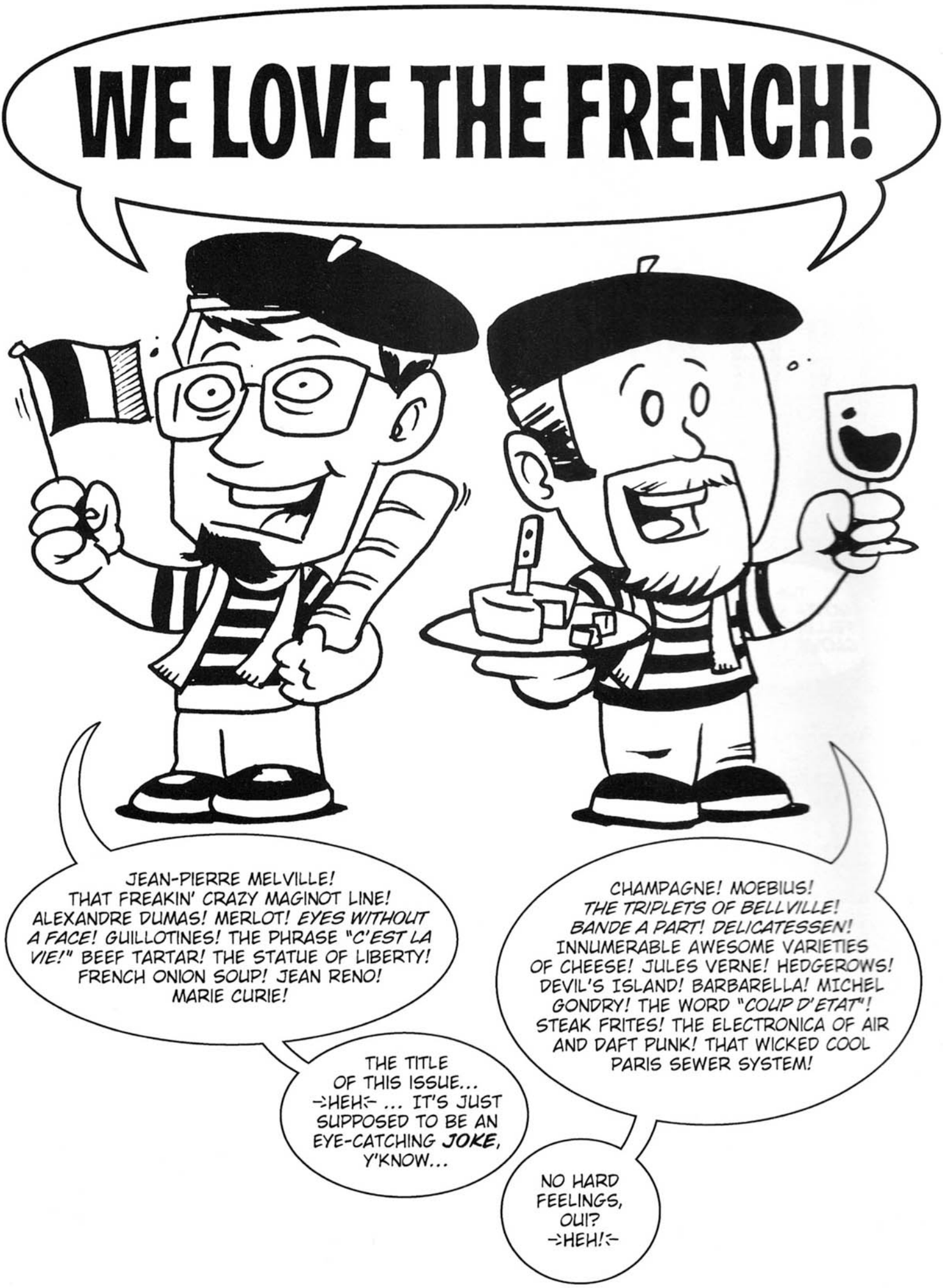
EVIL TWIN COMICS

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April 2006
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ACTION PHILOSOPHERS!

HATE THE FRENCH!





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LADIES AND GENTS! WITHOUT FURTHER ADIEU, WE'RE PROUD TO PRESENT THE FATHER OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY...

ACTION PHILOSOPHER #133...

RENÉ DESCARTES!

FRED VAN LENTE WRITES & RYAN DUNLAVEY DRAWS, THEREFORE THEY ARE!

RENÉ?

RENNY-BABY?

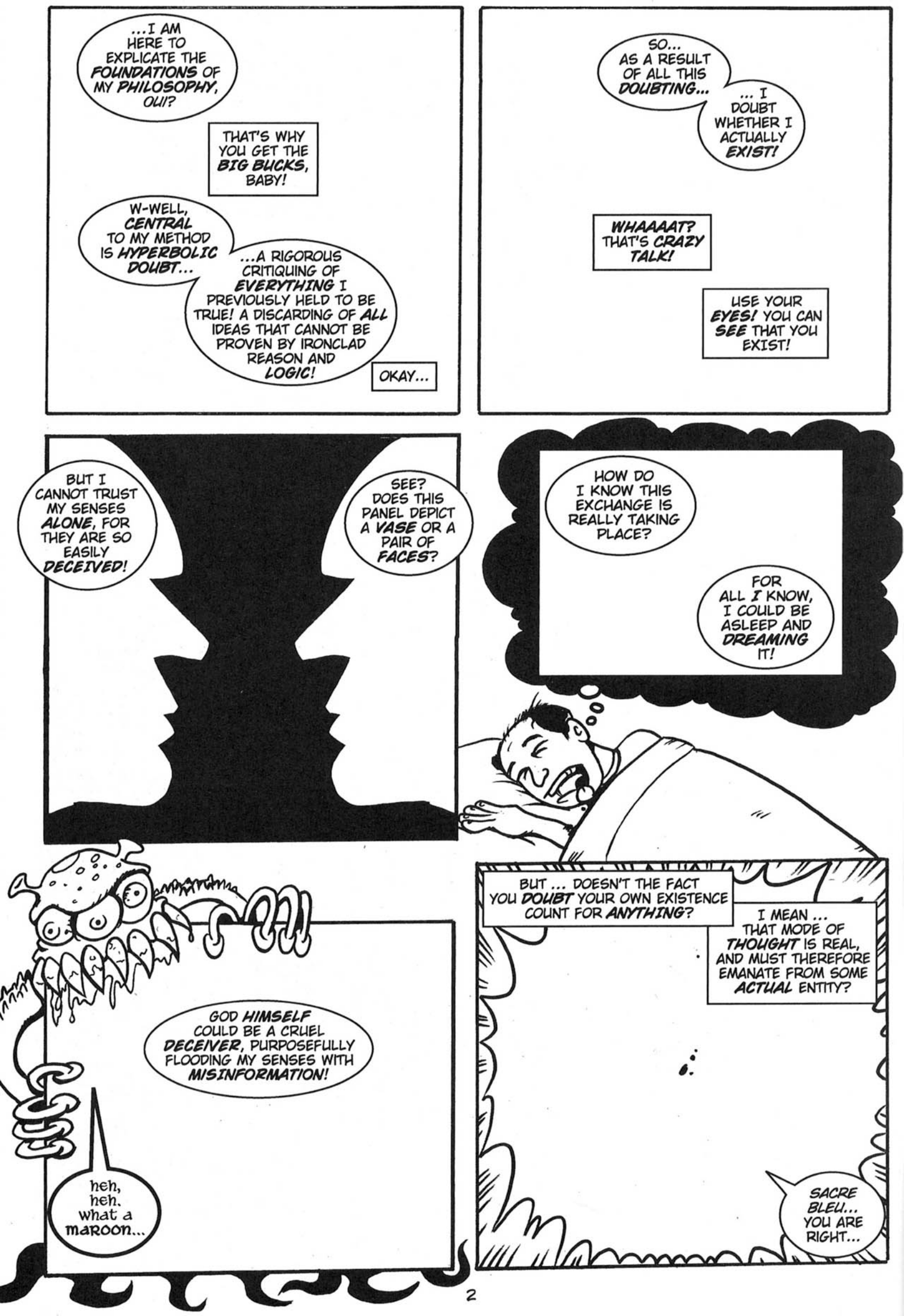
C'MON OUT AND KNOCK 'EM DEAD, SON!

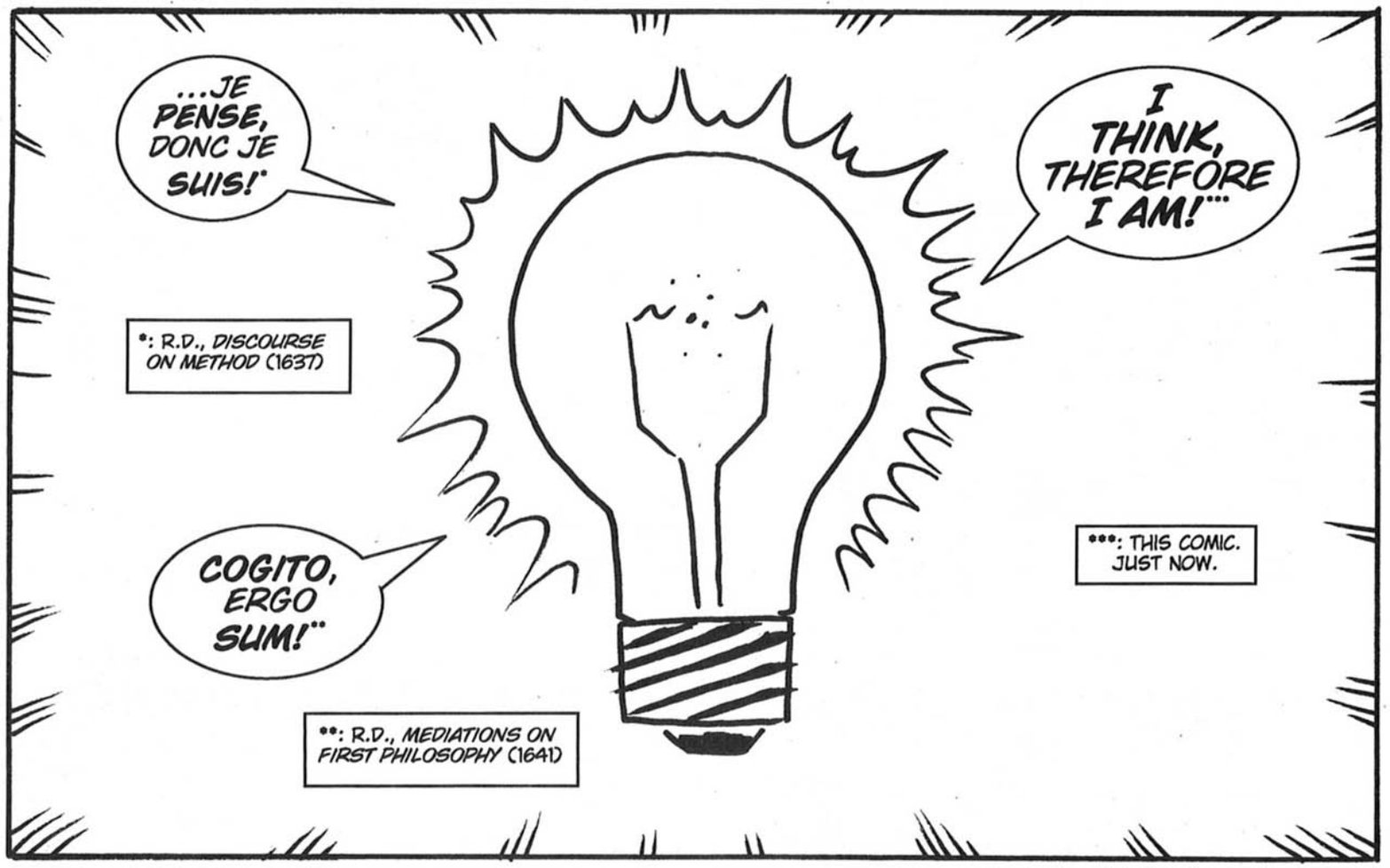
I'M OVER HERE.

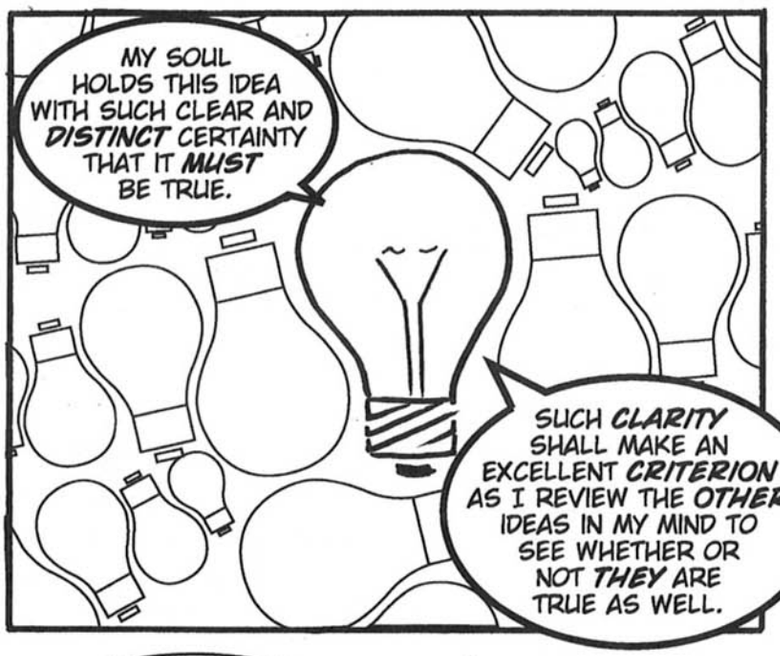
UH ... THEN WHY DON'T YOU COME OUT? W-WE GOT >HEHK PAYING CUSTOMERS WHO SLAPPED DOWN GOOD MONEY FOR THIS HERE PHILOSOPHY COMIC...

...AND THE SHOW MUST GO ON, TO COIN A CLICHE! >HEH!<

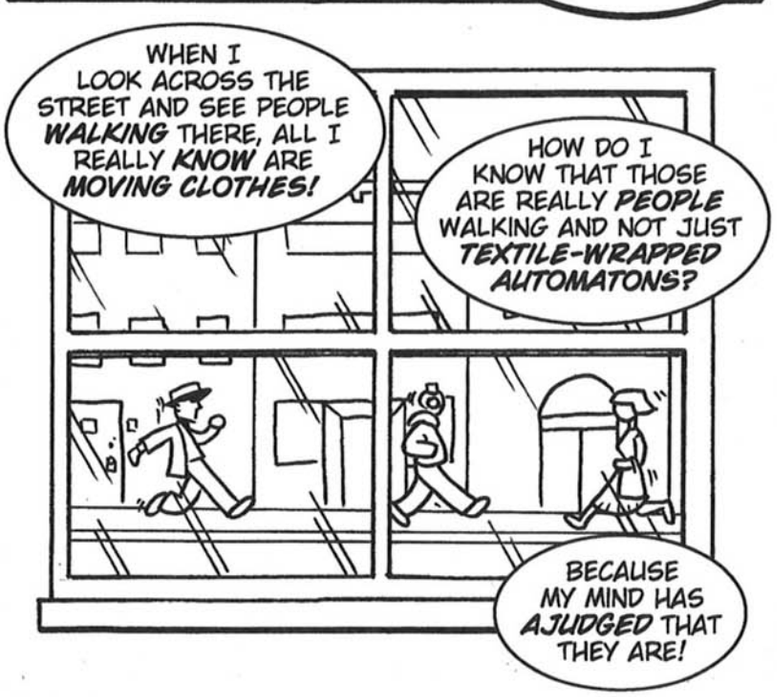
IT'S JUST... THERE'S A SLIGHT PROBLEM...

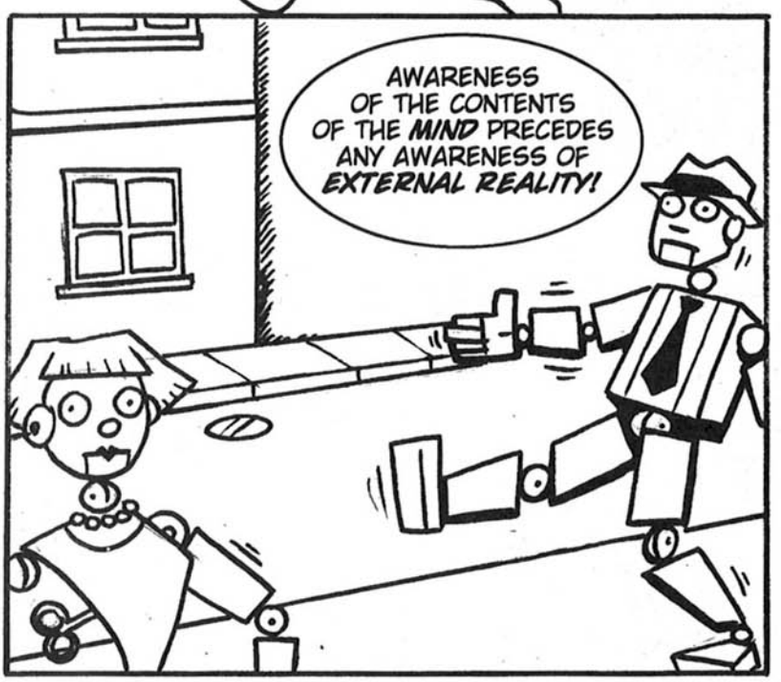

...I AM HERE TO EXPLICATE THE FOUNDATIONS OF MY PHILOSOPHY, OUI?
THAT'S WHY YOU GET THE BIG BUCKS, BABY!
W-WELL, CENTRAL TO MY METHOD IS HYPERBOLIC DOUBT...
...A RIGOROUS CRITIQUING OF EVERYTHING I PREVIOUSLY HELD TO BE TRUE! A DISCARDING OF ALL IDEAS THAT CANNOT BE PROVEN BY IRONCLAD REASON AND LOGIC!
OKAY...
SO... AS A RESULT OF ALL THIS DOUBTING...
... I DOUBT WHETHER I ACTUALLY EXIST!
WHAAAAT? THAT'S CRAZY TALK!
USE YOUR EYES! YOU CAN SEE THAT YOU EXIST!
BUT I CANNOT TRUST MY SENSES ALONE, FOR THEY ARE SO EASILY DECEIVED!
SEE? DOES THIS PANEL DEPICT A VASE OR A PAIR OF FACES?
HOW DO I KNOW THIS EXCHANGE IS REALLY TAKING PLACE?
FOR ALL I KNOW, I COULD BE ASLEEP AND DREAMING IT!
GOD HIMSELF COULD BE A CRUEL DECEIVER, PURPOSEFULLY FLOODING MY SENSES WITH MISINFORMATION!
heh, heh. what a maroon...
BUT ... DOESN'T THE FACT YOU DOUBT YOUR OWN EXISTENCE COUNT FOR ANYTHING?
I MEAN ... THAT MODE OF THOUGHT IS REAL, AND MUST THEREFORE EMANATE FROM SOME ACTUAL ENTITY?
SACRE BLEU... YOU ARE RIGHT...


...JE PENSE, DONC JE SUIS!*
I THINK, THEREFORE I AM!***
*: R.D., DISCOURSE ON METHOD (1637)
COGITO, ERGO SUM!**
**: R.D., MEDIATIONS ON FIRST PHILOSOPHY (1641)
***: THIS COMIC. JUST NOW.


MY SOUL HOLDS THIS IDEA WITH SUCH CLEAR AND DISTINCT CERTAINTY THAT IT MUST BE TRUE.
SUCH CLARITY SHALL MAKE AN EXCELLENT CRITERION AS I REVIEW THE OTHER IDEAS IN MY MIND TO SEE WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE TRUE AS WELL.


MY SENSES SUGGEST THAT MY SOUL/MIND IS ATTACHED TO SOME KIND OF BODY!
EXTENDED SUBSTANCE -- RES EXTENSA -- FROM MY RES COGITANS -- THINKING SUBSTANCE!
BUT... MY SENSES ARE UNTRUSTWORTHY INFORMANTS!

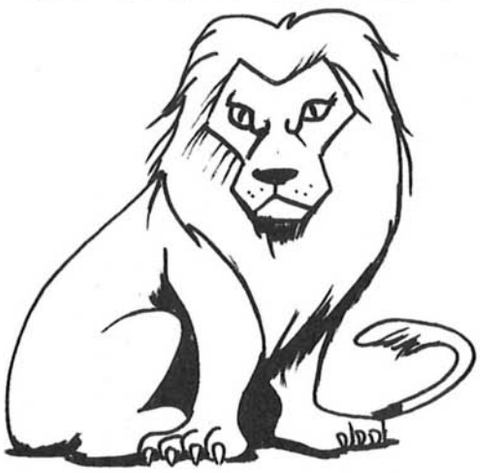

WHEN I LOOK ACROSS THE STREET AND SEE PEOPLE WALKING THERE, ALL I REALLY KNOW ARE MOVING CLOTHES!
HOW DO I KNOW THAT THOSE ARE REALLY PEOPLE WALKING AND NOT JUST TEXTILE-WRAPPED AUTOMATONS?
BECAUSE MY MIND HAS AJUDGED THAT THEY ARE!


AWARENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THE MIND PRECEDES ANY AWARENESS OF EXTERNAL REALITY!

AN INVENTORY OF MY MIND'S ***CONTENTS*** REVEALS THREE DISTINCT ***TYPES*** OF IDEAS:



FICTITIOUS IDEAS, WHICH THE MIND ***INVENTS...***

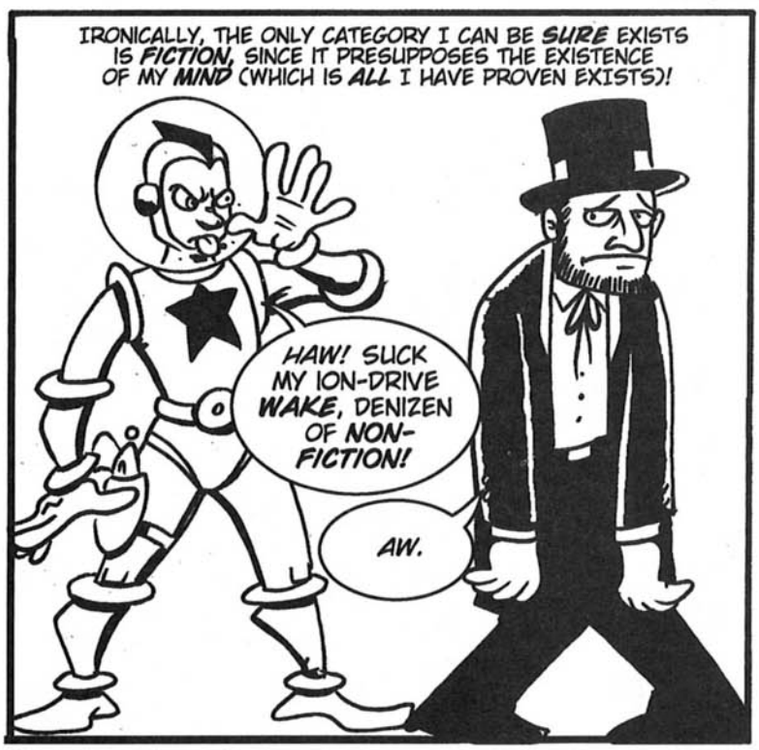


....***ADVENTITIOUS*** IDEAS, WHICH THE MIND ***RECEIVES*** FROM THE ***EXTERNAL WORLD...***

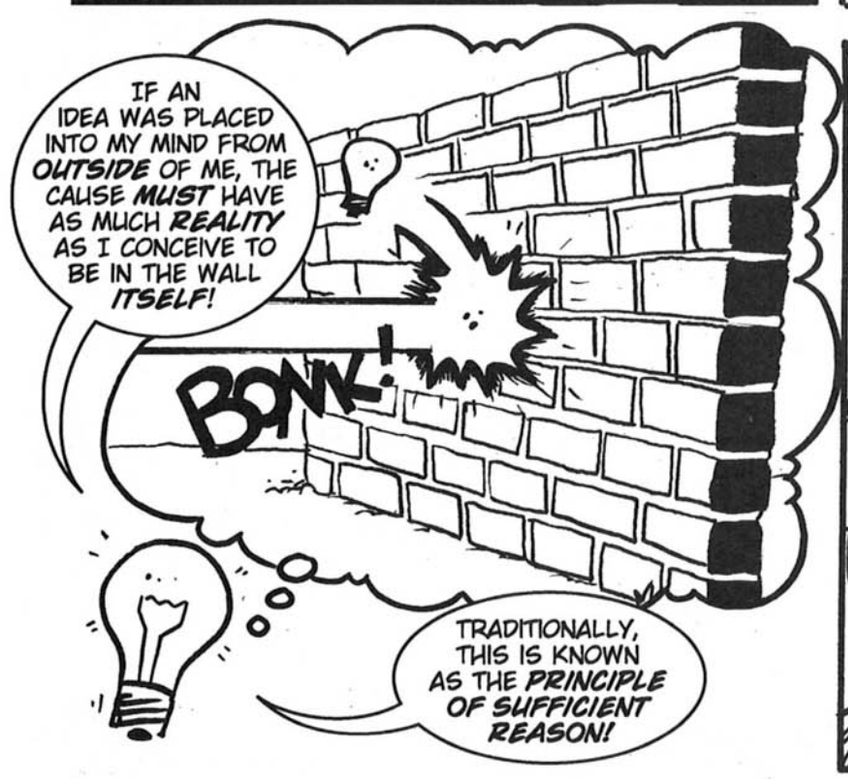


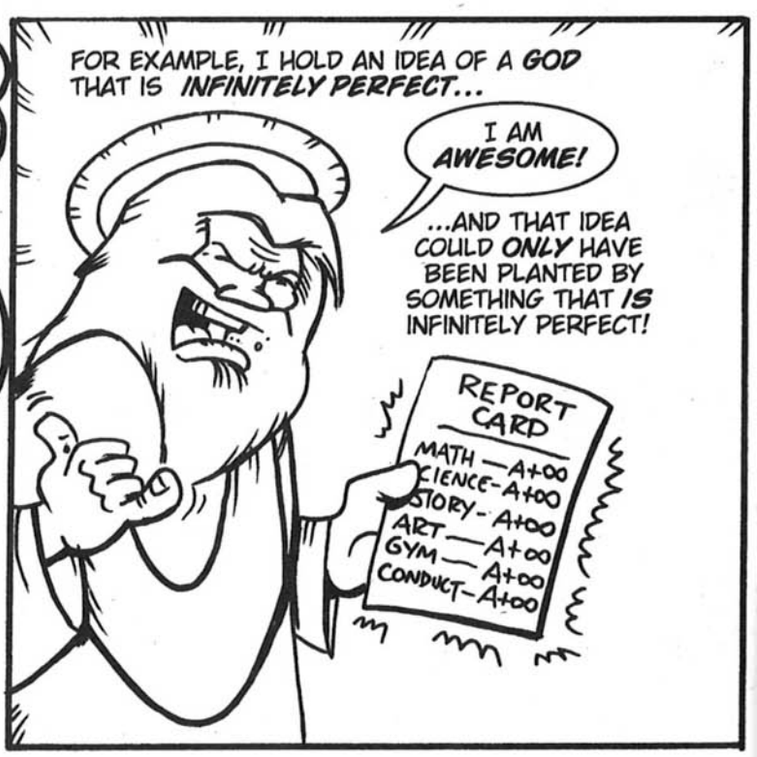
....AND ***INATE*** IDEAS, WHICH ARE BORN ***WITH*** THE MIND!

IRONICALLY, THE ONLY CATEGORY I CAN BE ***SURE*** EXISTS IS ***FICTION***, SINCE IT PRESUPPOSES THE EXISTENCE OF MY ***MIND*** (WHICH IS ***ALL*** I HAVE PROVEN EXISTS)!










NOR CAN A CAUSE CREATE AN EFFECT THAT IS MORE PERFECT THAN ITSELF!
(EVEN THOUGH I CAN IMAGINE THE FICTITIOUS IDEA OF THE "PERFECT WOMAN," I CANNOT ACTUALIZE THE PERFECT WOMAN MYSELF!)
SIGH... BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD...
IT FOLLOWS, THEN, THAT FALLIBLE, FINITE ME COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY A PERFECT, INFINITE SOURCE!
IN OTHER WORDS, I EXIST--
--THEREFORE, GOD EXISTS!
(THOUGH IT IS THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE I COULD HAVE BEEN CREATED BY A CAUSE EQUAL TO ME...
...THAT FINITE, FALLIBLE CAUSE WOULD HAVE THE IDEA OF THE INFINITE PERFECT AS WELL, WHICH MUST HAVE BEEN IMPLANTED BY AN INFINITELY PERFECT SOURCE!)
APROVED BY INSPECTOR
OUR INNATE IDEA OF THE INFINITELY PERFECT GOD IS THE MARK OF THE CRAFTSMAN STAMPED ON HIS WORK!
IF GOD IS PERFECT, IT FOLLOWS THAT HE IS NOT A DECEIVER!
ONE DISSEMBLES ONLY TO PROTECT VULNERABILITIES, WHICH A PERFECT BEING WOULD NOT HAVE!
AND SINCE GOD CREATED MY SENSES, MEMORY, AND OTHER INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES, AND SINCE HE IS NOT A DECEIVER...
...THEN MY SENSES, ON THE WHOLE, CAN BE TRUSTED!

YET THIS ALLEGED "*EXTERNAL WORLD*" (WHICH I HAVE NOT YET PROVEN *EXISTS*) EVIDENCES TWO VERY *DIFFERENT* SETS OF PROPERTIES!

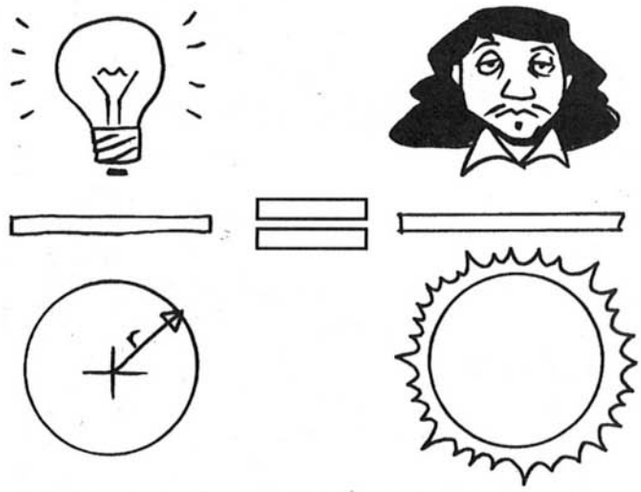
MY *EYES* TELL ME THE SUN IS VERY *SMALL*, AND THE SENSATION OF *HEAT* ON MY *SKIN* SUGGESTS IT IS VERY *CLOSE BY*!

BUT MY *MIND* KNOWS THAT THIS IS *NOT TRUE*! ASTRONOMICAL AND MATHEMATICAL DATA SHOW THAT THE SUN BOTH VERY *BIG* AND VERY *FAR AWAY*!

THESE *INHERENT* FACTORS OF THE SUN'S BEING--VOLUME AND DISTANCE--ARE ITS *PRIMARY PROPERTIES*! AND DERIVING FROM THOSE ARE *SECONDARY* PROPERTIES SUCH AS COLOR AND ODOR!

ALL THINGS, BUT ESPECIALLY *ME*, ARE SPLIT BETWEEN THESE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PROPERTIES!

THUS THE *MIND* AND THE *BODY* ARE TWO *RADICALLY* DIFFERENT ENTITIES--WE HUMANS ARE INHERENTLY *DUALISTIC*!



SINCE MY SENSES ARE PART OF MY *BODY* AND NOT OF MY MIND, I CANNOT BE CREATING THESE STIMULI *MYSELF* (I.E., THROUGH *INVENTED* IDEAS).

GOD COULD NOT BE *FEEDING* THESE SECONDARY PROPERTIES DIRECTLY *TO* ME, SINCE WE HAVE ESTABLISHED THAT HE IS NOT A *DECEIVER*.

HOKUM

NOR COULD I BE *DREAMING* THESE SECONDARY PROPERTIES, FOR *MEMORY* TIES THE EVENTS OF OUR WAKING LIVES *TOGETHER*.

(IN A *DREAM* I DO NOT REMEMBER *ALL* THE DREAMS I HAD BEFORE *THAT* ONE.)

I REMEMBER *ALL* OF MY LIFE UP UNTIL THIS POINT, SO I MUST BE *AWAKE*!

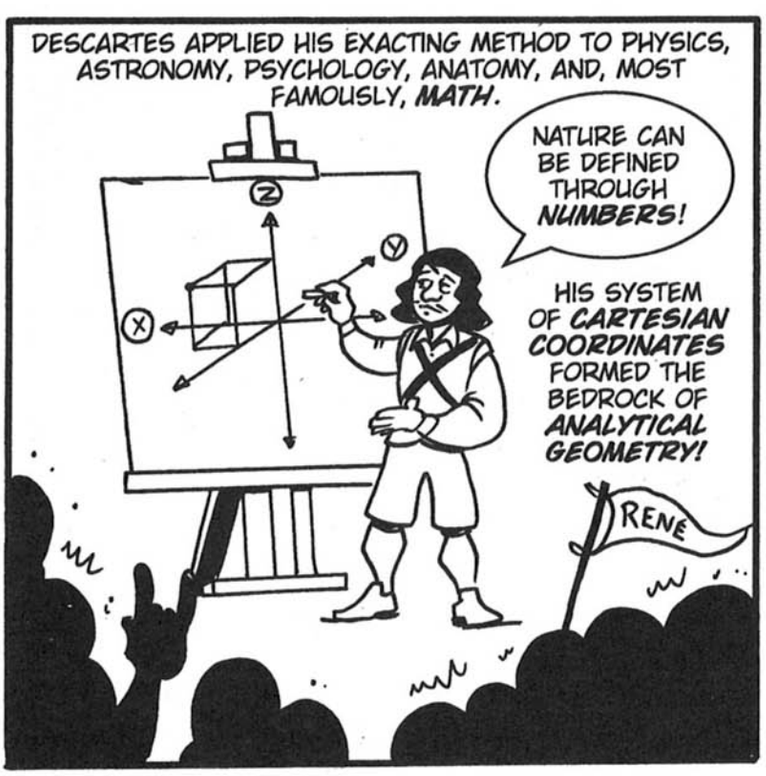
THEREFORE... I HAVE NO OTHER *CHOICE* BUT TO CONCLUDE...

...THAT I RECEIVE PASSIVE PERCEPTIONS OF AN *EXTERNAL WORLD*...

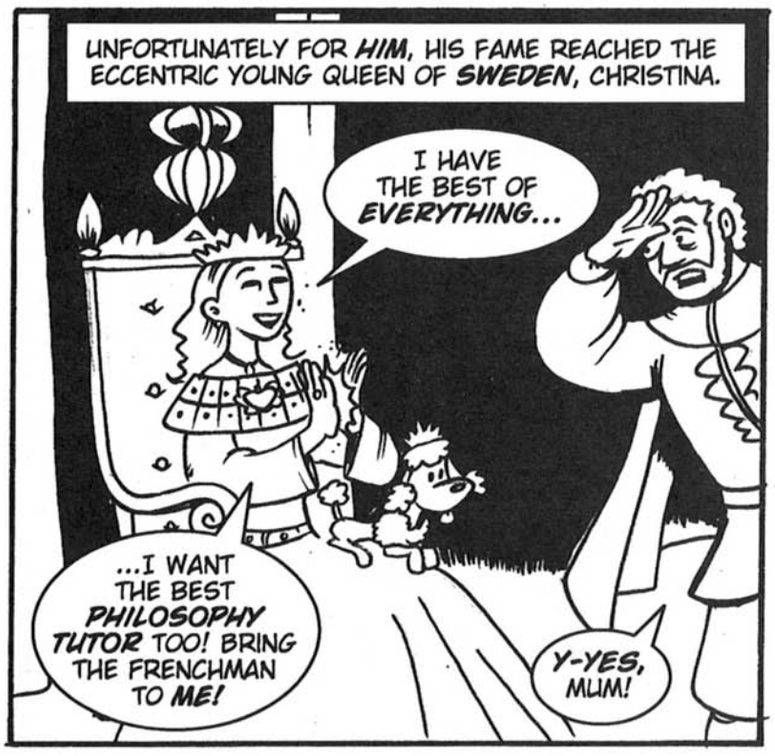

DESCARTES HIT UPON HIS REVOLUTIONARY METHODOLOGY WHILE SERVING IN THE THIRTY YEARS WAR.
IN NOVEMBER 1619 HE FOUND HIMSELF STUCK IN A SNOWBOUND LITTLE ROOM IN NEUBERG, GERMANY.
...BECAUSE AN EXTERNAL WORLD ACTUALLY EXISTS!


LITTLE WONDER HIS MIND SOON TURNED TOWARD PHILOSOPHICAL PURSUITS.
SOOOOO BOOOOORRRED...
HEY...I WONDER IF IT'D EVER BE POSSIBLE FOR ALL HUMAN KNOWLEDGE TO ATTAIN THE PRECISE ACCURACY OF MATHEMATICS?


THAT EVENING, THE YOUNG SOLDIER HAD A DREAM THAT CONVINCED HIM THAT GOD HAD INDEED SHOWN HIM THE CLEAREST PATH TO TRUTH.
AS LONG AS THE MIND IS CAREFUL TO AVOID THE PITFALLS LAID OUT FOR IT BY THE BODY'S FAULTY PERCEPTIONS...
...ABSOLUTE KNOWLEDGE OF ALL THINGS IS ATTAINABLE BY HUMAN REASON!

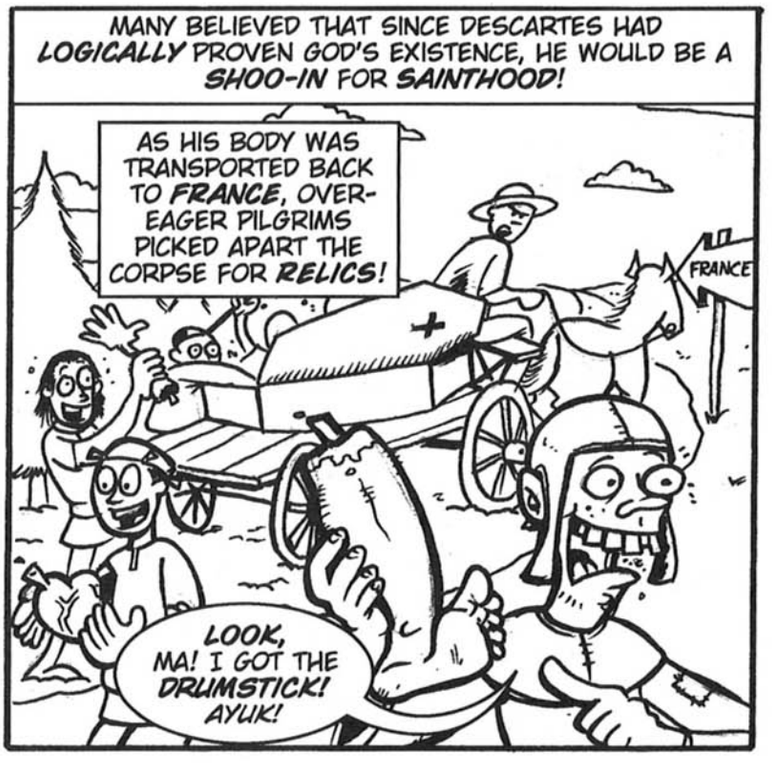

DESCARTES APPLIED HIS EXACTING METHOD TO PHYSICS, ASTRONOMY, PSYCHOLOGY, ANATOMY, AND, MOST FAMOUSLY, MATH.
NATURE CAN BE DEFINED THROUGH NUMBERS!
HIS SYSTEM OF CARTESIAN COORDINATES FORMED THE BEDROCK OF ANALYTICAL GEOMETRY!
Z
Y
X
RENE


HE ALSO WROTE A COMPREHENSIVE TREATISE ON PHYSICS, THE WORLD, BUT CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT PUBLISHING IT ONCE GALILEO WAS PUT ON TRIAL FOR SUPPORTING SIMILAR IDEAS.
YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT, FRENCHIE?
WHO, ME? >HEH!< ... NON!
"THE WORLD"

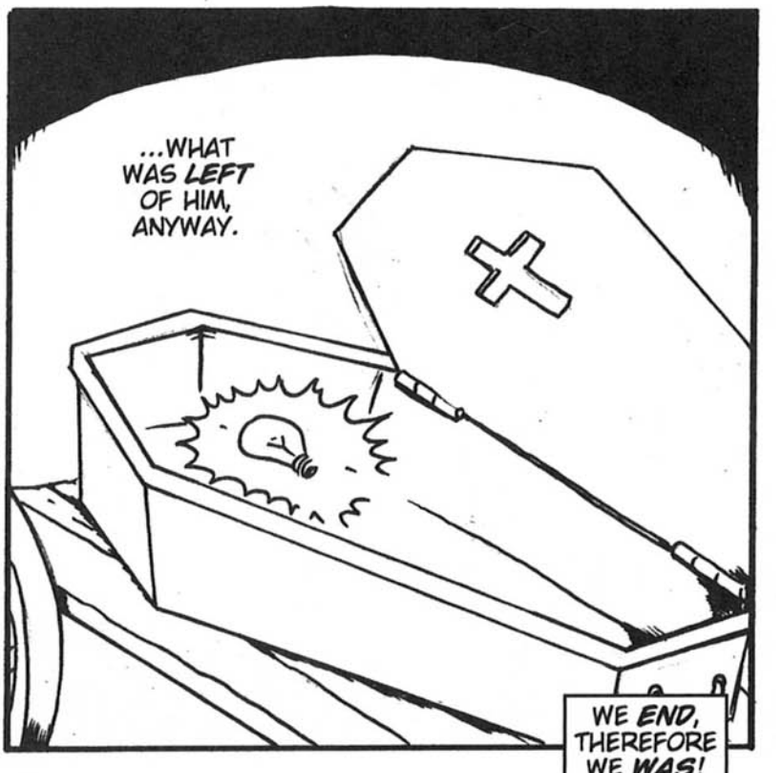

UNFORTUNATELY FOR HIM, HIS FAME REACHED THE ECCENTRIC YOUNG QUEEN OF SWEDEN, CHRISTINA.
I HAVE THE BEST OF EVERYTHING...
...I WANT THE BEST PHILOSOPHY TUTOR TOO! BRING THE FRENCHMAN TO ME!
Y-YES, MUM!


CHRISTINA SCHEDULED THEIR SESSIONS FOR SAM SHARP, THREE DAYS A WEEK.
A-CHOO! !@#$! SWEDISH WINTERS!!
TWO MONTHS INTO HIS NEW JOB, DESCARTES CAUGHT A COLD THAT QUICKLY SNOWBALLED INTO PNEUMONIA.


HE STRUGGLED FOR A WEEK, THEN DIED ON FEB. 11, 1650...
SPARE THE FRENCH BLOOD! >GAK!<
...AT 4AM, PERHAPS TO AVOID ANOTHER APPOINTMENT WITH THE KOOKY QUEEN!


MANY BELIEVED THAT SINCE DESCARTES HAD LOGICALLY PROVEN GOD'S EXISTENCE, HE WOULD BE A SHOO-IN FOR SAINTHOOD!
AS HIS BODY WAS TRANSPORTED BACK TO FRANCE, OVER-EAGER PILGRIMS PICKED APART THE CORPSE FOR RELICS!
FRANCE
LOOK, MA! I GOT THE DRUMSTICK! AYUK!

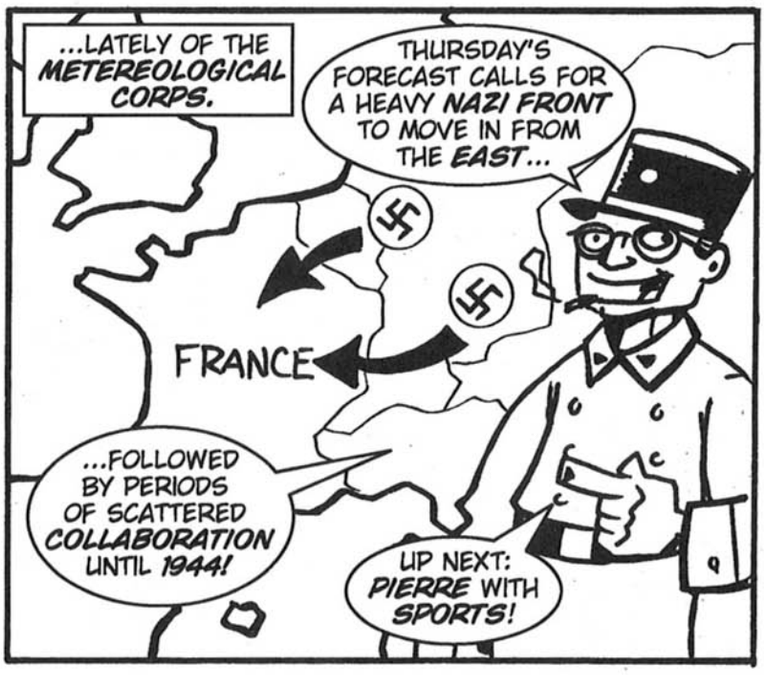

ONE OF THE MOST REVERED FIGURES IN FRENCH HISTORY, DESCARTES WAS LAID TO REST AT THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. GERMAIN DES PRES IN PARIS'S LATIN QUARTER...


...WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIM, ANYWAY.
WE END, THEREFORE WE WAS!

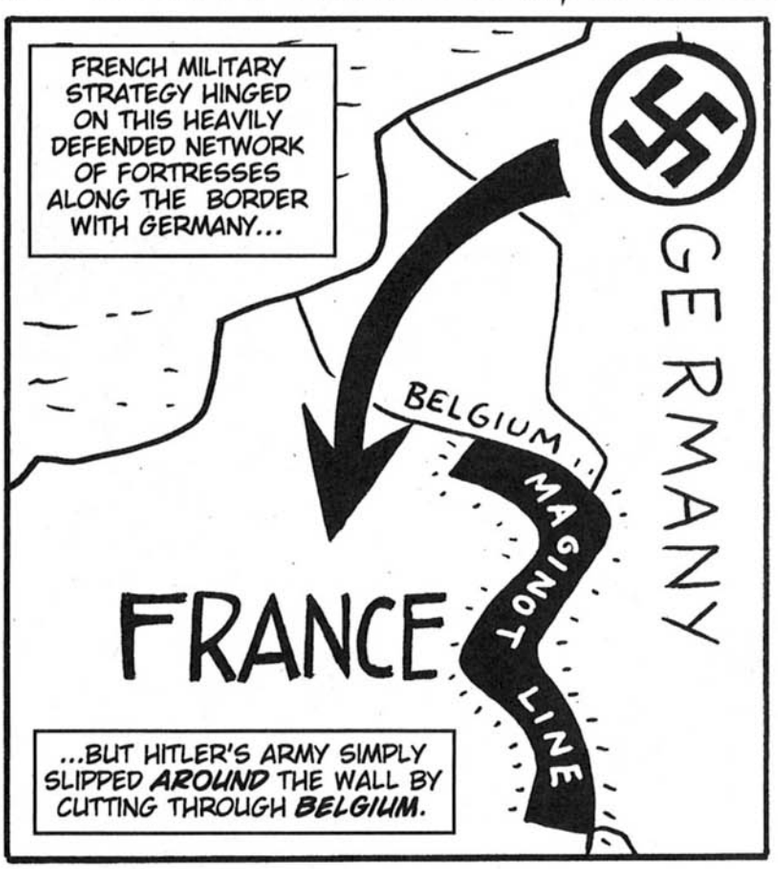

WHEN YOU THINK OF A "PHILOSOPHER", ODDS ARE YOU THINK OF A BRAINY, TWEEDY GUY WRITING IN A CAFE, SUCKING DOWN COFFEE AND CIGARETTES, ENGAGING IN HEATED METAPHYSICAL DEBATES WITH HIS INTELLECTUAL BUDDIES...
...WHEN REALLY, WHAT YOU'RE THINKING OF IS ACTION PHILOSOPHER #14:
JEAN-PAUL SARTRE
...AND THAT'S JUST THE WAY HE LIKES IT!
HELL IS FRED VAN LENTE (WRITER) & RYAN DUNLAVEY (ARTIST)!


THE TIME? AUGUST 1940!
THE PLACE? STALAG 12D, A PRISONER-OF-WAR CAMP OUTSIDE TRIER, GERMANY!
LOOK, KAROL! THE GOOSE-STEPPERS BROUGHT US SOME FRENCH CHICKENS FOR DINNER! >BWOK, BWOK!<
HEY JAN, HOW MANY FRENCH TROOPS DOES IT TAKE TO DEFEND PARIS?
HOW MANY?


WHO KNOWS? THEY'VE NEVER TRIED!
!@$%! POLES!!
HAHAHA!!
AMONG THE NEW P.O.W.'S IS THE 35 YEAR-OLD SARTRE...

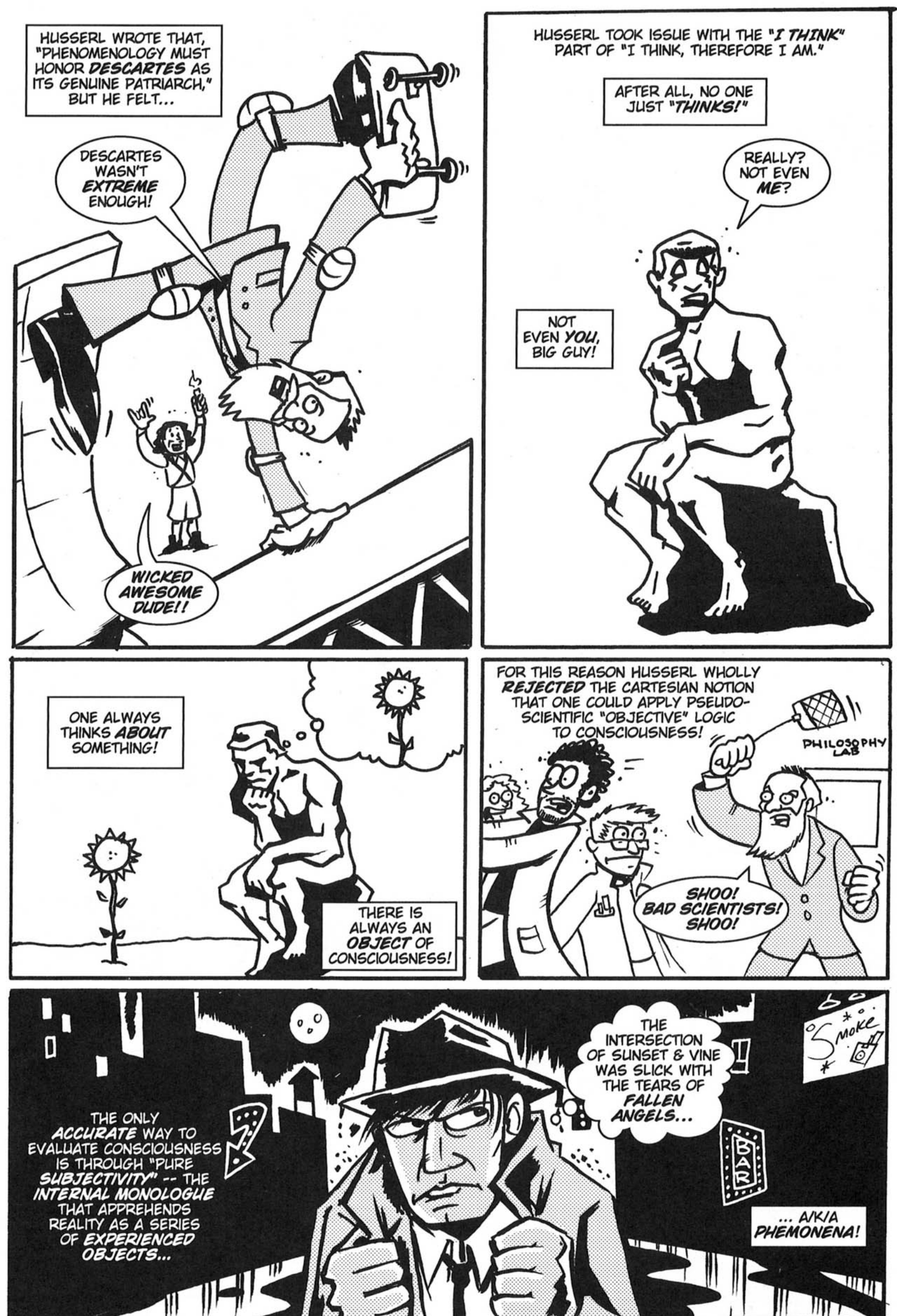

...LATELY OF THE METEREOLOGICAL CORPS.
THURSDAY'S FORECAST CALLS FOR A HEAVY NAZI FRONT TO MOVE IN FROM THE EAST...
FRANCE
...FOLLOWED BY PERIODS OF SCATTERED COLLABORATION UNTIL 1944!
UP NEXT: PIERRE WITH SPORTS!


THOUGH STALAG 12D'S POLISH AND CZECH PRISONERS MOCKED THE FRENCH AS COWARDS, REALLY THEY WERE UNDONE BY GOVERNMENTAL INCOMPETENCE.
AW-HAW-HAW! I WOULD LOVE TO SEE ZEE KRAUTS GET PAST OUR IMPREGNABLE MAGINOT LINE!
UH... SIR...

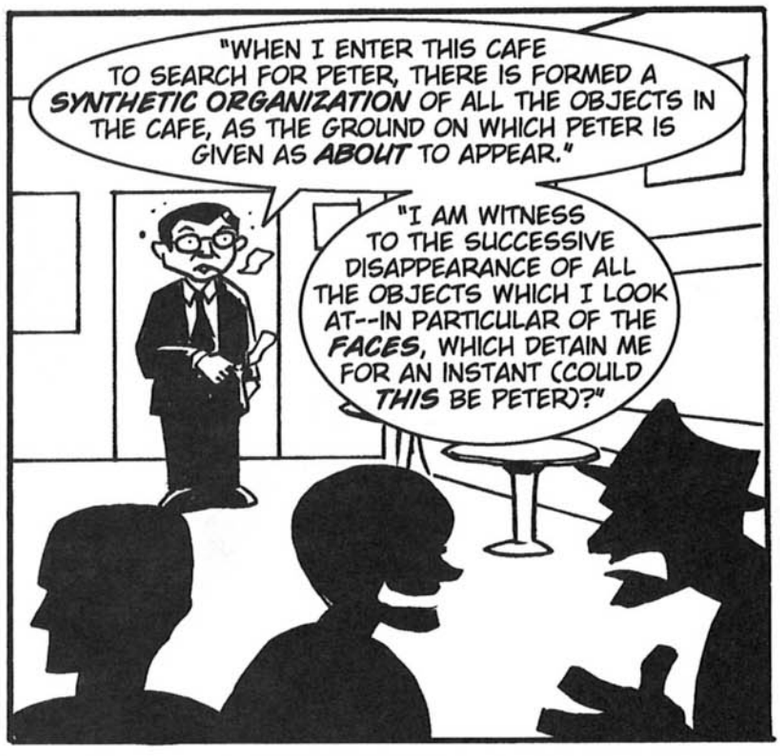

FRENCH MILITARY STRATEGY HINGED ON THIS HEAVILY DEFENDED NETWORK OF FORTRESSES ALONG THE BORDER WITH GERMANY...
GERMANY
BELGIUM
MAGINOT LINE
FRANCE
...BUT HITLER'S ARMY SIMPLY SLIPPED AROUND THE WALL BY CUTTING THROUGH BELGIUM.


SARTRE'S UNIT WAS CAPTURED ON JUNE 21--HIS BIRTHDAY--AND HE IMMEDIATELY BECAME STALAG 12D'S BIGGEST CELEBRITY, ALREADY FAMOUS AS THE AUTHOR OF SUCH NOVELS AS NAUSEA (1938).
A PHILOSOPHY TEACHER BY PROFESSION, HE BEGAN GIVING AVIDLY-ATTENDED LECTURES ON THE SUBJECT EVERY TUESDAY.

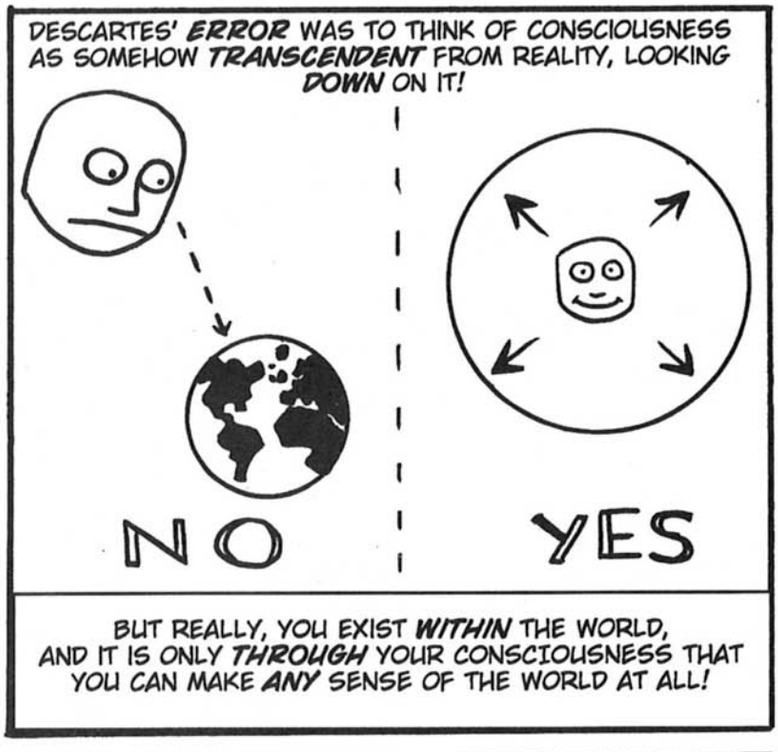

THE CAMP'S OFFICERS SOMETIMES ATTENDED TOO!
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT ENJOY SOME OF THE REICH'S PHILOSOPHERS' WORK, HERR SARTRE!
DANKE, COLONEL KLINK!
BEING AND TIME Heidegger
MARTIN HEIDEGGER (1889-1976) WAS THE FOREMOST PHILOSOPHER OF MODERN GERMANY. WHEN HE BECAME RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FREIBURG IN 1933 HE HAD TO JOIN THE NAZI PARTY.
HMMMMM... THIS HEIDEGGER SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN AS INFLUENCED BY HUSSERL AS I WAS!
CZECH EDMUND HUSSERL (1859-1938) HAD FOUNDED THE BRANCH OF PHILOSOPHY KNOWN AS PHENOMENOLOGY. HEIDEGGER STARTED OUT AS HIS ASSISTANT.
AND GET YOUR OWN DAMN COFFEE!
BUT WHEN HEIDEGGER BECAME RECTOR, THE JEWISH HUSSERL WAS BANNED FROM THE FREIBURG LIBRARY!
COINCIDENTALLY, AT THE SAME TIME, SARTRE WAS IN BERLIN, STUDYING PHENOMENOLOGY!
PFFFT! LIKE THIS NAZI THING IS GONNA LAST!
"YOU SEE, MY DEAR FELLOW, IF YOU ARE A PHENOMONOLOGIST, YOU CAN TALK ABOUT THIS COCKTAIL AND MAKE PHILOSOPHY OUT OF IT!"
CAFE
SARTRE HUNGERED TO RELATE THE BIG IDEAS OF PHILOSOPHY TO EVERYDAY LIFE!
HE HAD BEEN FASCINATED BY HUSSERL'S WORK EVER SINCE ONE OF HIS CAFE BUDDIES TOLD HIM:

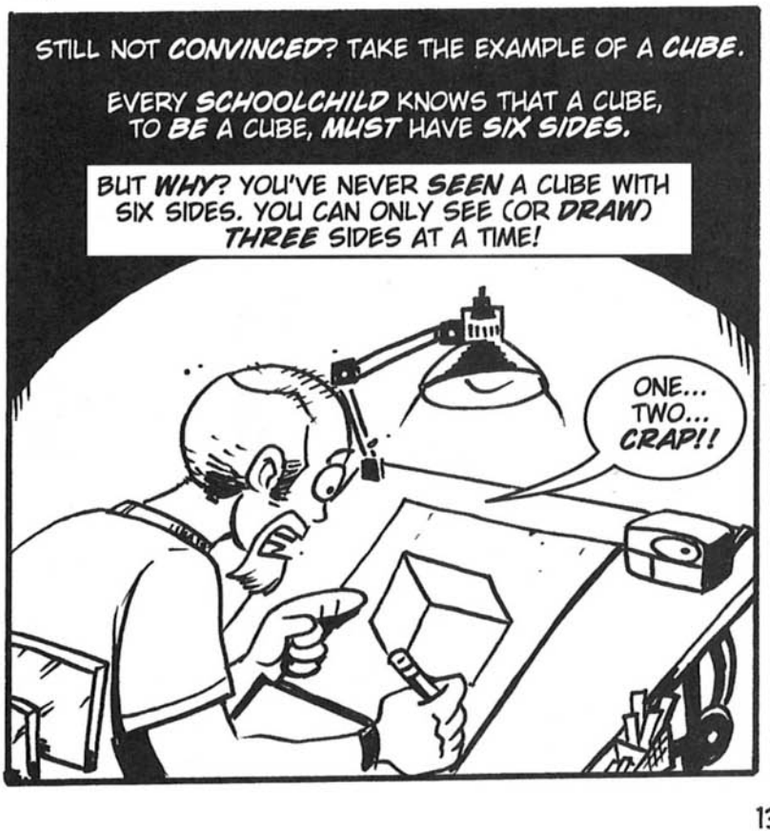

HUSSERL WROTE THAT, "PHENOMENOLOGY MUST HONOR DESCARTES AS ITS GENUINE PATRIARCH," BUT HE FELT...
DESCARTES WASN'T EXTREME ENOUGH!
WICKED AWESOME DUDE!!
HUSSERL TOOK ISSUE WITH THE "I THINK" PART OF "I THINK, THEREFORE I AM."
AFTER ALL, NO ONE JUST "THINKS!"
REALLY? NOT EVEN ME?
NOT EVEN YOU, BIG GUY!
ONE ALWAYS THINKS ABOUT SOMETHING!
THERE IS ALWAYS AN OBJECT OF CONSCIOUSNESS!
FOR THIS REASON HUSSERL WHOLLY REJECTED THE CARTESIAN NOTION THAT ONE COULD APPLY PSEUDO-SCIENTIFIC "OBJECTIVE" LOGIC TO CONSCIOUSNESS!
PHILOSOPHY LAB
SHOO! BAD SCIENTISTS! SHOO!
THE ONLY ACCURATE WAY TO EVALUATE CONSCIOUSNESS IS THROUGH "PURE SUBJECTIVITY" -- THE INTERNAL MONOLOGUE THAT APPREHENDS REALITY AS A SERIES OF EXPERIENCED OBJECTS...
THE INTERSECTION OF SUNSET & VINE WAS SLICK WITH THE TEARS OF FALLEN ANGELS...
SMOKE
BAR
... A/K/A PHEMONENA!

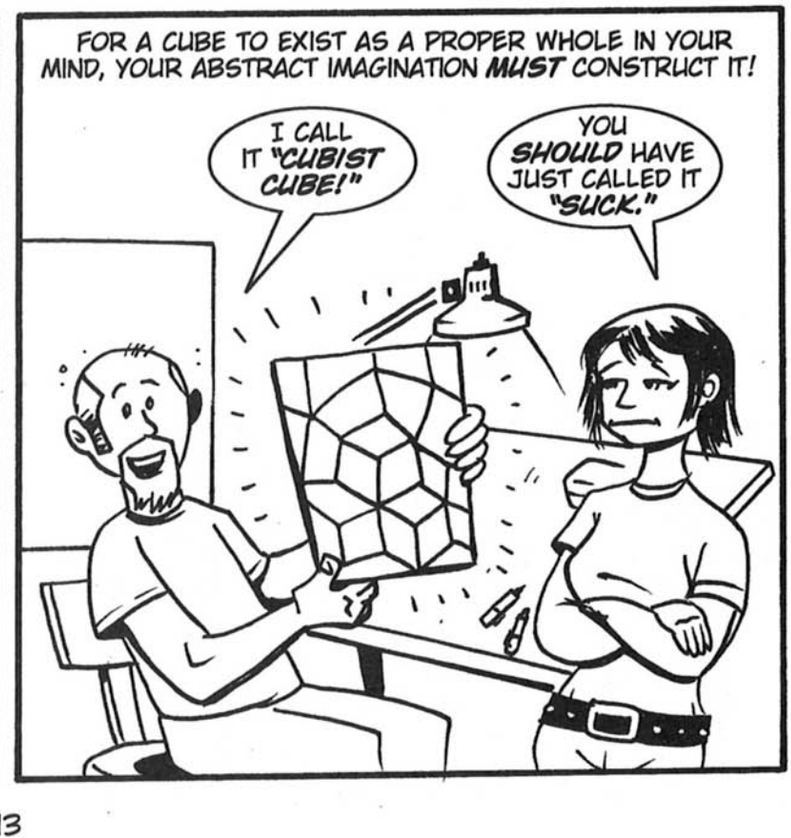

HUSSERL ALSO SAID THAT CONSCIOUSNESS IS FUNDAMENTALLY *INTENTIONAL*. SARTRE WOULD LATER ILLUSTRATE THIS POINT THUSLY:
"I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH PETER AT 4 O'CLOCK. I ARRIVE AT THE CAFE A QUARTER OF AN HOUR *LATE*."
"PETER IS *ALWAYS* PUNCTUAL. WILL HE HAVE *WAITED* FOR ME?"

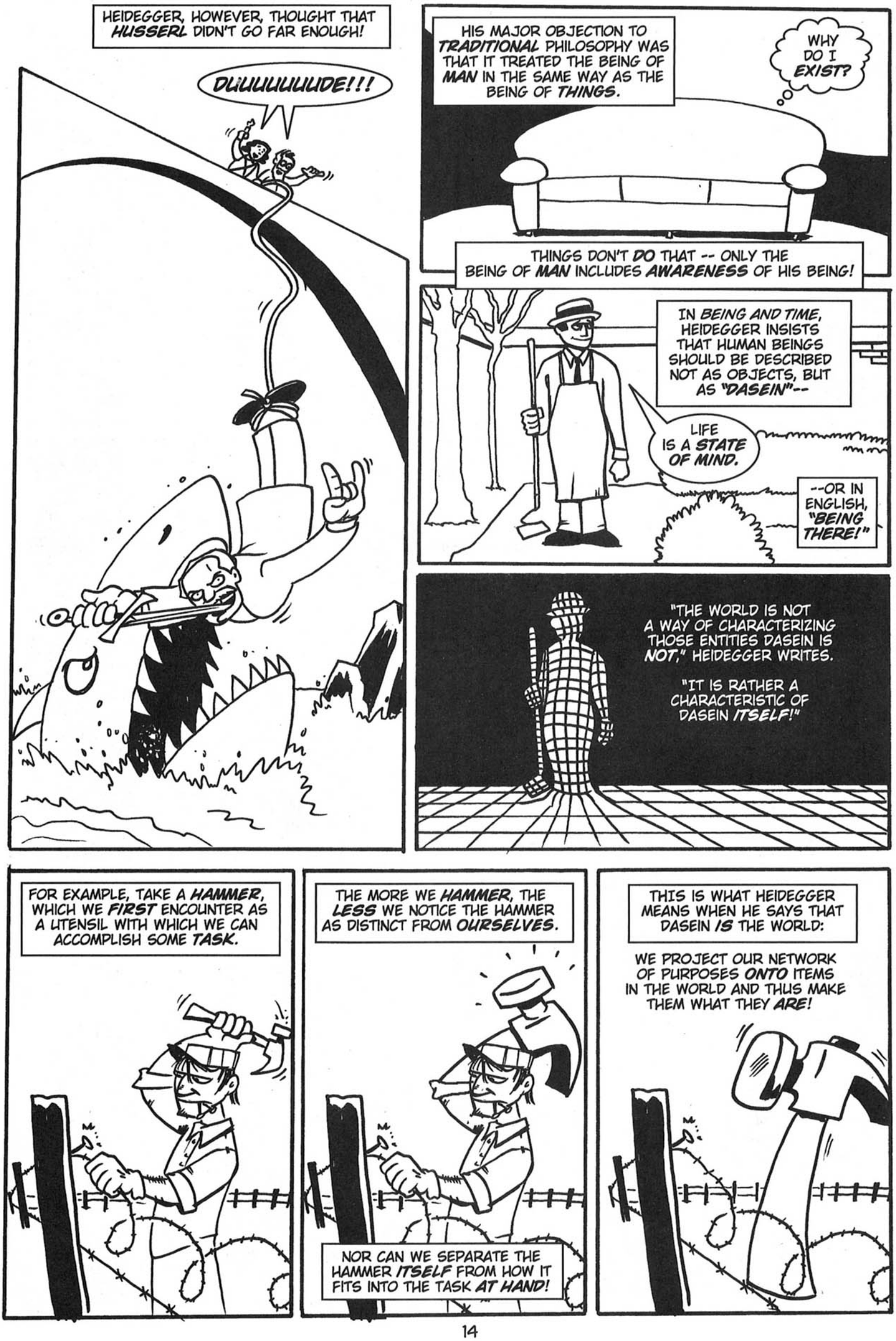

"WHEN I ENTER THIS CAFE TO SEARCH FOR PETER, THERE IS FORMED A *SYNTHETIC ORGANIZATION* OF ALL THE OBJECTS IN THE CAFE, AS THE GROUND ON WHICH PETER IS GIVEN AS *ABOUT* TO APPEAR."
"I AM WITNESS TO THE SUCCESSIVE DISAPPEARANCE OF ALL THE OBJECTS WHICH I LOOK AT--IN PARTICULAR OF THE *FACES*, WHICH DETAIN ME FOR AN INSTANT (COULD *THIS* BE PETER)?"


SO A CAFE IS NEVER "OBJECTIVELY" *JUST* A CAFE! IN *THIS* INSTANCE, IT HAS BEEN *CONSTRUCTED* BY SARTRE'S CONSCIOUSNESS AS *"THE SPACE WHERE PETER COULD BE"!*


DESCARTES' *ERROR* WAS TO THINK OF CONSCIOUSNESS AS SOMEHOW *TRANSCENDENT* FROM REALITY, LOOKING *DOWN* ON IT!
NO
YES
BUT REALLY, YOU EXIST *WITHIN* THE WORLD, AND IT IS ONLY *THROUGH* YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS THAT YOU CAN MAKE *ANY* SENSE OF THE WORLD AT ALL!


STILL NOT *CONVINCED*? TAKE THE EXAMPLE OF A *CUBE*.
EVERY *SCHOOLCHILD* KNOWS THAT A CUBE, TO *BE* A CUBE, *MUST* HAVE *SIX SIDES*.
BUT *WHY*? YOU'VE NEVER *SEEN* A CUBE WITH SIX SIDES. YOU CAN ONLY SEE (OR *DRAW*) *THREE* SIDES AT A TIME!
ONE... TWO... *CRAP!!*

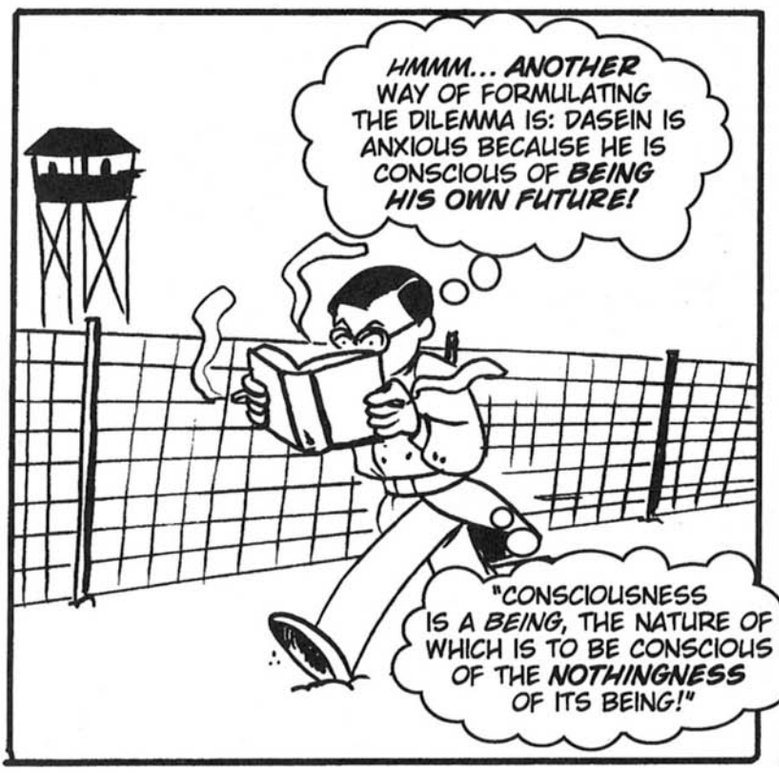

FOR A CUBE TO EXIST AS A PROPER WHOLE IN YOUR MIND, YOUR ABSTRACT IMAGINATION *MUST* CONSTRUCT IT!
I CALL IT *"CUBIST CUBE!"*
YOU *SHOULD* HAVE JUST CALLED IT *"SUCK."*

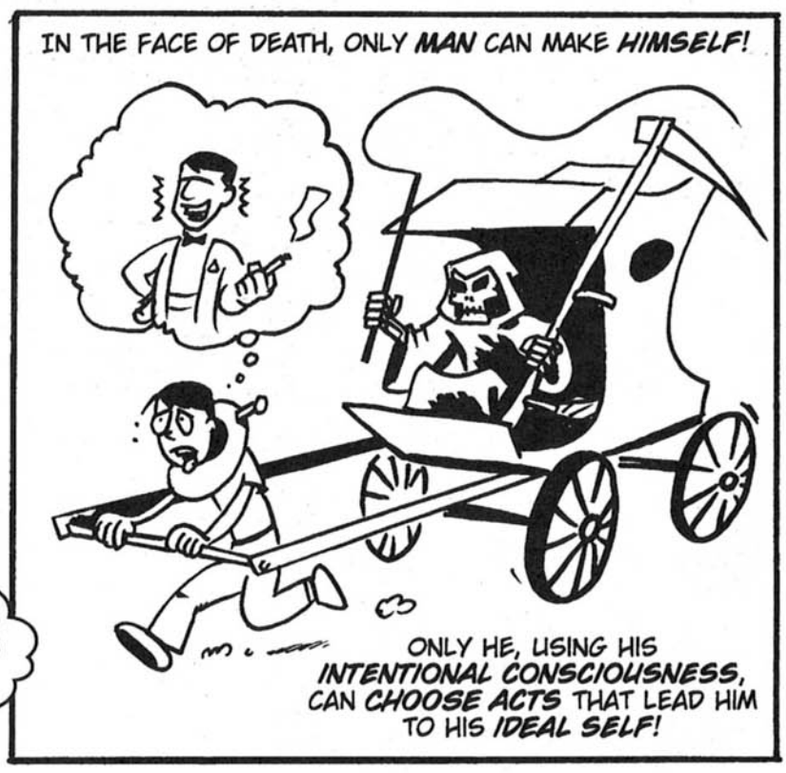

HEIDEGGER, HOWEVER, THOUGHT THAT HUSSERL DIDN'T GO FAR ENOUGH!
DUUUUUUUUDE!!!
HIS MAJOR OBJECTION TO TRADITIONAL PHILOSOPHY WAS THAT IT TREATED THE BEING OF MAN IN THE SAME WAY AS THE BEING OF THINGS.
WHY DO I EXIST?
THINGS DON'T DO THAT -- ONLY THE BEING OF MAN INCLUDES AWARENESS OF HIS BEING!
IN BEING AND TIME, HEIDEGGER INSISTS THAT HUMAN BEINGS SHOULD BE DESCRIBED NOT AS OBJECTS, BUT AS "DASEIN"--
LIFE IS A STATE OF MIND.
--OR IN ENGLISH, "BEING THERE!"
"THE WORLD IS NOT A WAY OF CHARACTERIZING THOSE ENTITIES DASEIN IS NOT," HEIDEGGER WRITES.
"IT IS RATHER A CHARACTERISTIC OF DASEIN ITSELF!"
FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE A HAMMER, WHICH WE FIRST ENCOUNTER AS A UTENSIL WITH WHICH WE CAN ACCOMPLISH SOME TASK.
THE MORE WE HAMMER, THE LESS WE NOTICE THE HAMMER AS DISTINCT FROM OURSELVES.
NOR CAN WE SEPARATE THE HAMMER ITSELF FROM HOW IT FITS INTO THE TASK AT HAND!
THIS IS WHAT HEIDEGGER MEANS WHEN HE SAYS THAT DASEIN IS THE WORLD:
WE PROJECT OUR NETWORK OF PURPOSES ONTO ITEMS IN THE WORLD AND THUS MAKE THEM WHAT THEY ARE!

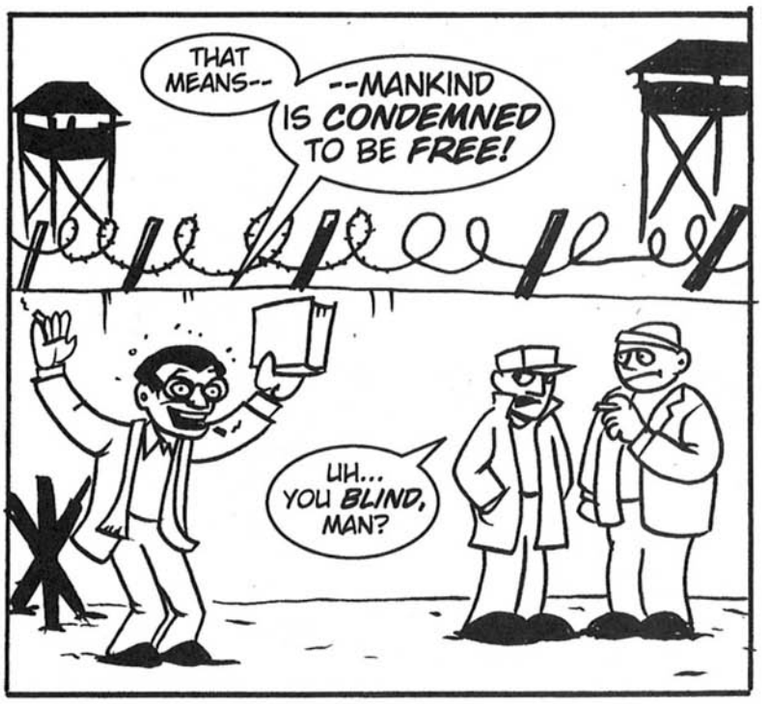

WHEN DASEIN CONTEMPLATES HIS *OWN* EXISTENCE, HE CANNOT HELP BUT PROJECT ONTO IT *TIME*---
SARTRE
APRIL
UH-OH.
--I.E, *MORTALITY*-- THE REALIZATION HE WILL ONE DAY *END*!


WE DO NOT *"FEAR"* DEATH -- FEAR IS A RESPONSE TO AN *OBJECT*, A TEMPORAL THREAT AGAINST WHICH WE CAN *FIGHT* OR *FLEE*!


DEATH, AFTER ALL, IS *INEVITABLE* AND *INDEFENSIBLE*.
NO, HEIDEGGER SAYS, WHAT WE FEEL TOWARDS DEATH IS *ANXIETY*--FOR, UNLIKE FEAR, ANXIETY HAS *NO OBJECT*! IT IS A CONSTANT NAGGING DREAD OF, LITERALLY, *"NO-THING"*!

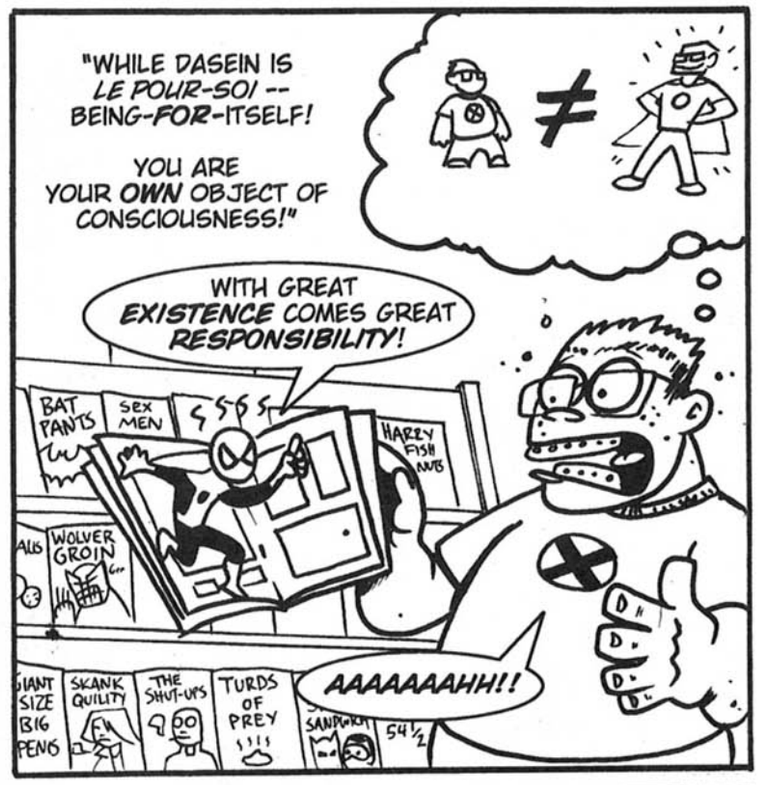

HMMM... ANOTHER WAY OF FORMULATING THE DILEMMA IS: DASEIN IS ANXIOUS BECAUSE HE IS CONSCIOUS OF *BEING HIS OWN FUTURE!*
"CONSCIOUSNESS IS A *BEING*, THE NATURE OF WHICH IS TO BE CONSCIOUS OF THE *NOTHINGNESS* OF ITS BEING!"

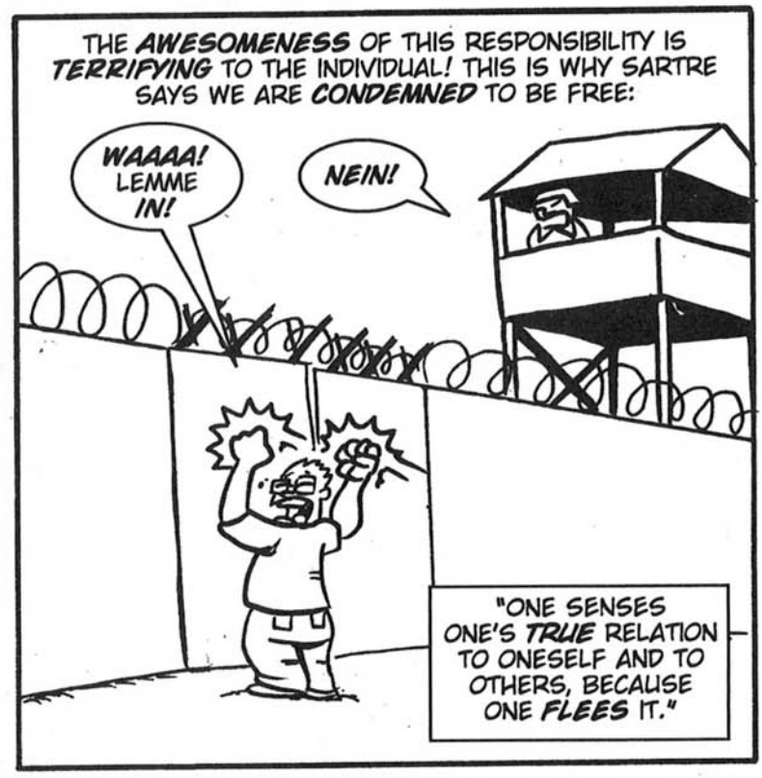

IN THE FACE OF DEATH, ONLY *MAN* CAN MAKE *HIMSELF*!
ONLY HE, USING HIS *INTENTIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS*, CAN *CHOOSE ACTS* THAT LEAD HIM TO HIS *IDEAL SELF*!


THAT MEANS--
--MANKIND IS CONDEMNED TO BE FREE!
UH... YOU BLIND, MAN?


SARTRE RADICALLY REVERSED MILLENNIA OF PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT, WHICH, EVER SINCE PLATO, HAD HELD...
EXISTENCE EMANATES FROM A HIGHER ESSENCE!


NON! EXISTENCE PRECEDES ESSENCE!
DASEIN AND ONLY DASEIN IMPOSES VALUE ON BEINGS-IN-THEMSELVES!
NOOOOOO!!!!!


"WHILE DASEIN IS LE POUR-SOI -- BEING-FOR-ITSELF!
YOU ARE YOUR OWN OBJECT OF CONSCIOUSNESS!"
WITH GREAT EXISTENCE COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY!
BAT PANTS
SEX MEN
HARRY FISH NUTS
WOLVER GROIN
GIANT SIZE BIG PENS
SKANK QUILITY
THE SHUT-UPS
TURDS OF PREY
AAAAAAAHH!!


THE AWESOMENESS OF THIS RESPONSIBILITY IS TERRIFYING TO THE INDIVIDUAL! THIS IS WHY SARTRE SAYS WE ARE CONDEMNED TO BE FREE:
WAAAA! LEMME IN!
NEIN!
"ONE SENSES ONE'S TRUE RELATION TO ONESELF AND TO OTHERS, BECAUSE ONE FLEES IT."


"WE ARE ALWAYS READY TO TAKE REFUGE IN A BELIEF IN DETERMINISM IF THIS FREEDOM WEIGHS UPON US OR WE NEED AN EXCUSE."
STUFF WILL HAPPEN TO YOU!
STUFF?!? TO ME?!? REALLY?!?
"WE FLEE FROM ANXIETY BY ATTEMPTING TO APPREHEND OURSELVES FROM WITHOUT AS AN OTHER OR AS A THING."
THE MYTH OF GOD, FOR INSTANCE, WAS A WAY OF LITERALLY BECOMING THE OBJECT OF A HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS! BUT...
WAAAA! DON'T GO!
SEE YA IN THE FUNNY PAGES, KID!
Science Sez: YER FIRED!
SARTRE STARTED TEACHING HEIDEGGER, MIXED WITH HIS OWN THEORIES, THREE TIMES A WEEK!
EACH MAN IS NOTHING MORE AND NOTHING LESS THAN THE SUM OF HIS ACTIONS!
UNTIL THE SPRING OF 1941...
UGH! WE HAVE TOO MANY FRENCH PRISONERS!
MAYBE WE COULD PARDON THE CIVILIANS?
"USING PHONY DOCUMENTS THAT SAID HE WAS CIVILIAN -- AS WELL AS PLAYING UP A NEAR-BLIND RIGHT EYE THAT HE SAID WOULD RENDER HIM USELESS TO THE MILITARY...
HEY...YOU THINK THIS WOULD MAKE A GOOD WACKY AMERICAN SIT-COM, A BUNCH OF P.O.W.'S CONSTANTLY TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM A GERMAN CAMP?
ARE YOU HIGH?

...SARTRE AND A **PRIEST BUDDY** WON THEIR EARLY RELEASE!

SARRRRTRE!

SWAP!

HE RETURNED TO OCCUPIED **PARIS**, WHERE HE CONTINUED WORKING ON THE MONUMENTAL TREATISE HE BEGAN IN STALAG 12D: *BEING AND NOTHINGNESS*.

-SIGH!- WE'VE **NEVER** BEEN MORE **FREE!**

UH... YOU **BLIND**, MAN?

"WE HAD LOST **ALL** OUR RIGHTS," SARTRE WROTE AFTER LIBERATION, "AND **BECAUSE** OF ALL THIS WE WERE FREE."

"EXILE, CAPTIVITY, AND ESPECIALLY **DEATH** (WHICH WE USUALLY **SHRINK** FROM FACING AT ALL IN HAPPIER DAYS) BECAME FOR US THE HABITUAL **OBJECTS** OF OUR CONCERN."

"AND THE **CHOICE** THAT EACH OF US MADE OF HIS LIFE WAS AN **AUTHENTIC** CHOICE BECAUSE IT WAS MADE FACE TO FACE WITH DEATH, BECAUSE IT COULD ALWAYS HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED IN THESE TERMS:"

'RATHER **DEATH** THAN...'

"HERE I AM NOT SPEAKING OF THE **ELITE** AMONG US WHO WERE **REAL** RESISTANTS, BUT OF **ALL** FRENCHMEN WHO, AT EVERY **HOUR** OF THE NIGHT AND DAY THROUGHOUT **FOUR YEARS**, ANSWERED:"

NO!

THOUGH IT'S FREQUENTLY ASSERTED THAT SARTRE WAS A MEMBER OF THE ***ARMED*** FRENCH RESISTANCE, THAT'S NOT TRUE.

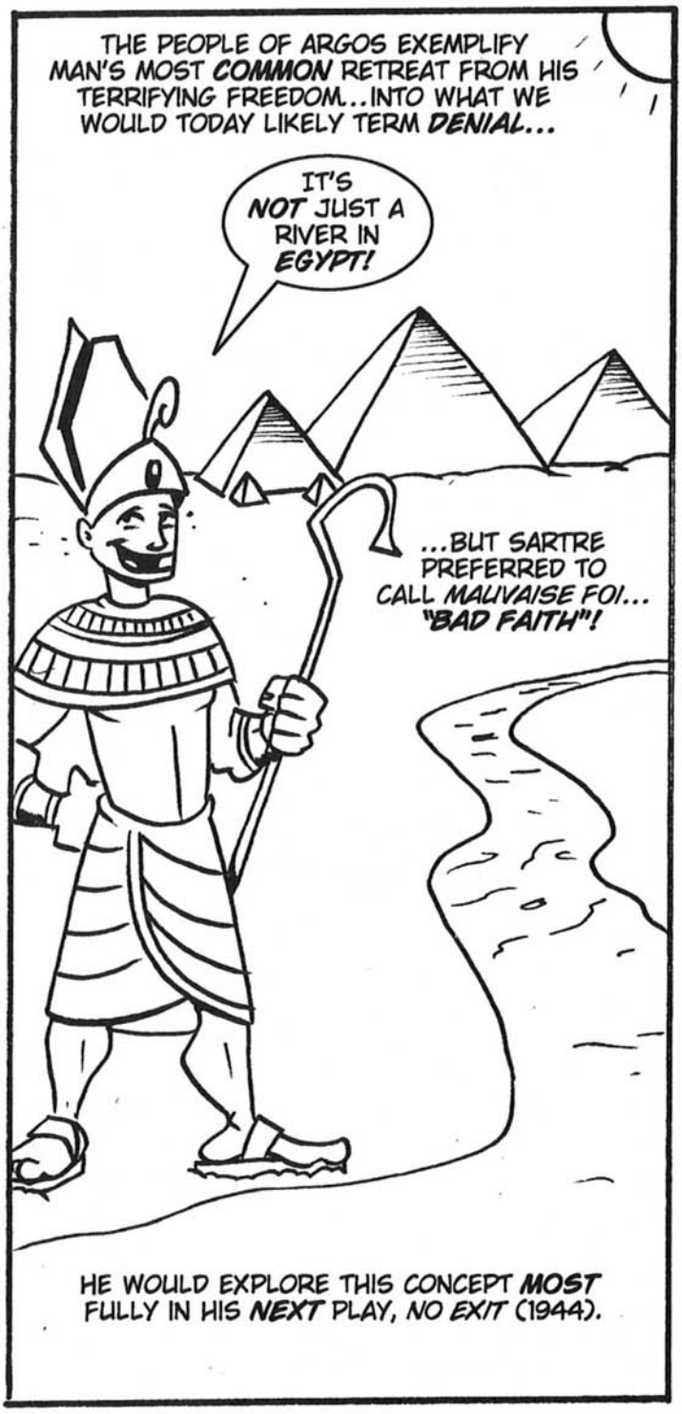


HIS OWN "NO" TOOK EFFECT ON THE ***STAGE.*** HE HAD WRITTEN A ***CHRISTMAS PAGEANT*** FOR STALAG 12D AND DISCOVERED HE ENJOYED ***PLAYWRITING.***




ORESTES SOON REALIZES THAT THE FURIES HAVE NO POWER OVER HIM ONCE HE ACCEPTS HIS ACTS AS HIS OWN!
"I AM MY FREEDOM! NO SOONER HAD ZEUS CREATED ME THAN I CEASED TO BE HIS!"
EXIT
CURSES! FOILED AGAIN!


HE LIBERATES THE PEOPLE OF ARGOS (FRENCH COLLABORATORS?) FROM ZEUS'S TYRANNY...
THANKS A LOT, JERK!
INGRATES.
...AND THEY HATE HIM FOR IT!


THE PEOPLE OF ARGOS EXEMPLIFY MAN'S MOST COMMON RETREAT FROM HIS TERRIFYING FREEDOM...INTO WHAT WE WOULD TODAY LIKELY TERM DENIAL...
IT'S NOT JUST A RIVER IN EGYPT!
...BUT SARTRE PREFERRED TO CALL MAUVAISE FOI... "BAD FAITH"!
HE WOULD EXPLORE THIS CONCEPT MOST FULLY IN HIS NEXT PLAY, NO EXIT (1944).


THE ACTION TAKES PLACE IN EXISTENTIALIST HELL.
YOU KNOW... THIS DOESN'T SEEM SO BAD.

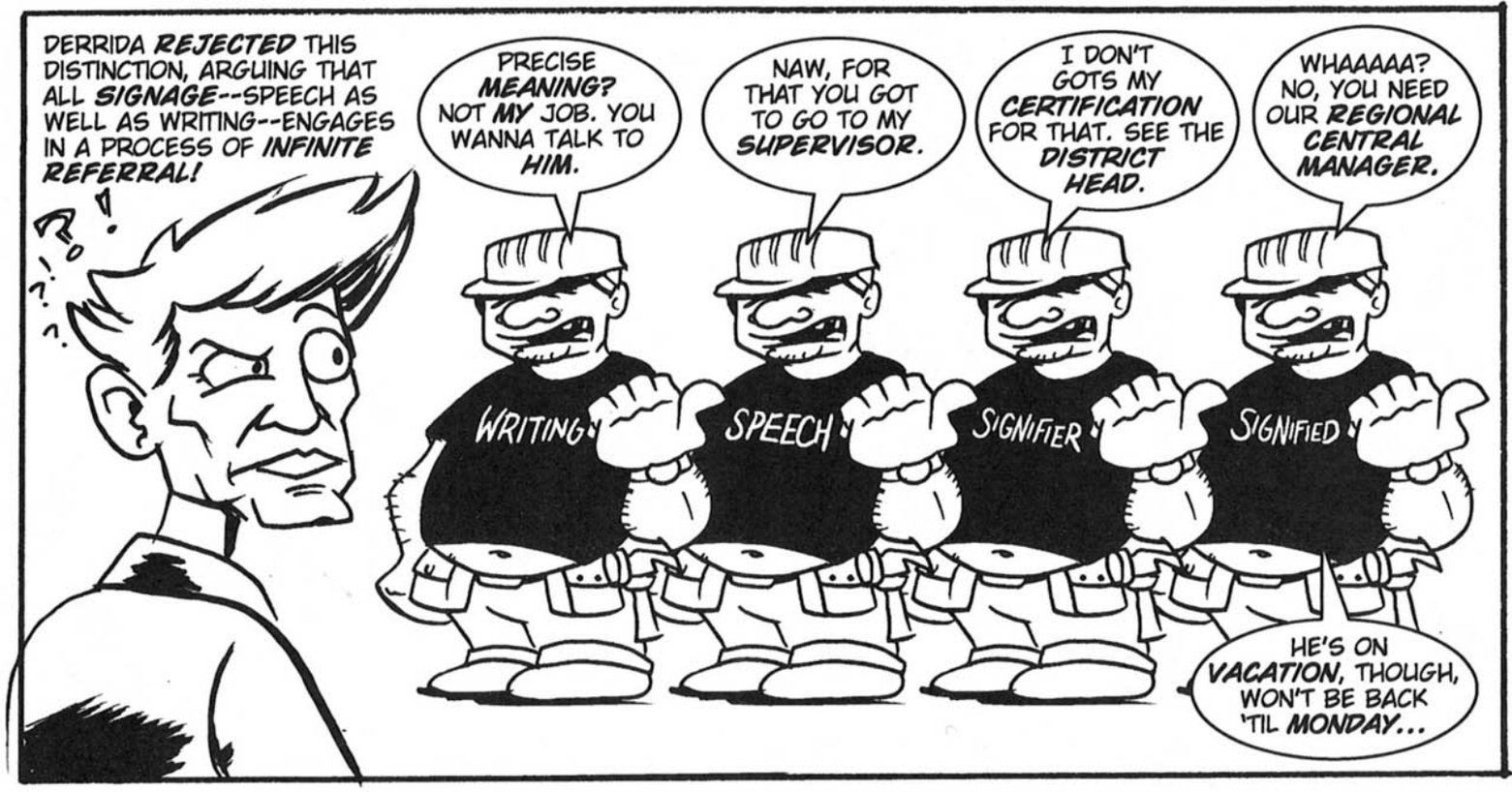

EACH OF THE CHARACTERS HAS BEEN DAMNED FOR LEADING INAUTHENTIC LIVES.
TRUTH BY GARLIN
GARCIN, FOR EXAMPLE, IS A REPORTER WHO FANCIES HIMSELF HEROIC.

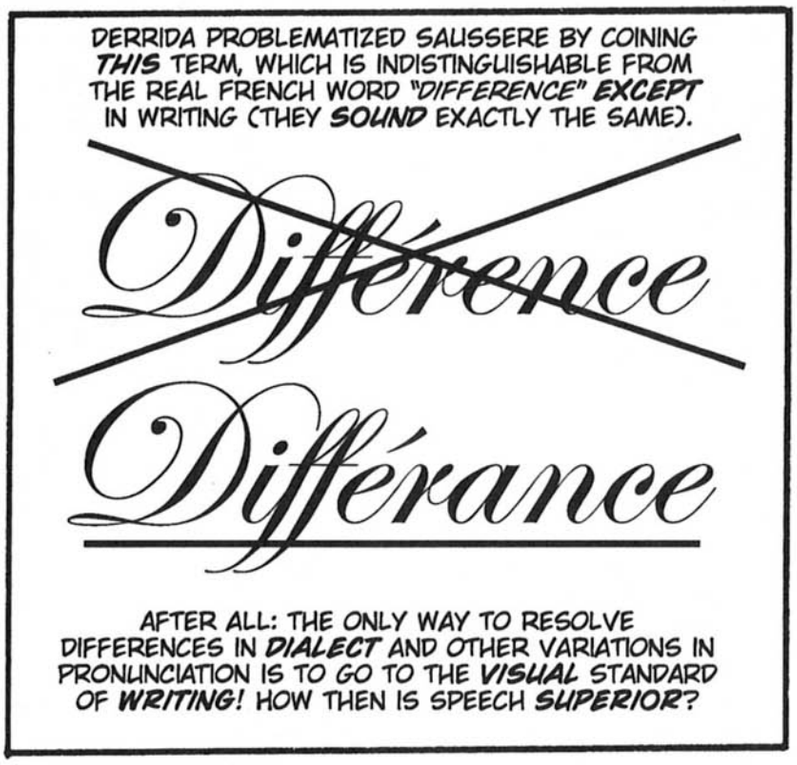

BUT WHEN WAR DOES BREAK OUT, HE TRIES TO FLEE THE COUNTRY, AND IS CAPTURED AND SHOT AS A COWARD AND A DESERTER!
WELCOME TO MEXICO
IN HELL, HE IS CONDEMNED TO SPEND ETERNITY WITH TWO PEOPLE WHO REFUSE TO ENABLE HIS NARCISSISTIC DENIAL! HE'LL FOREVER BE REMINDED HE NEVER EVEN TRIED TO ACTUALIZE HIS HEROIC IDEALS!
TRUTH BY GARLIN
≠
HENCE THE DRAMA'S MOST FAMOUS LINE:
HELL IS OTHER PEOPLE!
THE ALLIES FINALLY LIBERATED PARIS IN 1944!
THOUGH BEING AND NOTHINGNESS HAD BEEN PUBLISHED THE YEAR BEFORE, WITH THE WAR OVER IT COULD NOW REACH A WIDE AUDIENCE.
SARTRE SUCCEEDED IN MAKING PHILOSOPHY INTELLIGIBLE TO THE REGULAR PERSON! HE BECAME HUGELY FAMOUS-- AND HIS PHILOSOPHY, KNOWN AS "EXISTENTIALISM", BECAME A POPULAR BUZZWORD!
CAFE
UNFORTUNATELY, THIS HAD SOME NEGATIVE SIDE-EFFECTS...
...LIKE HE COULD NO LONGER GET WORK DONE IN CAFES!


SARTRE'S EXPERIENCE WITH COLLECTIVE LIVING IN STALAG 12D LED HIS POLITICS TO DRIFT LEFTWARD, TOWARD SOCIALISM.
UH...NOT SURE WHERE MY MATERIALISTIC DETERMINISM FITS INTO THIS WHOLE "MAN IS CONDEMNED TO BE FREE" BUSINESS...
YADDA, YADDA, YADDA...
HE TOOK HIS STRONGEST ACTIVIST STANDS AGAINST COLONIALISM IN ALL ITS FORMS--ATTACKING THE U.S. FOR BOMBING VIETNAM AND THE U.S.S.R. FOR CRUSHING THE HUNGARIAN UPRISING!
HE UNLEASHED THE FULL FORCE OF HIS CELEBRITY AGAINST FRANCE HERSELF, SPEAKING OUT CONSTANTLY AGAINST THE ALGERIAN WAR!
IN 1961, 5,000 FRENCH VETERANS MARCHED THROUGH THE CHAMPS-ELYSEES, SHOUTING:
SHOOT SARTRE!
SARTRE: NON!
RIGHT-WINGERS BOMBED HIS APARTMENT-- TWICE!
BUT IN MANY WAYS, HE ALREADY WAS -- THE EPITOME OF THE ACTIVISTINTELLECTUAL!
SARTRE WAS THAT RAREST OF THINKERS -- ONE WHO FULLY EMBODIED HIS OWN PHILOSOPHY!
≠
PHILOSOPHY
-SIGH!-
BEING & NOTHINGNESS
JEAN-PAUL SARTRE
IN 1964, THE NOBEL PRIZE COMMITTEE TRIED TO HONOR HIM WITH THE LITERATURE AWARD...
...FOR TIRELESSLY CHAMPIONING THE CAUSE OF HUMAN FREEDOM...
PASS!
...BUT HE REFUSED IT, SAYING HE DID NOT WANT TO BECOME "AN INSTITUTION."


DERRIDA
THE DECONSTRUCTONATOR
IN A 2002 DOCUMENTARY JACQUES DERRIDA DESCRIBES HOW, WHEN HE WAS TEN, THE PRO-NAZI VICHY GOVERNMENT EXPELLED ALL BUT 7% OF THE JEWS IN HIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN FRENCH ALGERIA.
Jews Stink
GO HOME. YOUR PARENTS WILL EXPLAIN!
?


HE SAYS, "WITH ALL THE JEWISH PROFESSORS THAT HAD BEEN FIRED, IT WAS EASY TO RECONSTITUTE A REALLY GOOD (JEWISH) SCHOOL. I DIDN'T LIKE THIS SCHOOL EITHER."
Jews Rule!
BLAH BLAH MOSES BLAH
THIS SUCKS TOO!
"THESE WERE THE YEARS THAT VERY MUCH COUNTED FOR ME. I WAS VERY MARKED OF SUFFERING BOTH FROM ANTI-SEMITISM AND MY OWN DISCOMFORT IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY!"
ADRIFT BETWEEN TWO POLES, NEVER WHOLLY SATISFIED WITH ONE OR THE OTHER...
FORM
REALITY
CHIPS
Dasein
not Dasein
MIND
BODY
...IS IT ANY WONDER THAT LITTLE JACQUES GREW INTO A PHILOSOPHER OBSESSED WITH PUTTING STRESS ON THE DUALITIES THAT HAVE TRADITIONALLY DOMINATED WESTERN THOUGHT?
CAPITALIST
PROLETARIAT
DERRIDA FIRST GAINED NOTORIETY IN 1966, AS YOUNG TURKS OFTEN DO...
SEMIOTICS
...BY TAKING ON A SEEMINGLY UNASSAILABLE TARGET-- SWISS LINGUIST FERDINAND DE SAUSSURE (1857-1913)!
SAUSSURE, THE FOUNDER OF STRUCTURALIST LINGUISTICS (A.K.A. SEMIOTICS), ASSERTED SPEECH WAS SUPERIOR TO WRITING BECAUSE THE LATTER WAS MERELY A REPRESENTATION OF THE FORMER!
-:SOB!:- WHAT DOES SHE HAVE THAT I DON'T HAVE?
abc
(WRITING VS. SPEECH: HMMM, THERE'S ANOTHER OF THOSE PESKY DUALISMS!)

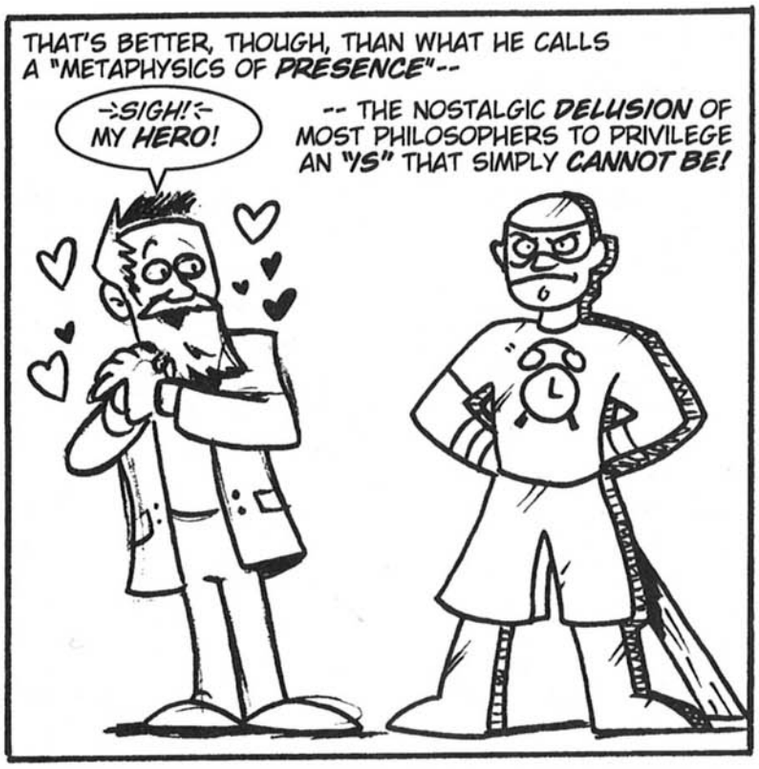

DERRIDA REJECTED THIS DISTINCTION, ARGUING THAT ALL SIGNAGE--SPEECH AS WELL AS WRITING--ENGAGES IN A PROCESS OF INFINITE REFERRAL!
PRECISE MEANING? NOT MY JOB. YOU WANNA TALK TO HIM.
NAW, FOR THAT YOU GOT TO GO TO MY SUPERVISOR.
I DON'T GOTS MY CERTIFICATION FOR THAT. SEE THE DISTRICT HEAD.
WHAAAAA? NO, YOU NEED OUR REGIONAL CENTRAL MANAGER.
WRITING
SPEECH
SIGNIFIER
SIGNIFIED
HE'S ON VACATION, THOUGH, WON'T BE BACK 'TIL MONDAY...

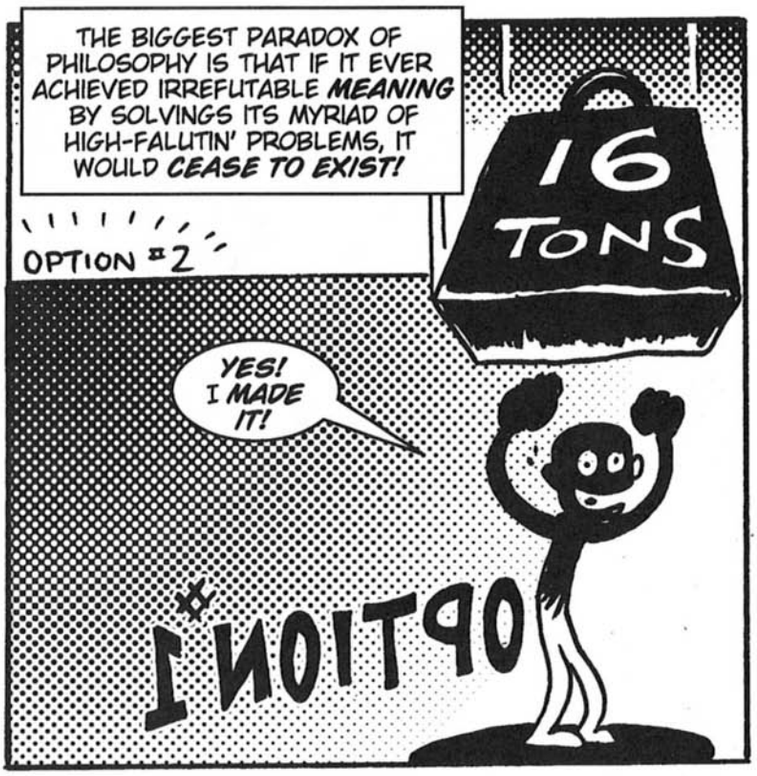

DERRIDA PROBLEMATIZED SAUSSERE BY COINING THIS TERM, WHICH IS INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE REAL FRENCH WORD "DIFFERENCE" EXCEPT IN WRITING (THEY SOUND EXACTLY THE SAME).
Différence
Différance
AFTER ALL: THE ONLY WAY TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES IN DIALECT AND OTHER VARIATIONS IN PRONUNCIATION IS TO GO TO THE VISUAL STANDARD OF WRITING! HOW THEN IS SPEECH SUPERIOR?

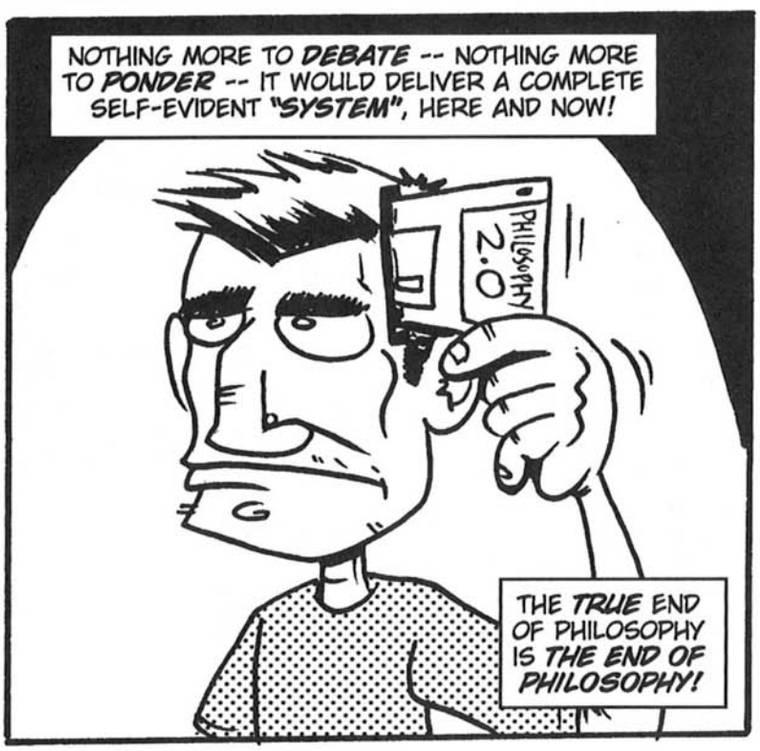

DERRIDA WOULD SPEND HIS CAREER EMPOWERING THE SUBORDINATED HALVES OF DUALISMS!
I AM WRITING! HEAR ME ROAR!
OHHHHHH....


REALITY
DECONSTRUCTION "DESTRUCTIVELY RETRIEVES" THE INHERENT INSTABILITY OF PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS!
TAKE HUSSERL'S PHENOMONOLOGY, FOR EXAMPLE...
OWWW!!! DO WE HAVE TO?
HIS METHOD, POPULARLY KNOWN AS "DECONSTRUCTION" (THOUGH THE TERM MADE HIM UNCOMFORTABLE), WAS TO EXPOSE THE PARADOXICAL PURSUIT OF IMPOSSIBLE ABSOLUTES.


ITS DUALISM PRIVILIGES EACH PSYCHE'S EXPERIENTIAL "NOW" OVER THE PAST AND THE PRESENT--AND THE OBJECTIVE WORLD!
ONLY BY "BRACKETING" (GREEK=EPOCHE) ANYTHING BEYOND MY IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE CAN I REFLECT ON THE ORIGINAL MODE OF EXISTENCE...
...MY LIFE, AS IT IS LIVED, MOMENT-TO-MOMENT!
FATHER TIME
NOT SO FAST, DERRIDA SAYS!
IS IT POSSIBLE TO EXPERIENCE ONLY THE PRESENT?
BZAP!
AFTER ALL, WE REFERENCE ALL OF OUR CURRENT EXPERIENCES AGAINST WHAT'S HAPPENED TO US IN THE PAST...
...AND THERE'S NO WAY TO APPRECIATE OUR PRESENT, EXCEPT BY LOOKING BACK FROM THE FUTURE...
...THEREFORE, BY HUSSERL'S OWN LOGIC, THE "IMMEDIATELY REFLECTIVE SELF" CANNOT EXIST!
HASTA LA VISTA, EPOCHE!
POFF!
FOR DERRIDA, NOTHING IS -- OR CAN EVER BE -- DEFINITE! THE "I" OF THE SELF IS ALWAYS IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING -- CAUGHT IN THE SPACE BETWEEN THE TWIN POLES OF A DUALISM!
OPTION #1
OPTION #2
DERRIDA'S IS OFTEN CALLED "THE PHILOSOPHY OF HESITATION!"


THAT'S BETTER, THOUGH, THAN WHAT HE CALLS A "METAPHYSICS OF *PRESENCE*"--
-:SIGH!:- MY *HERO!*
-- THE NOSTALGIC *DELUSION* OF MOST PHILOSOPHERS TO PRIVILEGE AN "*IS*" THAT SIMPLY *CANNOT BE!*


THE BIGGEST PARADOX OF PHILOSOPHY IS THAT IF IT EVER ACHIEVED IRREFUTABLE *MEANING* BY SOLVINGS ITS MYRIAD OF HIGH-FALUTIN' PROBLEMS, IT WOULD *CEASE TO EXIST!*
OPTION #2
16 TONS
YES! I *MADE* IT!
OPTION #1


NOTHING MORE TO *DEBATE* -- NOTHING MORE TO *PONDER* -- IT WOULD DELIVER A COMPLETE SELF-EVIDENT "*SYSTEM*", HERE AND NOW!
PHILOSOPHY 2.0
THE *TRUE* END OF PHILOSOPHY IS *THE END OF PHILOSOPHY!*

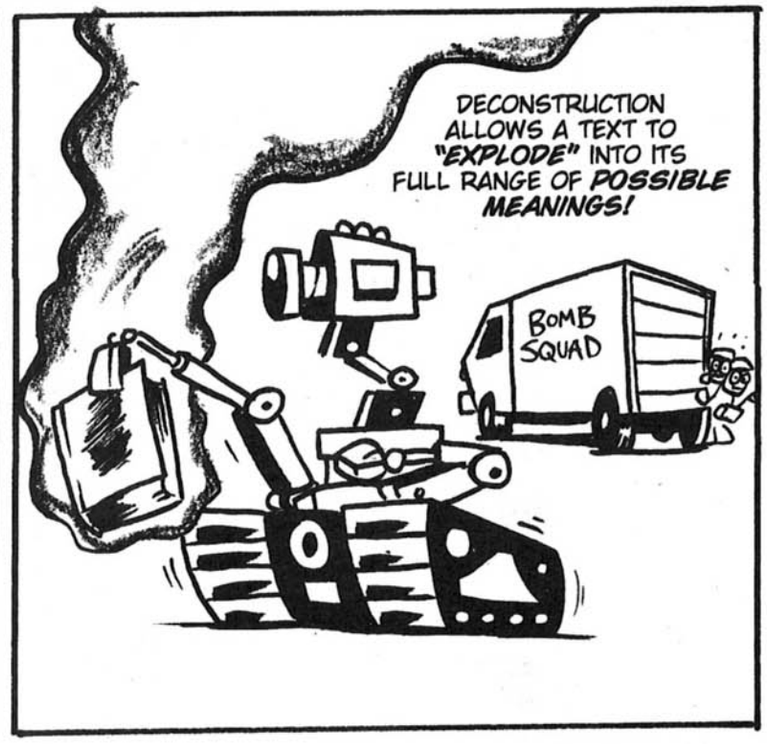

FOR THE BETTER PART OF *FOUR DECADES* DERRIDA CRANKED OUT BOOK-LENGTH DECONSTRUCTIONS OF DESCARTES, FREUD, MARX, AND MANY OTHERS...
WORKER! AND...CAPITALIST? YOU TWO...ARE... *TOGETHER?!?*
YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH!!
...DEMONSTRATING, AS IN THE CASE OF THE PHENOMONOLOGICAL *EPOCHE*, THAT EACH POLE OF A THINKER'S DUALISM CONTAINS A "*TRACE*" OF ITS *OTHER!*

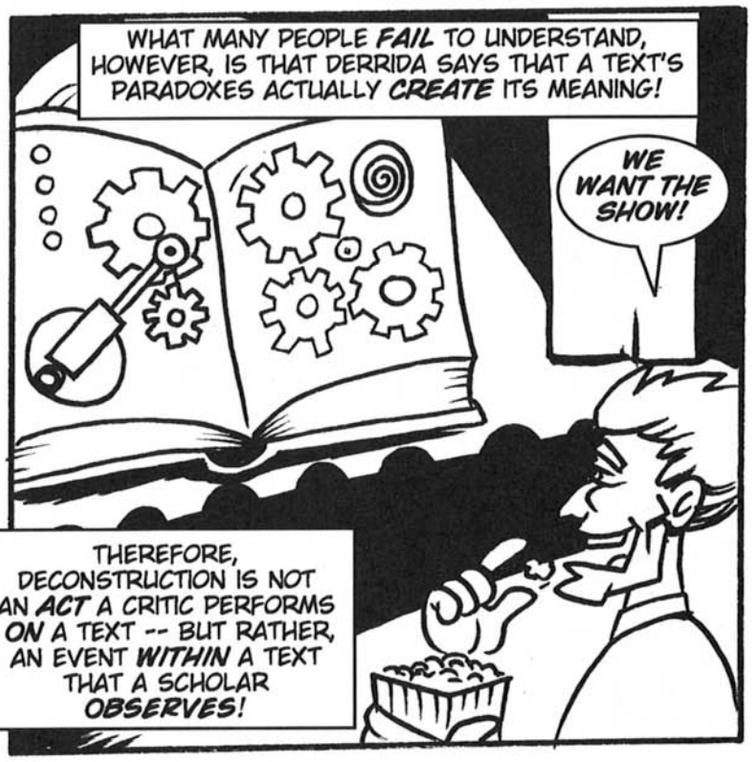

TO SAY THIS MADE DERRIDA A *CONTROVERSIAL* FIGURE AMONG *TRADITIONAL* PHILOSOPHERS WOULD BE A CONSIDERABLE *UNDERSTATEMENT.*
PHILOSOPHY
AND *STAY OUT!!*
TOSS!
HE WAS DENOUNCED AS A GIMMICKY *CHARLATAN* BY MANY --
DECONSTRUCTION DISMISSED AS THE "PHILOSOPHY ABOUT *NOTHING*" (THIS WAS BACK WHEN *SEINFELD* WAS BIG)--











PAGE SIX

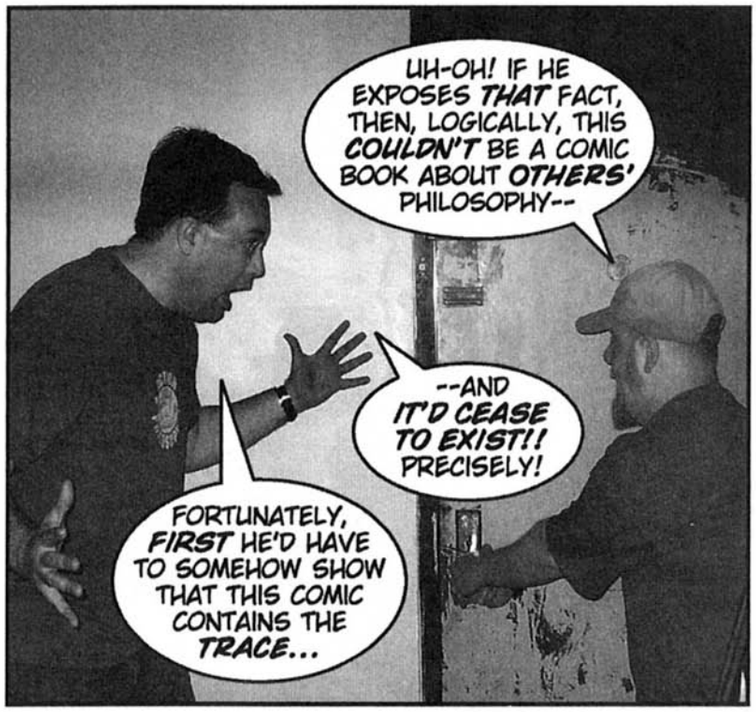
PANEL 6: CLOSE UP ON DERRIDA

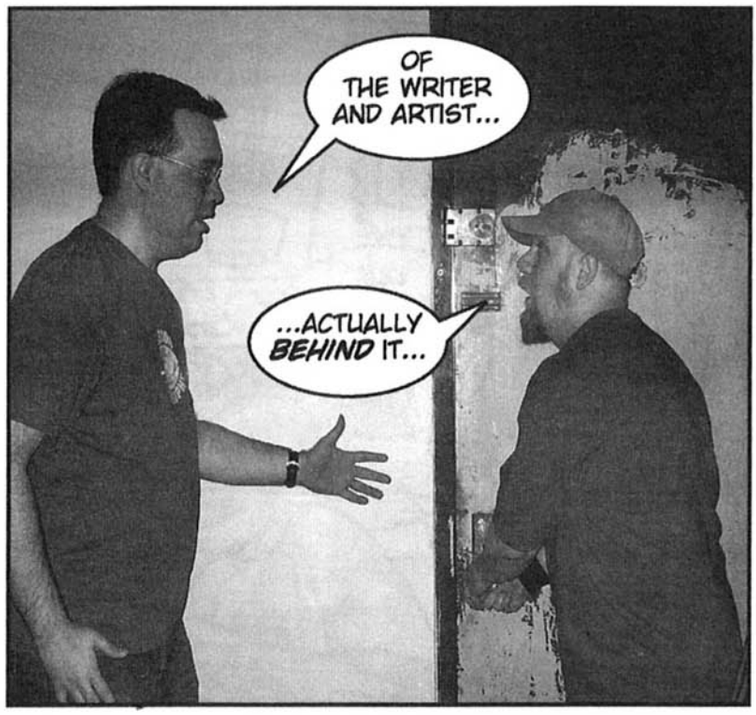
DERRIDA: In order to be FAITHFUL to a text's true meaning we must invent NEW ONES for it!

DERRIDA: "Invent in your OWN language if you can or want to hear MINE; invent if you can or want to give my language to be understood."

DERRIDA: Any faithful INTERPRETATION of my work would require a student to go BEYOND it!


RYAN! WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?
OUR COMIC BOOK IS STARTING TO BREAK DOWN, FRED!
OUR GRAMMATOLOGICAL SHIELDS ARE FAILING--
THIS STORY IS BEING HIJACKED BY AN ALTERNATE READING--
ZAP!
I AM ALWAYS ALREADY BACK!
AAHHH! DERRIDA! AAHHH!
WHAT CAN WE DO? WHAT CAN WE DO?
GET TO THE AUTHORIAL DRIVE! IF HE DESTRUCTIVELY RETRIEVES OUR PARADOXIUM WE'RE SUNK!
ZAP!
CRAP ON A CRACKER!! THAT CONTRADICTION FUELS OUR ENTIRE PROJECT!
AUTHORIAL DRIVE
TELL ME ABOUT IT! THIS BOOK IS BILLED AS AN OBJECTIVE EXPLICATION OF PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS THRU COMICS!
BUT THE IMPOSITION OF MY WORDS AND YOUR DRAWINGS FUNDAMENTALLY TRANSMOGRIFIES OTHERS' IDEAS INTO A THIRD, WHOLLY SEPARATE ENTITY!











COULD THIS BE THE *END* OF *ACTION PHILOSOPHERS?*

GREY MATTERS

WRITE TO: US@EVILTWINCOMICS.COM
OR VISIT OUR MESSAGE BOARD AT
WWW.ACTIONPHILOSOPHERS.COM

Seems like we had all retailers in the last letter column; and this one is all international academics — students and teachers alike!

We don't plan things this way, they just happen...

Ryan,

I've just recently stumbled across your Action Philosophers book while perusing the comic book shop. Having burned out on superheroes and mega-event crossovers, I was looking for something different, and Plato jumping off the top rope was definitely different.

I thought the first book was awesome and went back to the shop the next day to pick up as many as I could find. Now I'm pestering everyone I know to read these books. You'll be glad to know you have a huge following in the English department of the University of Calgary up here in Canada (if you count 5 people as a huge following).

We don't have December's issue yet, but we're eagerly awaiting it. If you're still taking requests for issue #5, you have 4 votes for Jean-Paul Sartre and one for Simone de Beauvoir, although I would assume she would come up when discussing Sartre.

(I tried to explain this to the girl who voted for de Beauvoir, but she is a typical feminist and she told me that Simone would be spinning in her grave if she was only remembered as some man's lover. She thinks the privileged name in that relationship should be Beauvoir, thus, only remembering Sartre for his relationship with her. I find feminists intimidating...)

Anywho, keep up the great work and Seasons Greetings,

Andrew Barbero

Actually, Andrew, I agree with your intimidating feminist friend — and that's why you'll notice Beauvoir isn't mentioned in the Sartre story at all!

I suppose there are people who will find this to be a hideous admission, and the original draft of the script did discuss her, but it was cut from the final version for length.

I decided that Beauvoir was so much of an intellectual powerhouse in her own right that simply mentioning her in a single panel was just as bad, if not worse, as not mentioning her at all ... and she didn't have much to do with the development of Sartre's philosophy as depicted here (after all, it's not like she was in Stalag 12D with him). For that matter, I think ol' Simone merits her own "Action Philosophers" bio! We'll see if that happens ... Who wants to see an All-Feminist Issue? We can do Andrea Dworkin and Betty Friedan too.

Hi.

Just want to let you know that I read every issue of your comic, and that they are mostly very good. I teach philosophy here in Montreal in Canada and I find your take on the mind and life of most philosophers very funny and sometime instructive too. (Sorry about the English: French is my first langage)

I buy every issue at least two times. One is for me. The other one, I put in the common room of the philosophy teachers here, for everyone to look at if they want. When you write on a philosopher that one of my colleagues wrote on or worked a lot on, I buy one copy for them too. So I will buy the one with Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein four times: one for me, one for the common room, one for someone who worked on the first philosopher, and one for a teacher who worked on the second one. I hope it helps you too: I know self-publishing must eat more dough than gives.

A third point! I really liked your comic on Marx. It was very funny and all but I don't understand why you never talked of democracy. Democracy was one of the principles that Marx and Engels defended the most. And talking about democracy through communism helps people understand that Russia was never a communist country, at least not in the sense that Marx and Engels thought of it.

Concerning Machiavelli, it was funny but certainly not very synthetic. You could have talked of "being like the fox" and "being like the lion" (is it how it is translated in english?). You talked of force or strength a little bit, but less of ruse. I don't know. Maybe I'm wrong, but it seems to me that the picture your comic made of Machiavelli could have been more detailed and more respresentative of his thoughts. Maybe not. I don't know for sure, really.

Something else. Your choice of philosophers is sometimes funny. Some of the "philosophers" you wrote about are not considered philosophers at all here! I'm thinking mostly of Bodhidharma, of the Kabbalah and of Thomas Jefferson. I know of no university (here or in Europe, at least) that teaches the philosophy of Jefferson, at the very least. Why not write on John Stuart Mill, David Hume, John Locke, Adam Smith or some other true Action Philosopher on liberalism? I don't know. Maybe I'm wrong about this too and my view of what philosophy is is too small.

Finally, why not an issue on the analytical philosophers? Aren't they the ones that they teach in schools in the United States and in England? All the philosophers you presented (apart from Jefferson, maybe) are from the continental tradition. They are philosophers that are mostly taught in Europe or here in Quebec. Wouldn't you like to write on Bertrand Russell, Frege or Davidson? I would certainly like to read an issue about them, at least.

Anyway,

Bye and good luck on Action Philosophers and your other works,

Dominique Uhde
Philosophy teacher (and master)
at Collège Ahuntsic in Monteal

Dominique, for one thing you write English better than I do, so I didn't feel the urge to correct jack.

Secondly: A big SHOUT OUT to our homies in the common room at the philosophy department of the Collège Ahuntsic in Montreal! If I knew what the name of your sports team was I would tell it to GO!

Now on to your actual points.

Since I wrote you back in February, Dominique, I looked into the whole democracy issue, as least as it relates to Marx specifically, and I must say I respectfully disagree. I was particularly struck by this passage from *Critique of the Gotha Program* (1875):

***"'Even vulgar democracy, which sees the millennium in the democratic republic and has no suspicion that it is precisely in this last form of state of bourgeois society that the class struggle has to be fought out to a conclusion—even it towers mountains above this kind of democratism which keeps within the limits of what is permitted by the police and not permitted by logic."* (Part IV, section A)**

It seems clear to me, particularly in *Gotha*, that, to Marx, democracy is still a government manipulated and controlled by the ruling classes; even if it is the last stage in a historical process that will end in the (initially) violent (and, according to him, temporary) dictatorship of the proletariat, which is what we depicted in our story.

However, I do agree that Leninism, such as it is, got quite a lot wrong about Marx. And who can say? It's possible that, had history allowed it to do so, the USSR might have evolved out of its "proletariat dictatorship" into something resembling one-man one-vote democracy.

When it comes to Machiavelli, we depicted that quotation you mentioned (yes that is the correct translation) in an earlier draft of the script but, just like Beauvoir in "Sartre," it was, all together now, "cut for length." With these 8-14 page comics stories there's just so much we can cram in here, and that's why here at Action Philosophers we like to make the distinction between our books being fundamentally "educational" (whatever that means) and being, more accurately, "graphical essays" on individual thinkers, focusing primarily on how they reached their major conclusions — thereby putting the ACTION in Action Philosophers!

And who knew the Reniassance was so violent? I had no idea before I started researching that story ... and I'm an American. I love violence. I don't really understand why. I blame a steady diet of super hero comics in my youth.

[Said like Snake from *The Simpsons*:] "If only they had philosophy comics when *I* was a lad..."

With regards to analytical versus conteniental philosophy...let's check out the next letter, shall we?

Hi,

Thanks for the comics I ordered. I look forward to being able to get hold of the sold out editions soon. Can I let you know that I will be publicising your mag over here in Scotland and that you would do yourself a lot of favours (financially) if you produced some editions concentrating on the philosophers and problems dealt with in the upper school qualification in philosophy we offer over here. Let me list them for you: Hume; Descartes; Plato; free will vs. determinism; scepticism/epistemology; moral philosophy (- objective vs. subjective); Kant; utilitarianism and critical thinking. Needless to say, since they'd be for 16-18 year olds you'd need to be easy on the sex, etc!

Yours aye,

Bill Storrie

And aye right back atcha, Bill! Let's run down that list of yours:

Plato: See June's ACTION PHILOSOPHERS GIANT-SIZE THING for a reprint of our Plato story (along with the rest of AP#1)!

Descartes: Turn to the front of this comic!

Free Will vs. Determinism: See "St. Augustine" in APGST

Kant: Scheduled for AP#8!

As for Hume, utilitarianism, and, from Dominique, John Stuart Mill, Russell, and more: since we've been deluged with mail from our pals in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island (thanks, in no small part, I suspect, to the interview with me that appeared in UK's *The Philosophers' Magazine* [Issue 33 — 1st quarter 2006 — a mere £3.50! On newsstands now!]), I think we have no choice but to add a special NINTH issue to our line-up in 2007 — The "RUE BRITANNIA" issue that will tackle those crazy cats from England and Scotland: Berkeley, Hume, Mill, Bentham, and (maybe) Bertrand Russell and Hobbes!

And since 16-18 year olds appear to be our target audience, we won't have any sex...we'll just have to increase the fart jokes a hundredfold.

Whoever says Evil Twin Comics does not bend like a wet noodle in the wind of international popular opinion clearly has no idea what the heck they're talking about.

Until next time, kiddies: Keep thinkin'!

— Fred Van Lente