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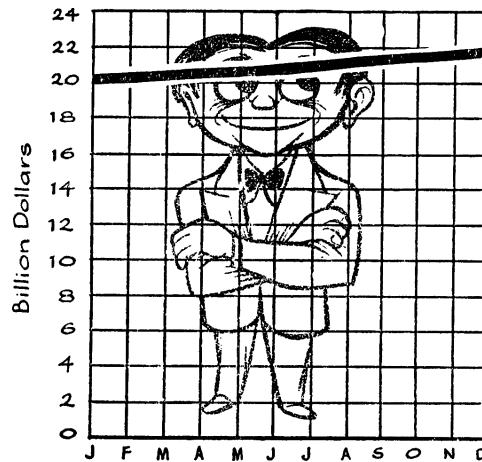
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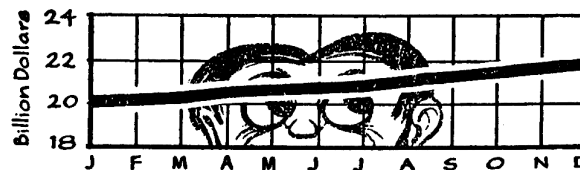
Some excerpts on graphing...

Begin with paper ruled into squares. Name the months along the bottom. Indicate billions of dollars up the side. Plot your points and draw your line, and your graph will look like this:

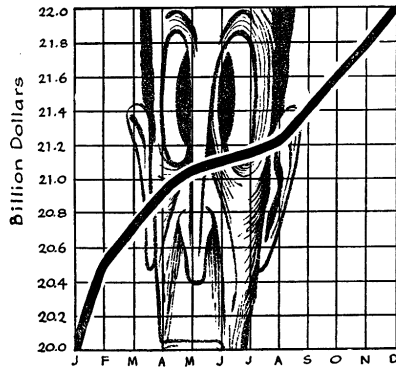


Now that's clear enough. It shows what happened during the year and it shows it month by month.

That is very well if all you want to do is convey information. But suppose you wish to win an argument, shock a reader, move him into action, sell him something. For that, this chart lacks schmaltz. Chop off the bottom.



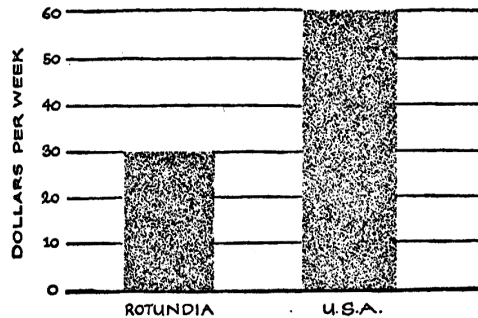
Now that's more like it. (You've saved paper too, something to point out if any carping fellow objects to your misleading graphics.) The figures are the same and so is the curve. It is the same graph. Nothing has been falsified—except the impression that it gives. But what the hasty reader sees now is a national-income line that has climbed halfway up the paper in twelve months, all because most of the chart isn't there any more.



Now that you have practiced to deceive, why stop with truncating? You have a further trick available that's worth a dozen of that. It will make your modest rise of ten per cent look livelier than one hundred per cent is entitled to look. Simply change the proportion between the ordinate and the abscissa. There's no rule against it, and it does give your graph a prettier shape. All you have to do is let each mark up the side stand for only one-tenth as many dollars as before.

That is impressive, isn't it? Anyone looking at it can just feel prosperity throbbing in the arteries of the country. It is a subtler equivalent of editing "National income rose ten per cent" into "... climbed a whopping ten per cent." It is vastly more effective, however, because it contains no adjectives or adverbs to spoil the illusion of objectivity. There's nothing anyone can pin on you.

Perhaps I wish to show a comparison of two figures—the average weekly wage of carpenters in the United States and Rotundia, let's say. The sums might be \$60 and \$30. I wish to catch your eye with this, so I am not satisfied merely to print the numbers. I make a bar chart.



There it is, with dollars-per-week indicated up the left side. It is a clear and honest picture. Twice as much money is twice as big on the chart and looks it.

The chart lacks that eye-appeal though, doesn't it? I can easily supply that by using something that looks more like money than a bar does: moneybags. One moneybag



for the unfortunate Rotundian's pittance, two for the American's wage. Or three for the Rotundian, six for the American. Either way, the chart remains honest and clear, and it will not deceive your hasty glance. That is the way an honest pictograph is made.

"But I want more. I want to say that the American workingman is vastly better off than the Rotundian, and the more I can dramatize the difference between thirty and sixty the better it will be for my argument.

...but I don't want to be caught at my tricks. There is a way, and it is one that is being used every day to fool you."

I simply draw a moneybag to represent the Rotundian's thirty dollars, and then I draw another one twice as tall to represent the American's sixty. That's in proportion, isn't it?



Now *that* gives the impression I'm after. The American's wage now dwarfs the foreigner's.

The catch, of course, is this. Because the second bag is twice as high as the first, it is also twice as wide. It occupies not twice but four times as much area on the page. The numbers still say two to one, but the visual impression, which is the dominating one most of the time, says the ratio is four to one. Or worse.

“27 Times Better!”

This is not an example from the book, but rather was told to me by a friend.

When he was in high school, he was taking an Economics class. One day an ad appeared in the local newspaper, advertising some fancy new oil, “27 Times Better!” The teacher had the students write to the company, to find out “27 times better than what?” The answer: dry sand.

Any time you see a comparison, ask the question: “Compared to what?”