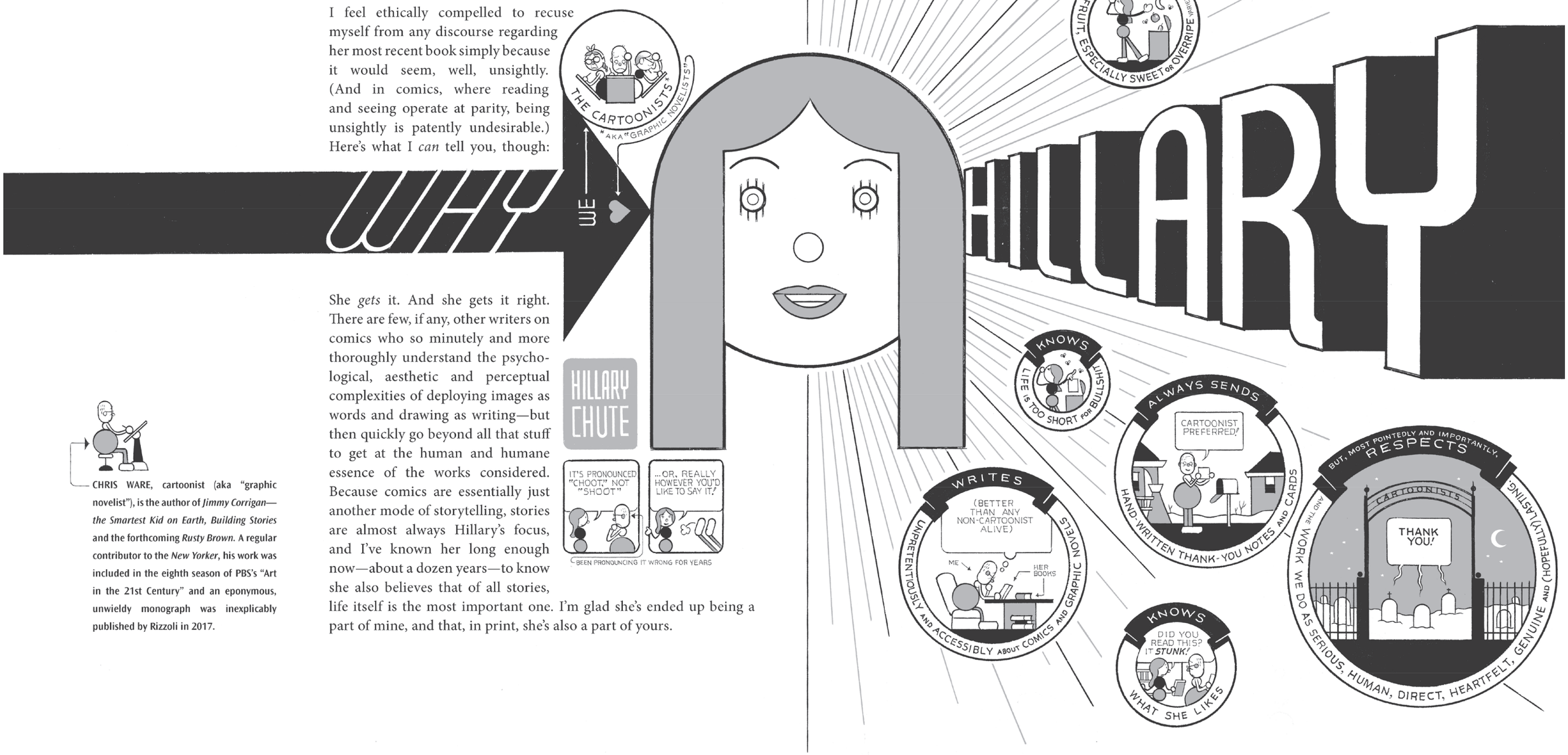
Panels and Pens

CHRIS WARE

Man thinks not always in words but also in images ...
—Vladimir Nabokov, *Lectures on Literature*, "James Joyce" (1980)

AS ONE OF THE MANY FORTUNATE AND GRATEFUL SUBJECTS OF HILLARY CHUTE'S WRITING OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, I feel ethically compelled to recuse myself from any discourse regarding her most recent book simply because it would seem, well, unsightly. (And in comics, where reading and seeing operate at parity, being unsightly is patently undesirable.) Here's what I *can* tell you, though:



She *gets* it. And she gets it right. There are few, if any, other writers on comics who so minutely and more thoroughly understand the psychological, aesthetic and perceptual complexities of deploying images as words and drawing as writing—but then quickly go beyond all that stuff to get at the human and humane essence of the works considered. Because comics are essentially just another mode of storytelling, stories are almost always Hillary's focus, and I've known her long enough now—about a dozen years—to know she also believes that of all stories, life itself is the most important one. I'm glad she's ended up being a part of mine, and that, in print, she's also a part of yours.

CHRIS WARE, cartoonist (aka "graphic novelist"), is the author of *Jimmy Corrigan—the Smartest Kid on Earth*, *Building Stories* and the forthcoming *Rusty Brown*. A regular contributor to the *New Yorker*, his work was included in the eighth season of PBS's "Art in the 21st Century" and an eponymous, unwieldy monograph was inexplicably published by Rizzoli in 2017.

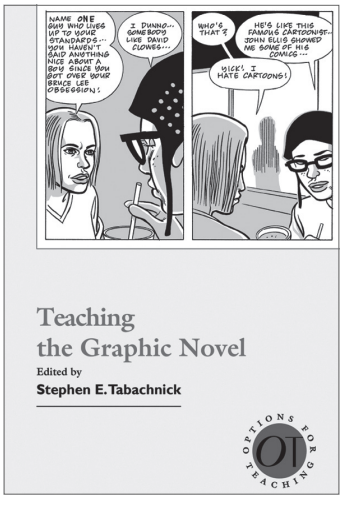
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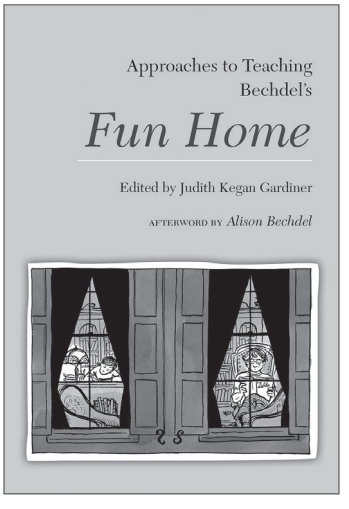
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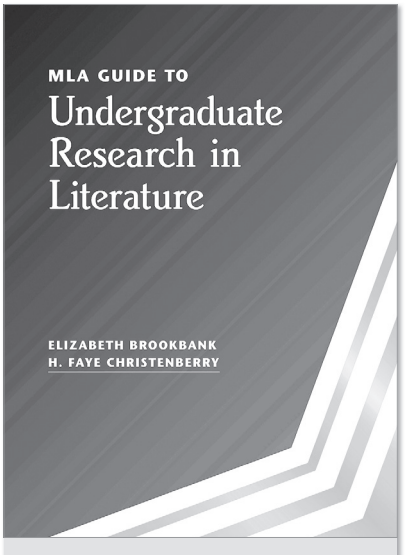
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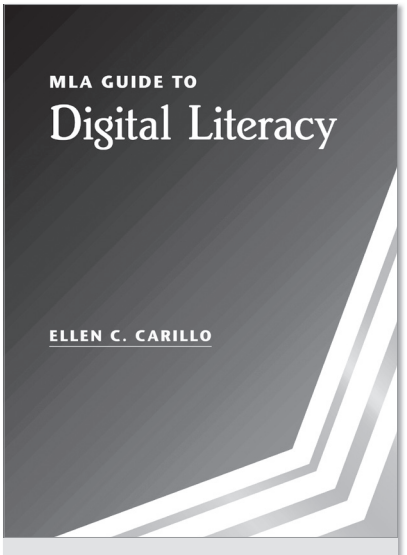
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