

*A Guide to...*

# **BETTER FIGURE DRAWING**

*by*

*Cecile Hardy*

- LINE OF ACTION • DRAWING
- FROM THE MODEL - CREATIVELY •
- CLOTHING THE FIGURE DRAWING •
- THE GLAMOUR GIRL •





# better figure drawing

by *Cecile Hardy*

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Dear Reader,

This informal book on figure drawing shows you as simply as possible things I have learned about drawing the female figure. The matters that I discuss are those which I consider most important. It is a book of practical suggestions to help you to draw attractive, live-looking figures.....



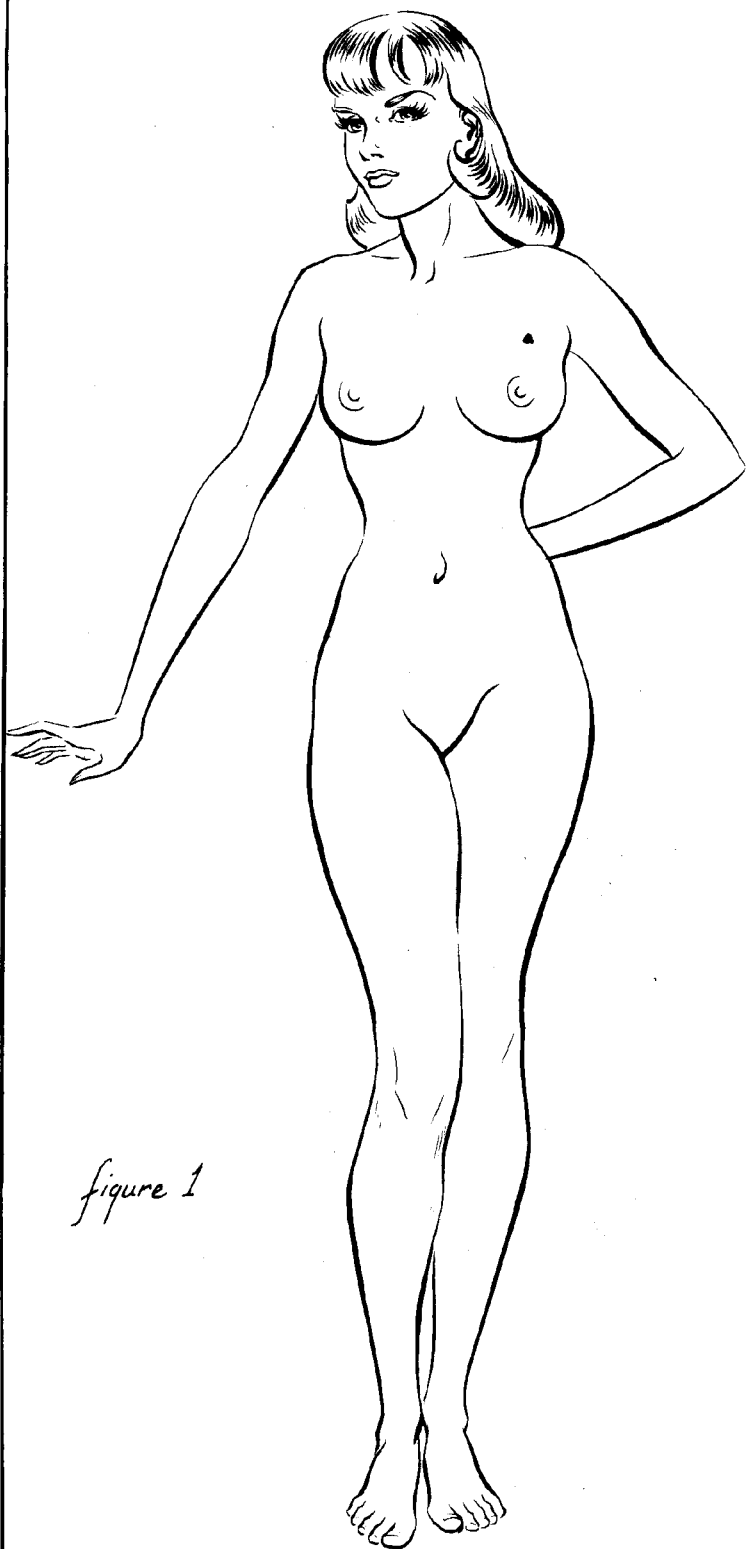


## *What's in this book...*

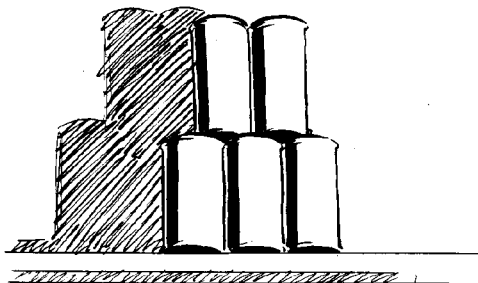
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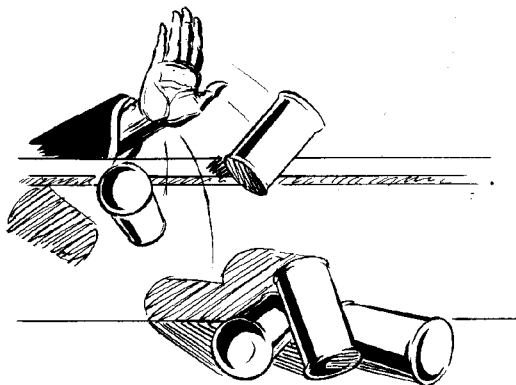
# CHANGING AN AWKWARD



*figure 1*



TIN CANS PILED ON A SHELF ARE DULL TO LOOK AT - AND SO IS THE DRAWING ON THE LEFT, DESPITE THE PRETTY GIRL. (SEE HOW STIFFLY SHE STANDS)



IF WE PUSH THE CANS OFF THE SHELF, NOTE HOW THEY BECOME MORE INTERESTING - NOT JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE MOVING, BUT BECAUSE THEY NOW FORM A CHANGING, DIVERSIFIED PATTERN.



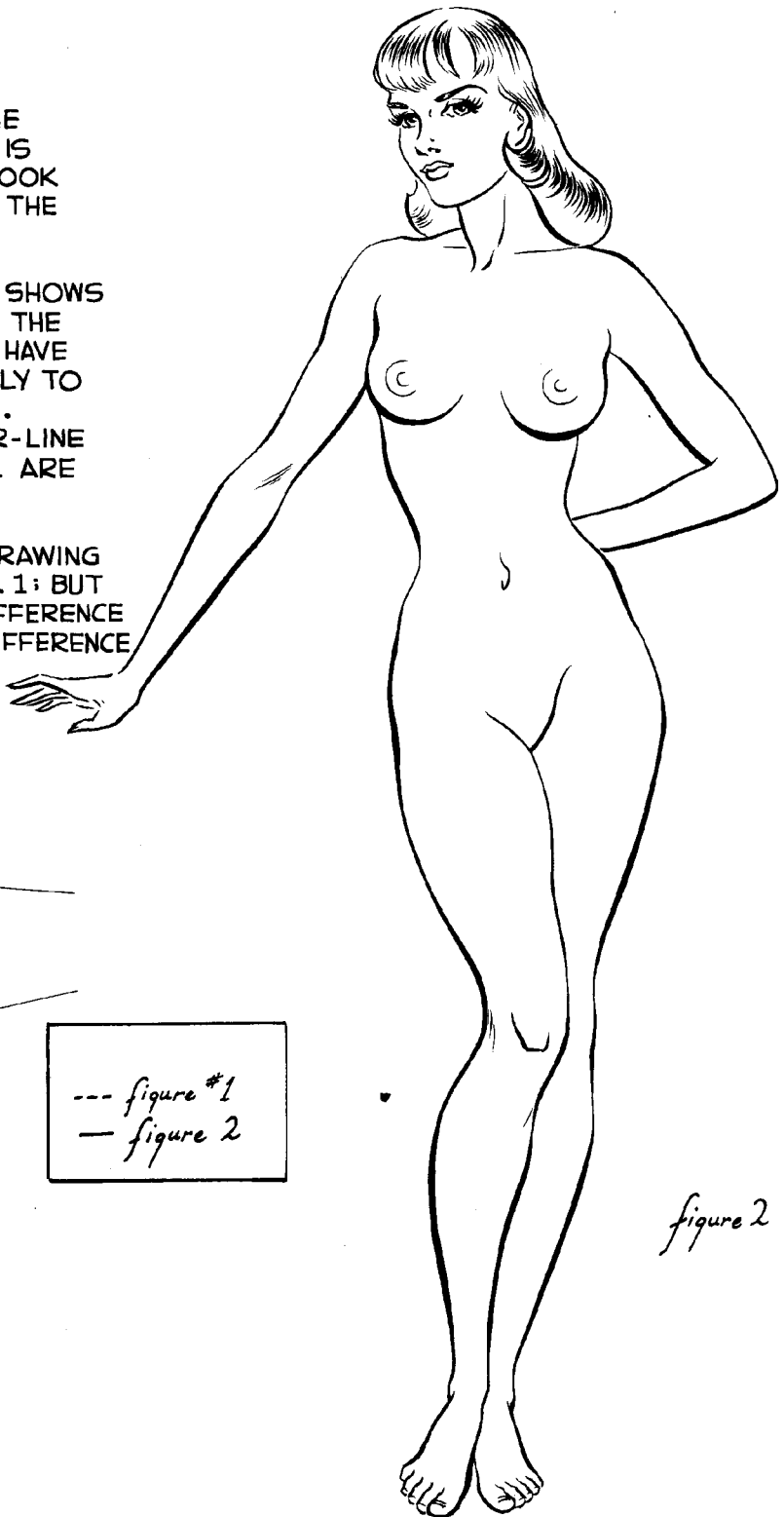
# POSE INTO A GRACEFUL ONE

IN THE SAME WAY, THE FIGURE ON THE RIGHT IS MORE PLEASING TO LOOK AT THAN THE ONE ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE.

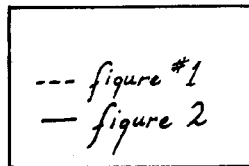
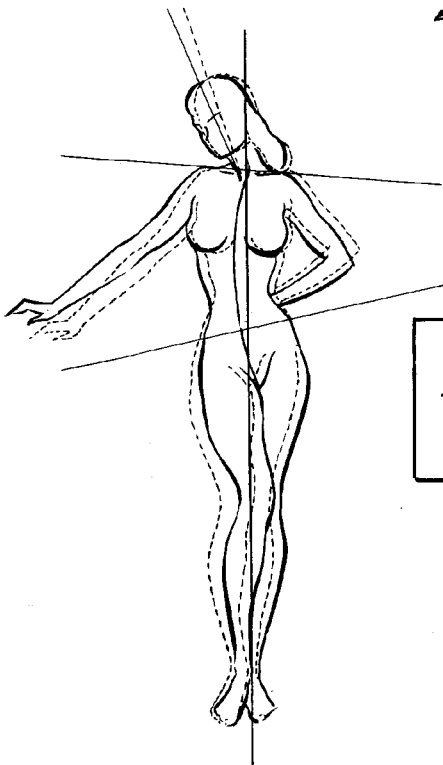
THE DIAGRAM BELOW SHOWS HOW THE OUTLINES OF THE FIGURE ON THE RIGHT HAVE BEEN SHIFTED SLIGHTLY TO IMPROVE THE DRAWING.

NOTE HOW SHOULDER-LINE AND HIP-LINE IN FIG. 2 ARE SLANTED IN OPPOSING DIRECTIONS.

FIG. 2 IS THE SAME DRAWING ANATOMICALLY AS FIG. 1; BUT THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM. THE DIFFERENCE IS IN THE ACTION.



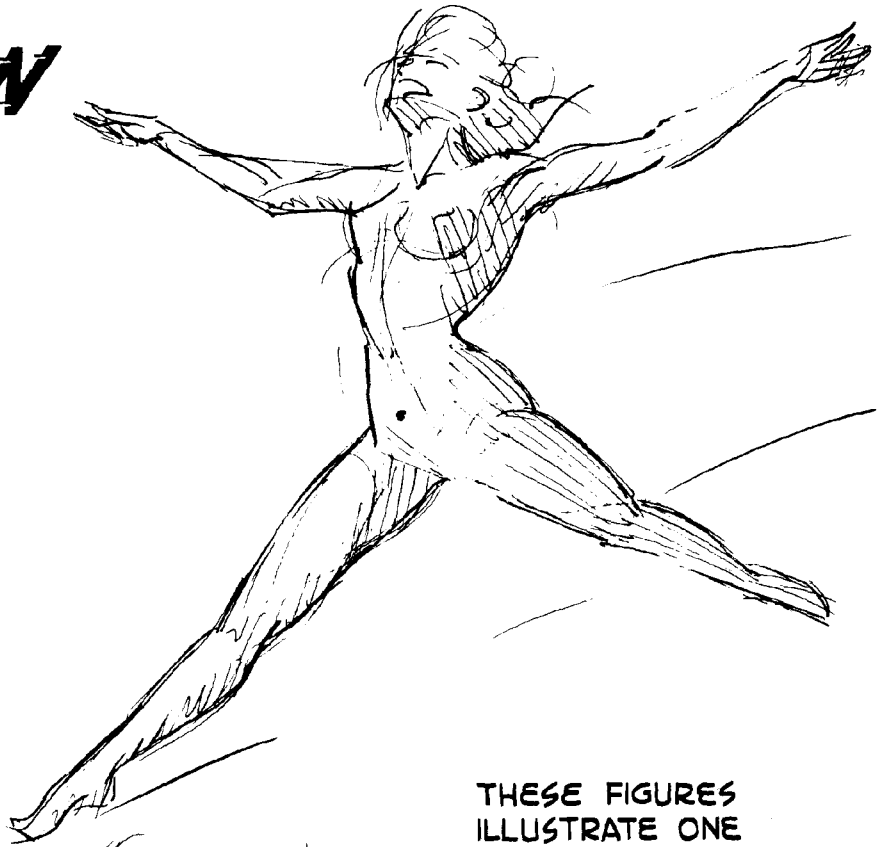
*figure 2*





# ***ACTION***

IN YOUR FIGURE  
DRAWINGS WILL  
MAKE THEM MORE  
INTERESTING TO  
LOOK AT.



THESE FIGURES  
ILLUSTRATE ONE  
TYPE OF ACTION  
FIGURE.



THE FIGURES ON THIS PAGE  
ARE DRAWN SO AS TO GIVE  
THE ILLUSION OF THEIR  
BEING IN MOTION, WHILE  
ACTUALLY THEY ARE NOT.





BUT THERE IS ACTION IN  
THIS RELAXED, STATIC  
FIGURE, ALSO.

THE ACTION IS IN THE  
LINES FORMED BY THE  
CONTOURS (OUTLINES) OF  
THE BODY.

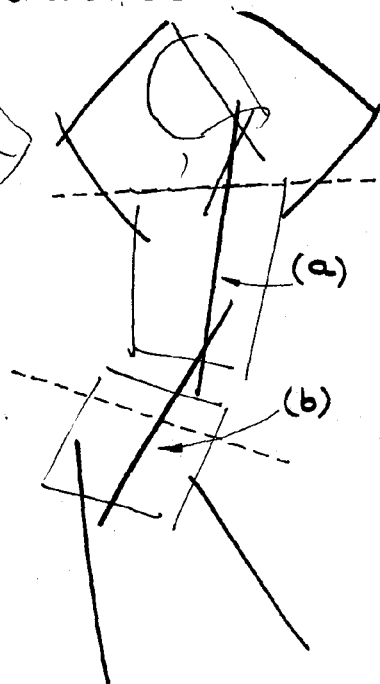


# THERE ARE TWO THINGS THAT WILL CREATE ACTION IN A FIGURE DRAWING -

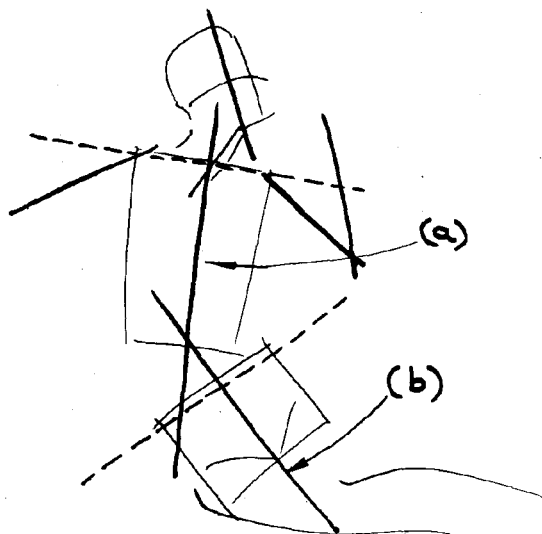
**1** THE FIRST IS *VARIETY*.  
REMEMBER THE TIN  
CANS ON THE FIRST TWO  
PAGES? THE CANS THAT  
HAD FALLEN MADE A MORE  
INTERESTING DRAWING, BECAUSE  
THEIR OUTLINES FORMED VARIOUS  
ANGLES WITH ONE ANOTHER.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT  
YOU REMEMBER TO APPLY  
THIS PRINCIPLE TO FIGURE  
DRAWING.

ON THIS PAGE YOU SEE  
DIAGRAMS OF FIGURES SHOWING  
VARIETY IN THE DIRECTIONS OF  
THE LINES THAT FORM THE FIGURES.



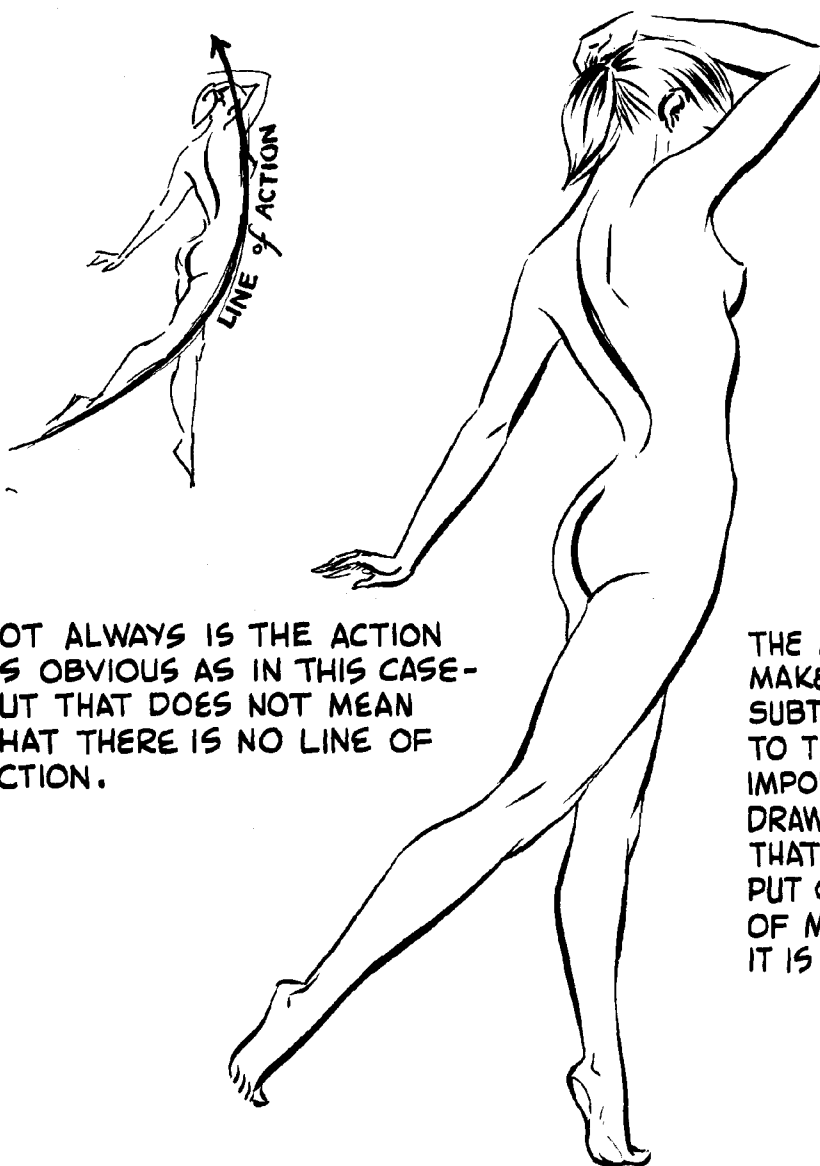
NOTE THAT THE LINE THROUGH THE  
CENTER OF THE UPPER PART OF THE  
TORSO (a) CROSSES THE LINE  
DRAWN THROUGH THE LOWER SECTION  
OF THE TORSO. (b)





# 2

THE SECOND FACTOR IS THE LINE OF ACTION. THE LINE OF ACTION IS THE SWING OF THE BODY IN A PARTICULAR POSE; IT IS THE MAIN DIRECTION IN WHICH THE BODY BENDS OR STRETCHES OR LEANS. IN THE DRAWING BELOW, THE LINE OF ACTION IS FORMED BY THE CONTOUR LINES OF SEVERAL PARTS OF THE BODY. THESE LINES FLOW INTO ONE ANOTHER SO AS TO FORM A CONTINUOUS LINE OF ACTION. NOTE THAT HERE THE LINE OF ACTION IS THE LONGEST CONTINUOUS LINE IN THE BODY.



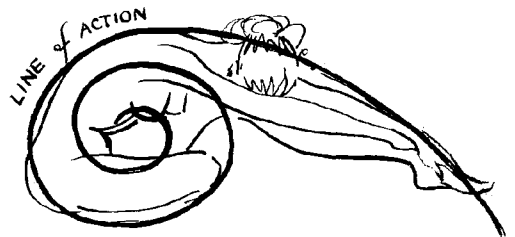
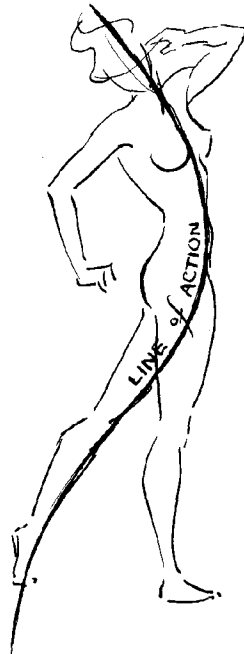
NOT ALWAYS IS THE ACTION AS OBVIOUS AS IN THIS CASE - BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THERE IS NO LINE OF ACTION.

THE ARTIST'S JOB IS TO MAKE THE IMPORTANT BUT SUBTLE THINGS MORE EVIDENT TO THE OBSERVER. THE IMPORTANT THING ABOUT A DRAWING IS THE MAIN IDEA THAT THE ARTIST WANTS TO PUT OVER. IN THE CASE OF MOST FIGURE DRAWINGS, IT IS THE LINE OF ACTION.

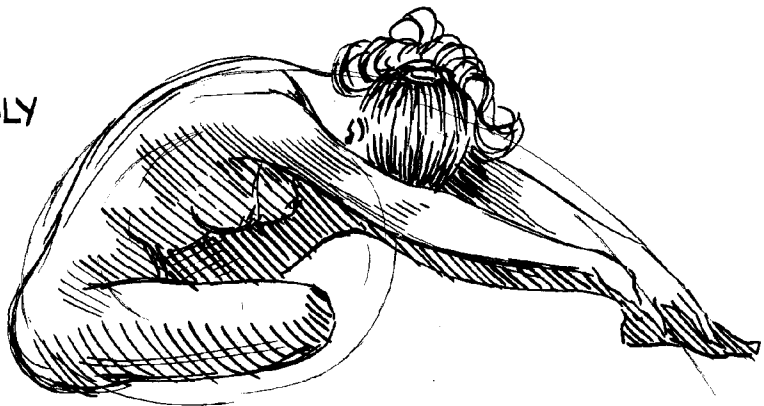


# DON'T MISS THE *LINE OF ACTION!*

DRAW IN THE  
LINE OF ACTION  
FIRST, THEN FILL  
IN THE CONTOUR  
LINES OF THE  
FIGURE AROUND  
IT.



IF YOU MISS THE  
LINE OF ACTION  
YOU WILL PROBABLY  
BE DISAPPOINTED  
IN YOUR DRAWING.

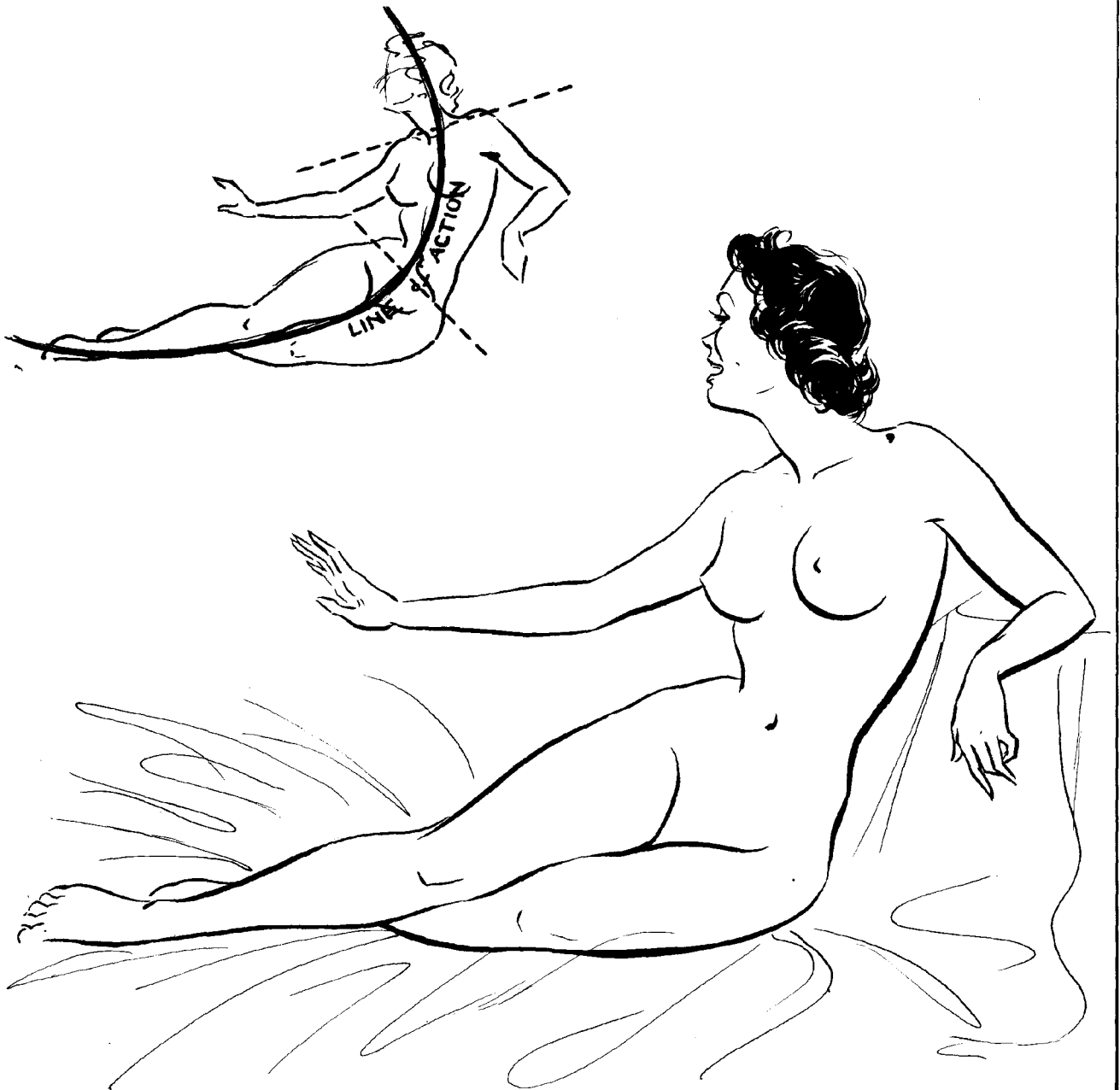




IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT YOU FIND THE SWING OF THE BODY IN SEATED POSES. IF YOU STRESS THE LINE OF ACTION IN SEATED FIGURES, THEY WILL APPEAR MORE LIFE-LIKE.

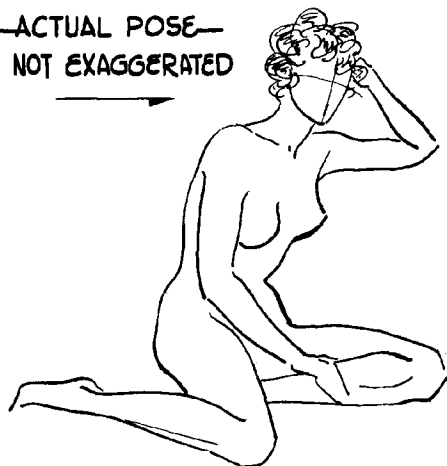
TO THOSE WHOSE KNOWLEDGE OF ANATOMY IS NOT YET TOO ADVANCED I WOULD SAY THAT THERE IS NOTHING THAT WILL DO MORE TO IMPROVE YOUR FIGURE DRAWINGS THAN TO STRESS THE ACTION.

EXAGGERATE THE ACTION IF NECESSARY!





—ACTUAL POSE—  
NOT EXAGGERATED



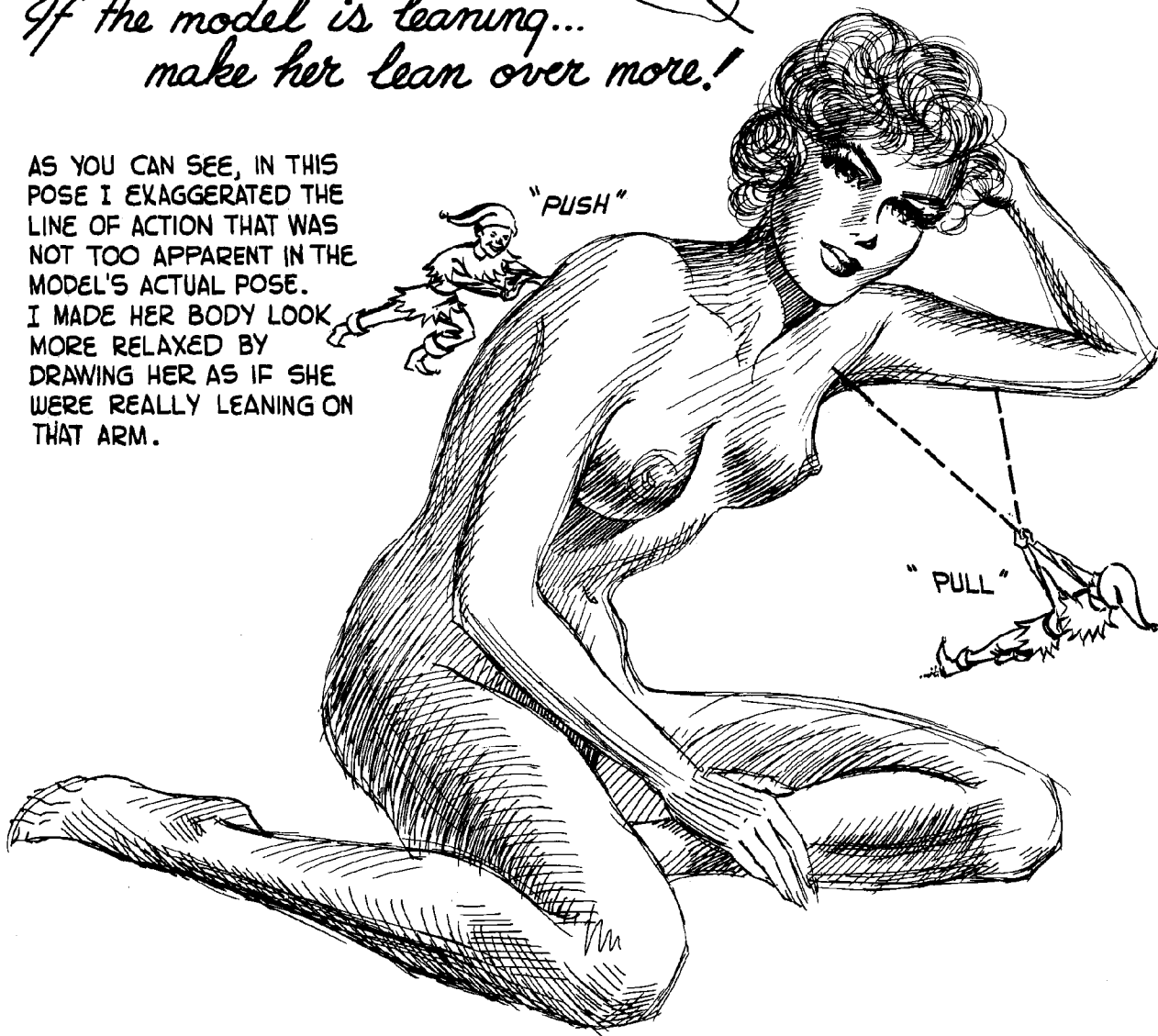
IF YOU ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE A MODEL, POSE HER SO AS TO SHOW A DEFINITE LINE OF ACTION, OR ELSE EXAGGERATE THE ACTION THAT YOU DO SEE IN THE POSE.

EXAGGERATION



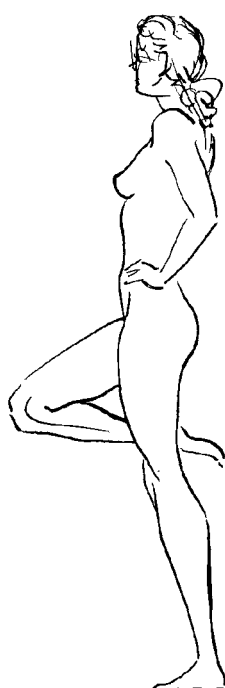
*If the model is leaning...  
make her lean over more!*

AS YOU CAN SEE, IN THIS POSE I EXAGGERATED THE LINE OF ACTION THAT WAS NOT TOO APPARENT IN THE MODEL'S ACTUAL POSE. I MADE HER BODY LOOK MORE RELAXED BY DRAWING HER AS IF SHE WERE REALLY LEANING ON THAT ARM.

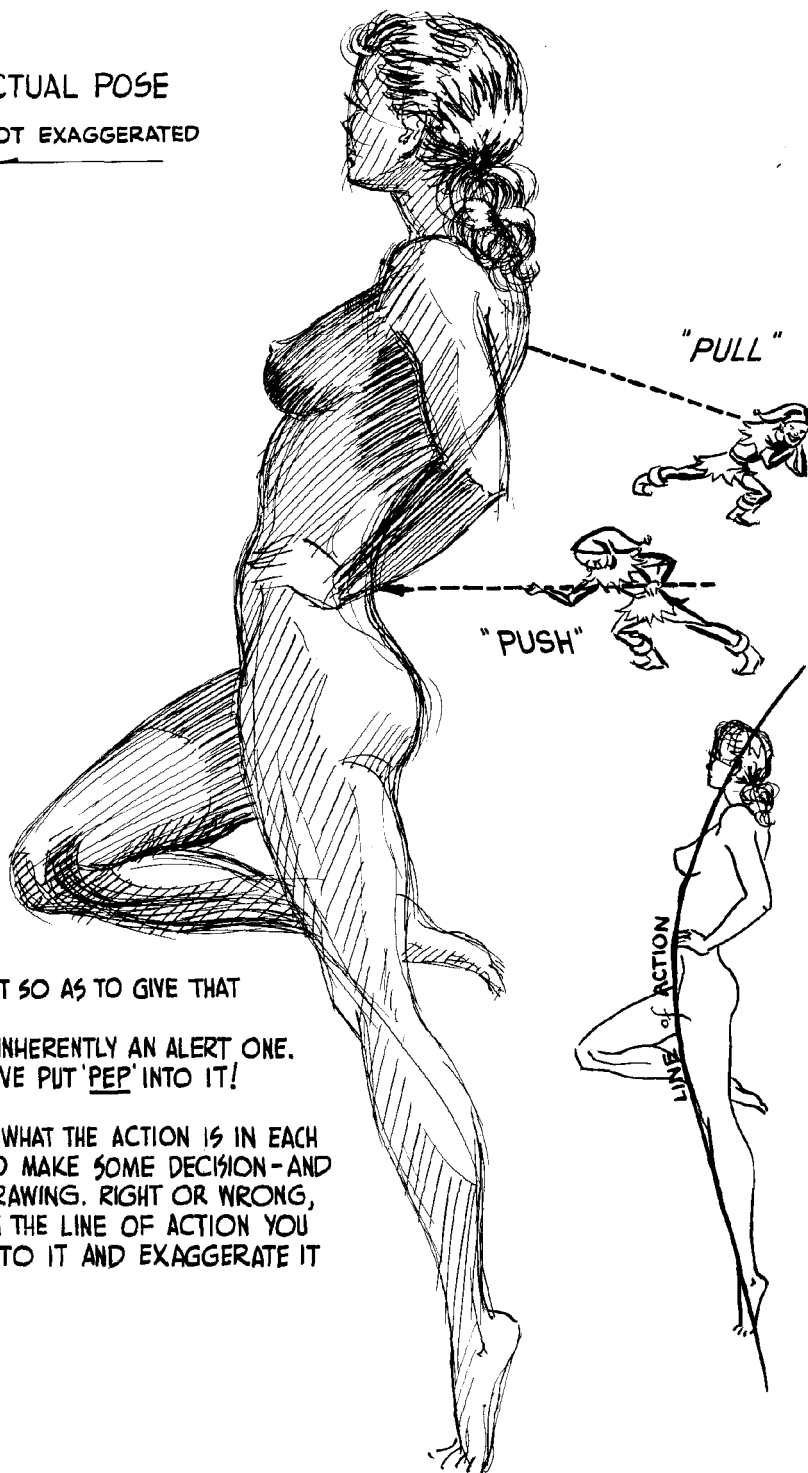




# DECIDE WHAT IS MOST CHARACTERISTIC ABOUT A POSE, THEN MAKE IT DO MORE.



ACTUAL POSE  
NOT EXAGGERATED



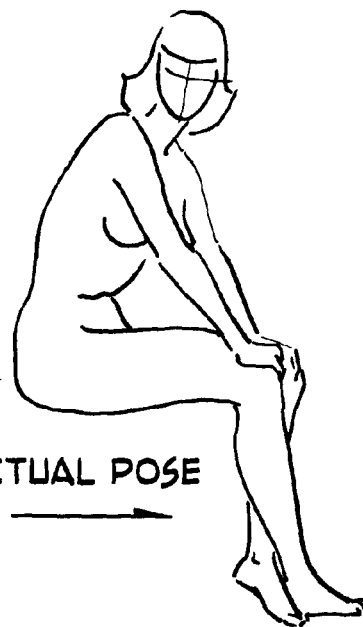
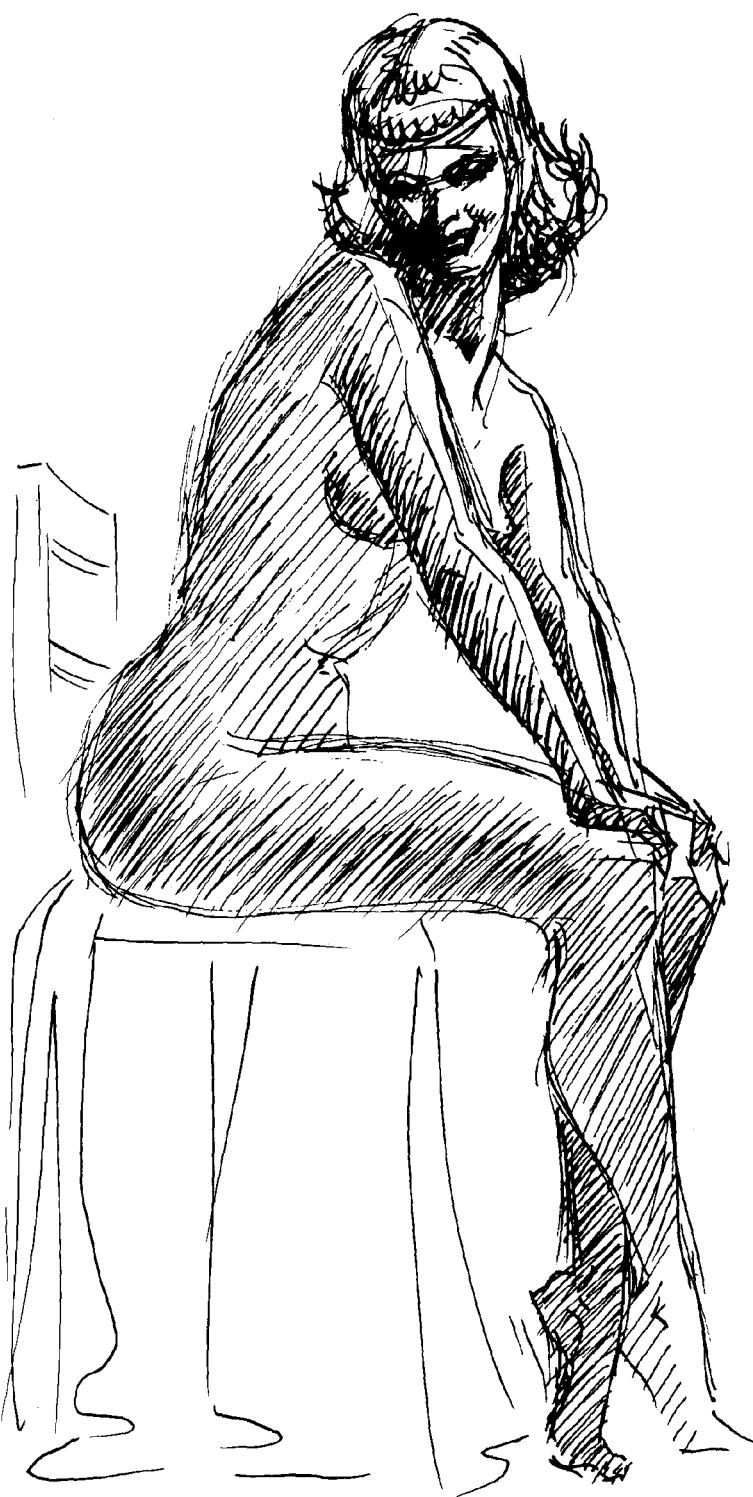
ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE, THE MOST OBVIOUS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE POSE IS THAT IT IS A RELAXED POSE, A "SLEEPY" POSE-THE MODEL COULD FALL ASLEEP IN A POSE LIKE THAT. THEREFORE, I DREW IT SO AS TO GIVE THAT EFFECT.

ON THIS PAGE, THE POSE IS INHERENTLY AN ALERT ONE. SO I'VE MADE IT MORE ALERT-I'VE PUT 'PEP' INTO IT!

IT IS UP TO YOU TO JUDGE WHAT THE ACTION IS IN EACH POSE THAT YOU DRAW. BUT DO MAKE SOME DECISION-AND MAKE IT OBVIOUS IN YOUR DRAWING. RIGHT OR WRONG, DON'T BE HESITANT. DRAW IN THE LINE OF ACTION YOU THINK YOU SEE, THEN STICK TO IT AND EXAGGERATE IT IF NECESSARY.



# EXAGGERATE

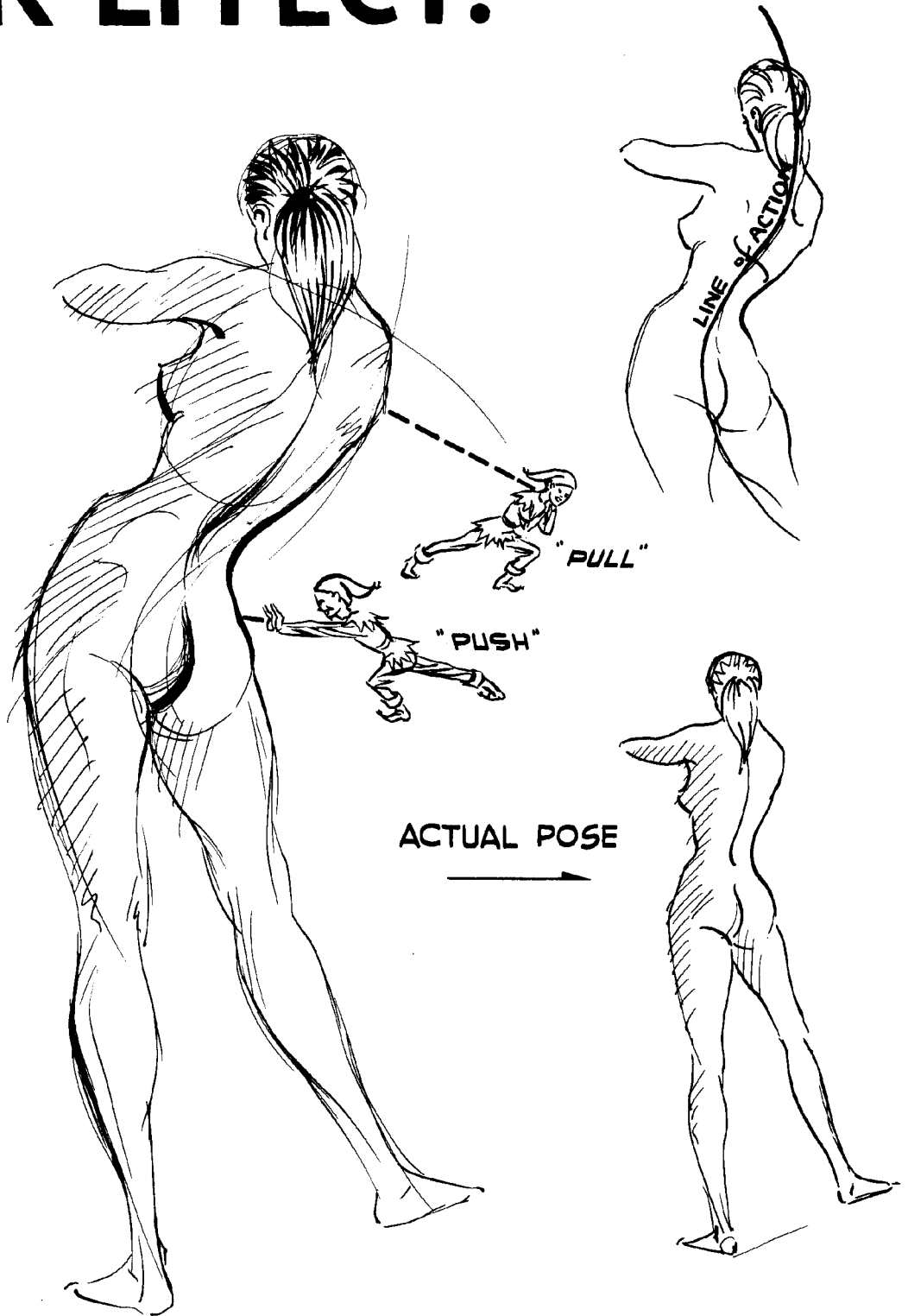


ACTUAL POSE

THE DIFFERENCE IN  
THE EXAGGERATED  
POSE IS SLIGHT,  
BUT VERY IMPOR-  
TANT.

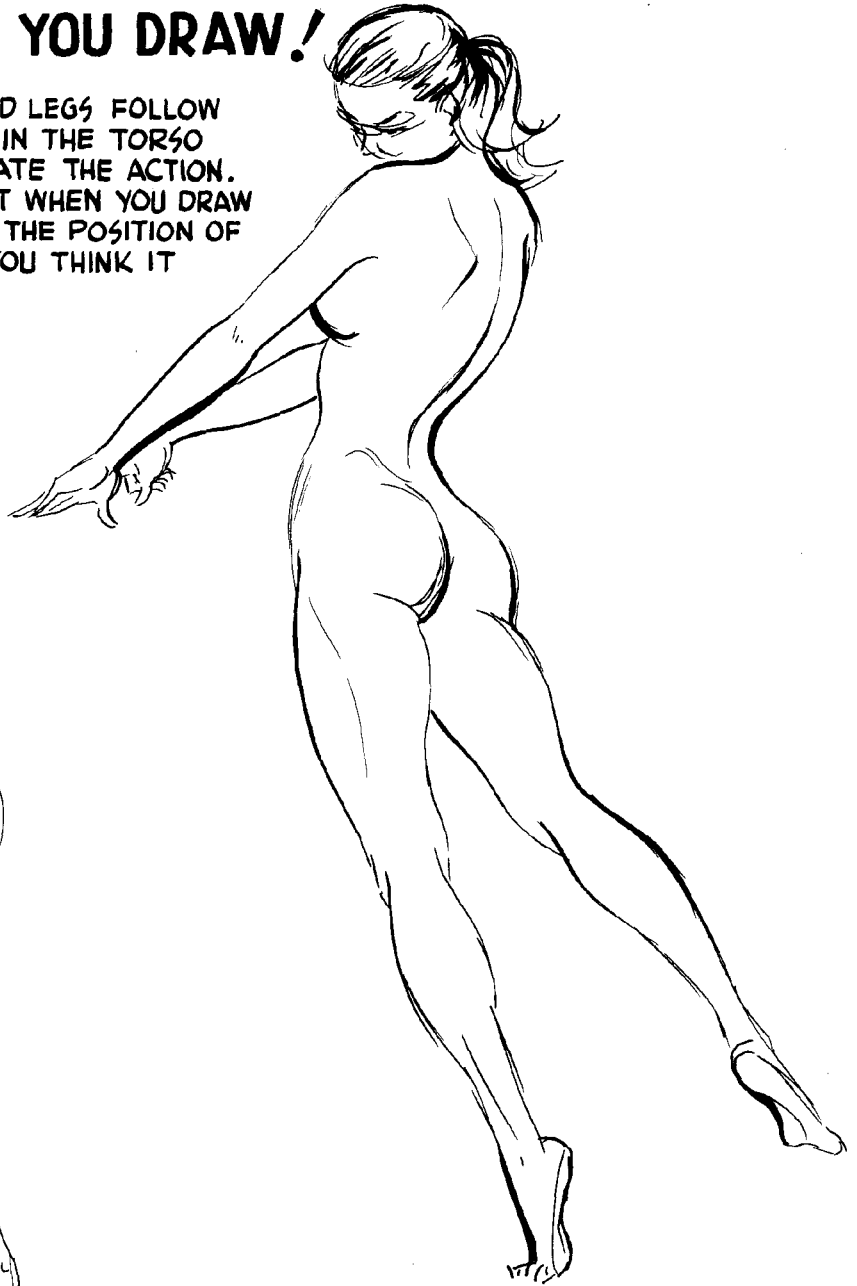


# FOR EFFECT!



# THINK BEFORE YOU DRAW!

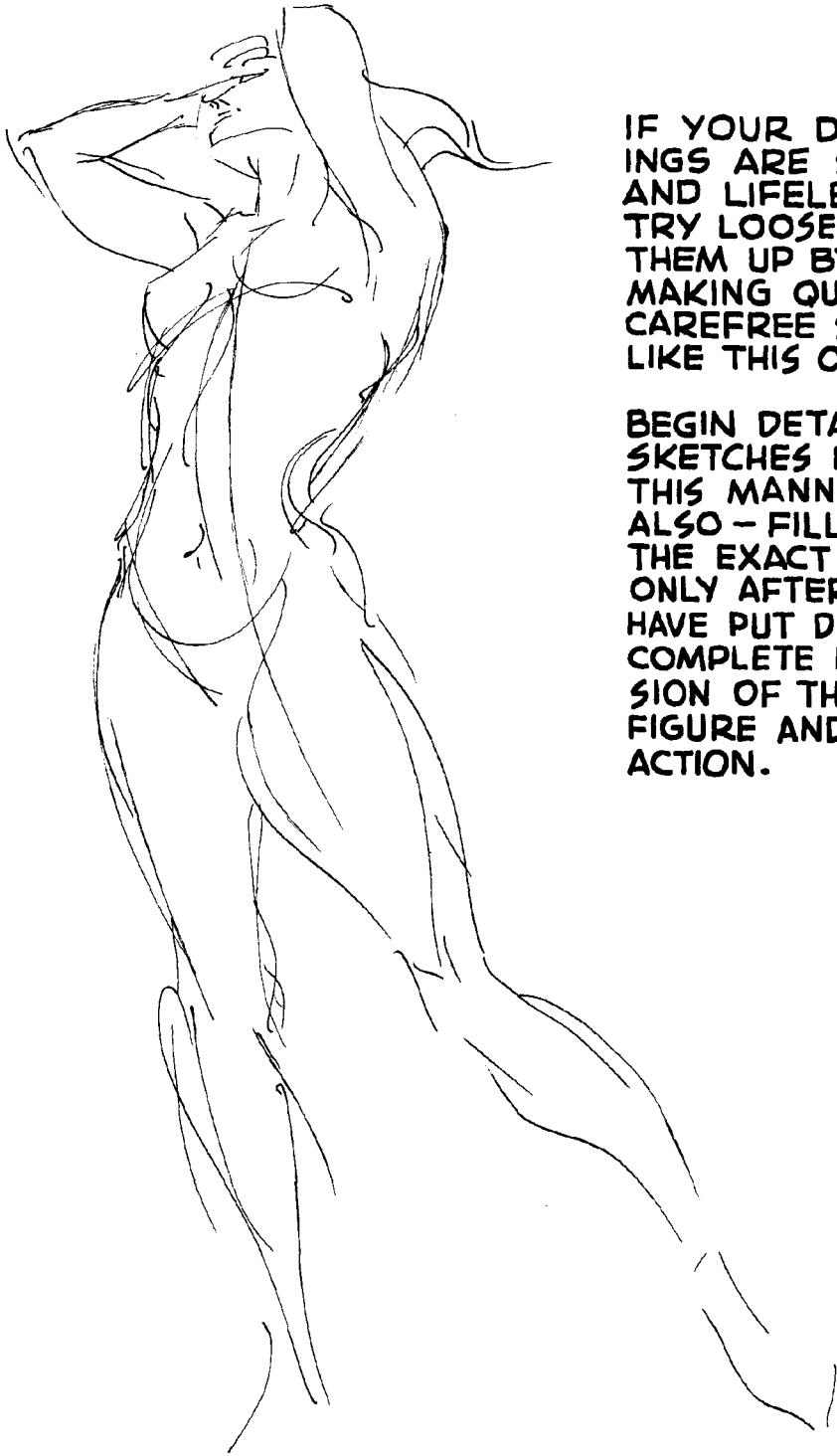
NOTE THAT THE ARMS AND LEGS FOLLOW THE ACTION EXPRESSED IN THE TORSO AND HELP TO ACCENTUATE THE ACTION. THINK ABOUT THAT FACT WHEN YOU DRAW A FIGURE, AND CHANGE THE POSITION OF AN ARM OR A LEG IF YOU THINK IT WILL HELP.



DON'T BE AFRAID - BE BOLD! AN ARTIST WHO IS A SLAVE TO WHAT HE ACTUALLY SEES BEFORE HIM WILL DRAW STIFF-LOOKING FIGURES.

## USE YOUR HEAD FIRST, YOUR EYES SECOND





IF YOUR DRAWINGS ARE STIFF AND LIFELESS, TRY LOOSENING THEM UP BY MAKING QUICK, CAREFREE SKETCHES LIKE THIS ONE.

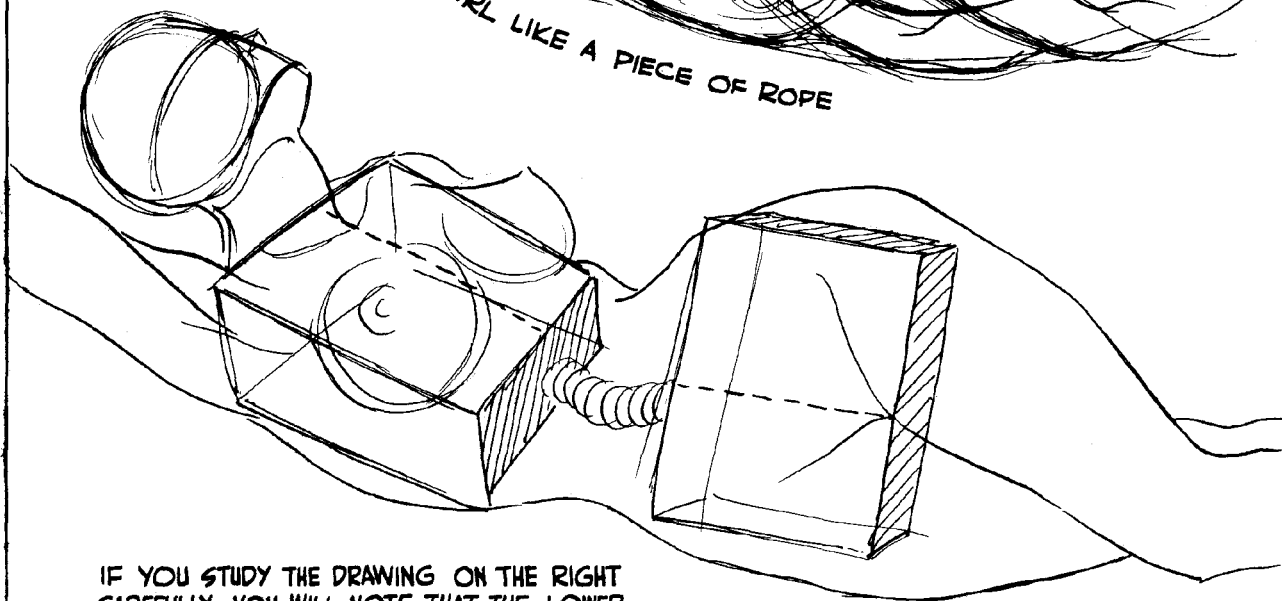
BEGIN DETAILED SKETCHES IN THIS MANNER, ALSO - FILL IN THE EXACT CONTOUR ONLY AFTER YOU HAVE PUT DOWN A COMPLETE IMPRESSION OF THE FIGURE AND ITS ACTION.

STUDENTS USUALLY HAVE DIFFICULTY DRAWING THE FIGURE IN RECLINING POSES. THE RESULTS OFTEN LOOK LIKE A CAKE THAT HAS FALLEN IN THE OVEN.

# The Reclining Figure

NOTE SWIRLING ACTION LINES IN THIS DRAWING. TRY TURNING YOUR DRAWING ON END, AS IF THE FIGURE WERE STANDING: YOU MAY FIND IT EASIER TO SEE YOUR MISTAKES IN DRAWING FROM THAT ANGLE.

THE BODY CAN SWIRL LIKE A PIECE OF ROPE



IF YOU STUDY THE DRAWING ON THE RIGHT CAREFULLY, YOU WILL NOTE THAT THE LOWER PORTION OF THE TORSO IS DECIDEDLY TIPPED, WHEREAS THE UPPER PORTION LIES FLAT.

TO EXPLAIN IT MORE CLEARLY, SEE THE DIAGRAM ABOVE. THE BOXES REPRESENT THE UPPER AND LOWER SECTIONS OF THE TORSO.





# ***DON'T BE "FINICKY" ABOUT SHADING YOUR DRAWINGS!***

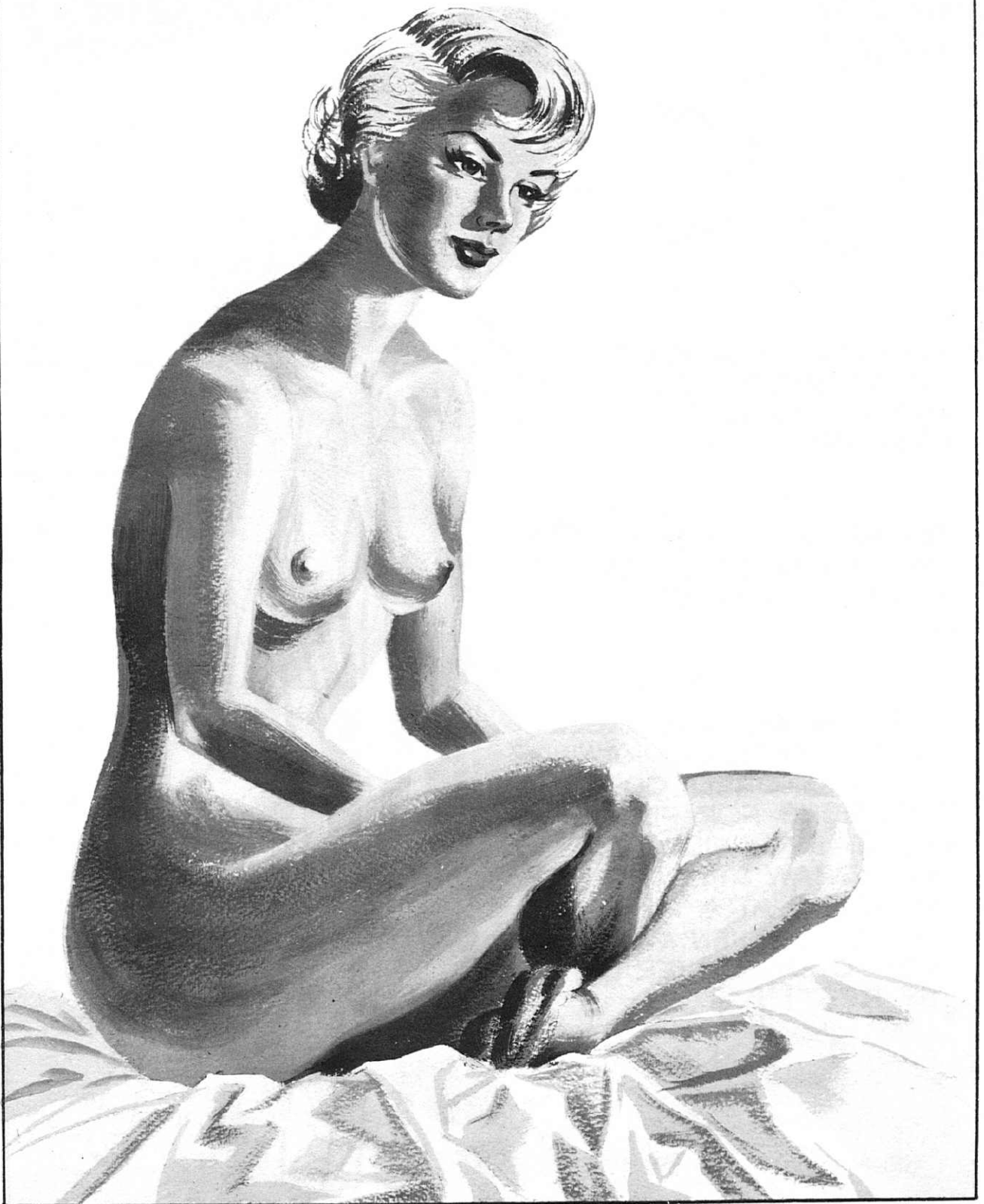
**A QUICK SIMPLE SKETCH**

**LIKE THIS.....**



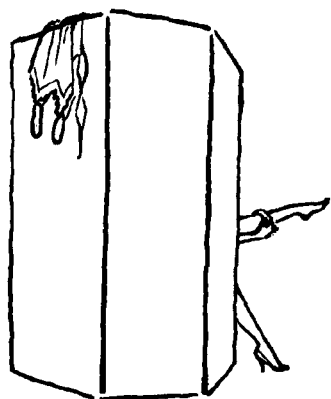


...CAN BE DEVELOPED INTO A FULLY RENDERED  
DRAWING LIKE THIS.



YOU WILL PERHAPS FIND THIS HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT  
IT'S CLOTHES THAT MAKE.....

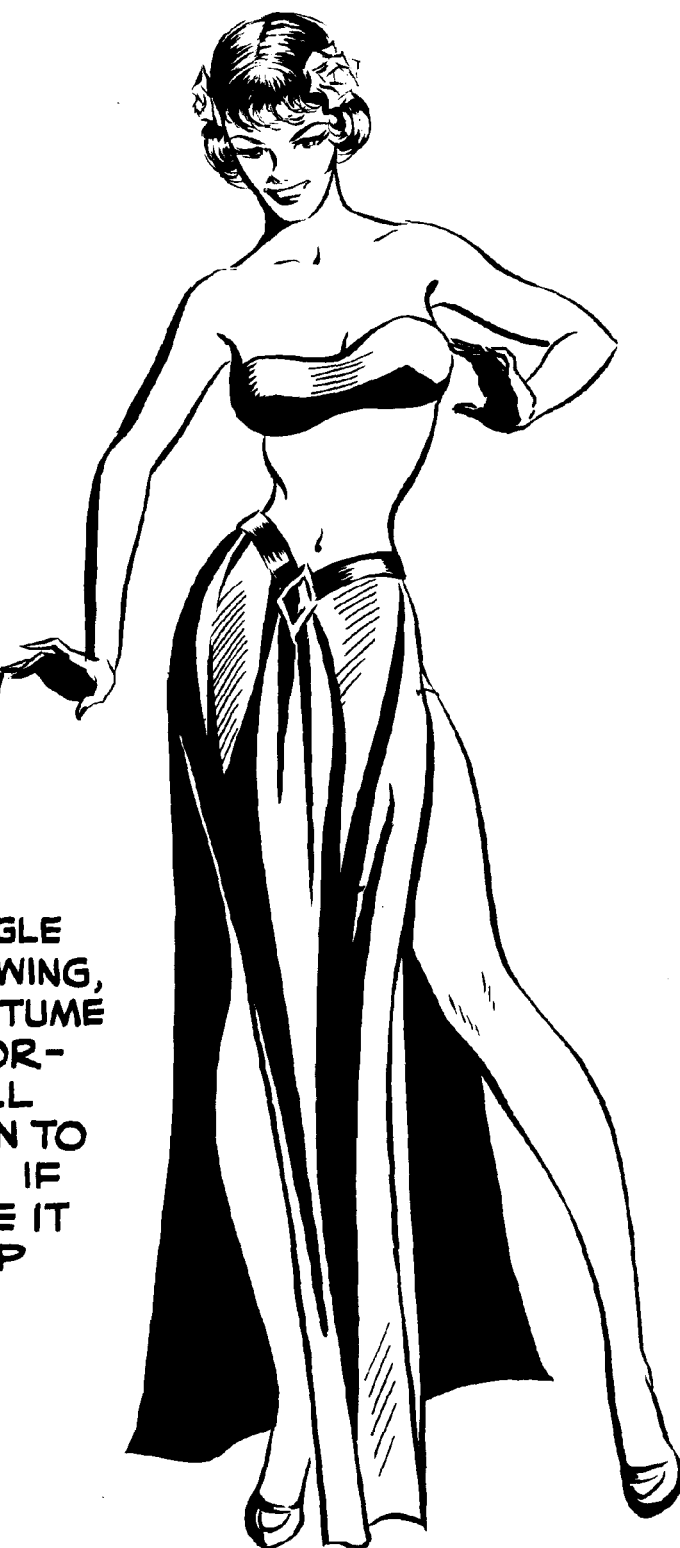
# THE PIN-UP GIRL!



TO CHANGE A NUDE  
TO A PIN-UP, YOU  
MUST ADD SOME  
CLOTHES.

THERE IS NO MYSTERY  
ABOUT A NUDE; THERE  
IS ABOUT A GOOD  
PIN-UP.

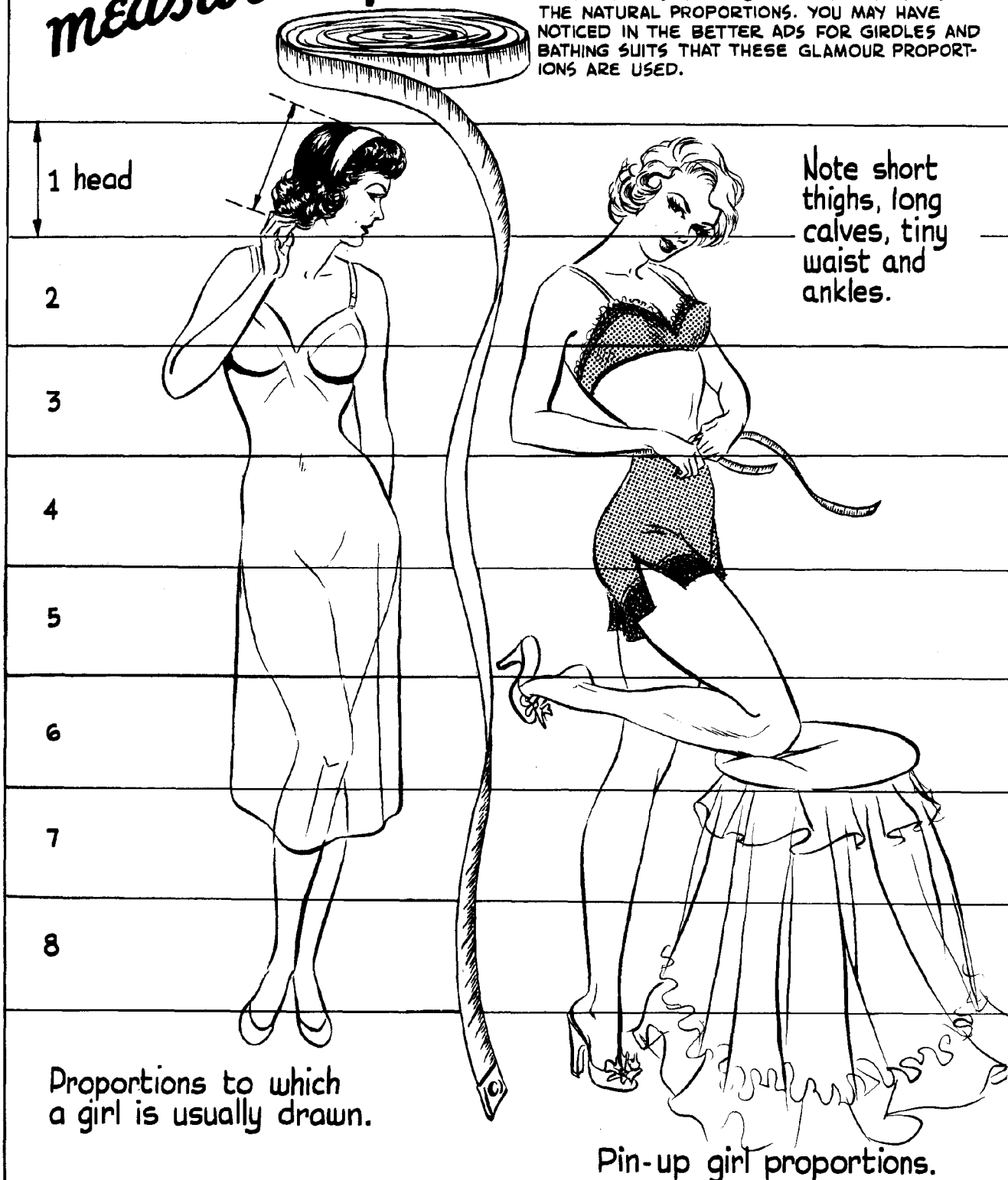
THERE IS ANOTHER ANGLE  
TO THIS TYPE OF DRAWING,  
OFTEN IGNORED. COSTUME  
DESIGNERS FOR FLOOR-  
SHOWS ETC., WILL TELL  
YOU - DRAW ATTENTION TO  
ONE THING AT A TIME! IF  
IT'S LEGS, THEN MAKE IT  
LEGS ONLY - COVER UP  
THE REST!





# How does she measure up?

GLAMOUR GIRLS ARE USUALLY DRAWN TO SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT PROPORTIONS. SOME OF THE BEST PIN-UPS ARE REALLY AMAZINGLY EXAGGERATED—LONG LEGS, TINY WAIST, AND SO ON. THE CHART BELOW WILL SHOW YOU IN WHAT WAY TO DISTORT THE NATURAL PROPORTIONS. YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED IN THE BETTER ADS FOR GIRDLES AND BATHING SUITS THAT THESE GLAMOUR PROPORTIONS ARE USED.



THINK UP CUTE  
COSTUME IDEAS FOR  
GLAMOUR GIRLS. PLACE  
THE FIGURES WITH THE  
APPROPRIATE PROPS,  
AS ON THIS PAGE AND  
THE ONE OPPOSITE.





NOTICE THE PROPS IN PIN-UP  
DRAWINGS THAT YOU SEE. THEY  
ARE SURPRISINGLY IMPORTANT  
TO THE IMPACT OF THE  
DRAWINGS.



# *High Heels*

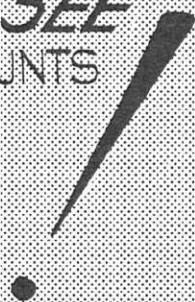
ARE STANDARD EQUIPMENT  
FOR THE GLAMOUR GIRL.  
BUT THEY'RE DIFFICULT TO  
DRAW.







*Remember...*  
IN THE  
GLAMOUR DEPT.  
IT'S WHAT YOU  
***DON'T SEE***  
THAT COUNTS



# "Wonder what she'd look like in clothes?"

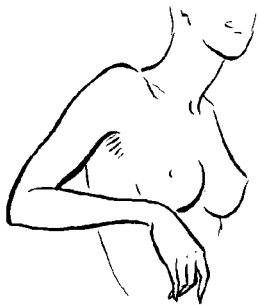
YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD THAT ONE BEFORE. WELL, WHY DON'T YOU FIND OUT? TRY PUTTING CLOTHES ON YOUR FIGURE DRAWINGS.

YOU FIRST SAW THIS FIGURE ON PAGE 11. ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE, I HAVE PUT CLOTHES ON HER, ATTEMPTING NOT TO LOSE THE EFFECT OF THE FIGURE DRAWING UNDERNEATH.

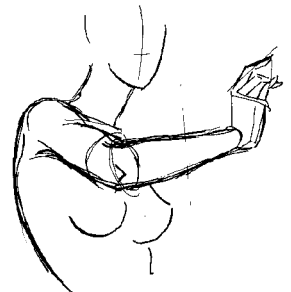
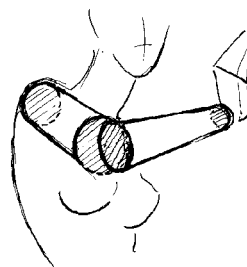
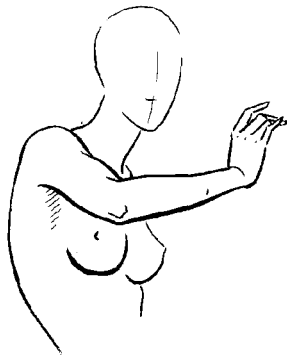
DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE LEGS DO NOT SHOW, THEIR POSITION IS SUGGESTED IN THE WAY IN WHICH THE SKIRT IS ARRANGED. ALWAYS DRAW IN THE LEGS UNDER A SKIRT, WHETHER THEY ARE SEEN AT ALL OR NOT.

USE REAL FASHIONS - DRESSES YOU HAVE SEE OR SEEN ADVERTIZED. IT WILL MAKE YOUR DRAWING LOOK AUTHENTIC; VERY FEW PEOPLE CAN JUST "THINK UP" FASHIONS.

## TO CHANGE THIS



INTO THIS.....

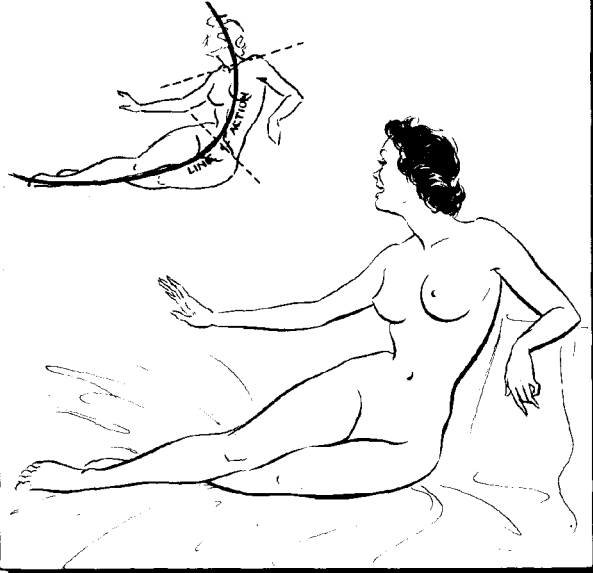


**DRAW CYLINDERS, THEN FINISH.**

IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT YOU FIND THE SWING OF THE BODY IN SEATED POSES. IF YOU STRESS THE LINE OF ACTION IN SEATED FIGURES, THEY WILL APPEAR MORE LIFE-LIKE.

TO THOSE WHOSE KNOWLEDGE OF ANATOMY IS NOT YET TOO ADVANCED I WOULD SAY THAT THERE IS NOTHING THAT WILL DO MORE TO IMPROVE YOUR FIGURE DRAWINGS THAN TO STRESS THE ACTION.

EXAGGERATE THE ACTION IF NECESSARY!



AS YOU NOTICE, I CHANGED THE POSITION OF ONE OF HER ARMS. THIS IS NOT AS DIFFICULT TO DO AS YOU MAY IMAGINE. DRAW CYLINDERS FOR THE PARTS, AS SHOWN, THEN ADD DETAIL. A FORESHORTENED ARM OR LEG IS JUST A FORESHORTENED CYLINDER- DON'T LET IT SCARE YOU.

ESPECIALLY WHEN DRAWING WITHOUT A  
MODEL, I FIND IT HELPFUL TO DRAW A  
LITTLE GADGET LIKE THIS TO REMIND  
ME OF THE SOURCE OF LIGHT I'VE  
CHOSEN.





# *Make Quick Sketches...*

OF YOUR FRIENDS, TO LEARN HOW WRINKLES ARRANGE THEMSELVES INTO PATTERNS ON THE BODY.

NEVER SLAVISHLY COPY A PHOTOGRAPH. HOWEVER, FASHION PHOTOS ARE USEFUL TO SKETCH FROM AFTER YOU HAVE DRAWN THE FIGURE A GREAT DEAL. USE THEM FOR THE LATEST STYLES, IMPORTANT DETAILS OF WOMEN'S CLOTHING.

THERE IS AN EXCELLENT BOOK CALLED "DRAWING DRAPERY FROM HEAD TO TOE," BY CLIFF YOUNG. IT EXPLAINS HOW WRINKLES TEND TO FALL ON A FIGURE.



TRY TO KEEP THE ACTION  
OF THE FIGURE UNDERNEATH  
IN YOUR CLOTHED SKETCHES.

IT IS SUGGESTED THAT EVEN  
IN QUICK SKETCHES OF CLOTHES  
YOU DRAW IN THE FIGURE FIRST,  
THEN THE CLOTHES.

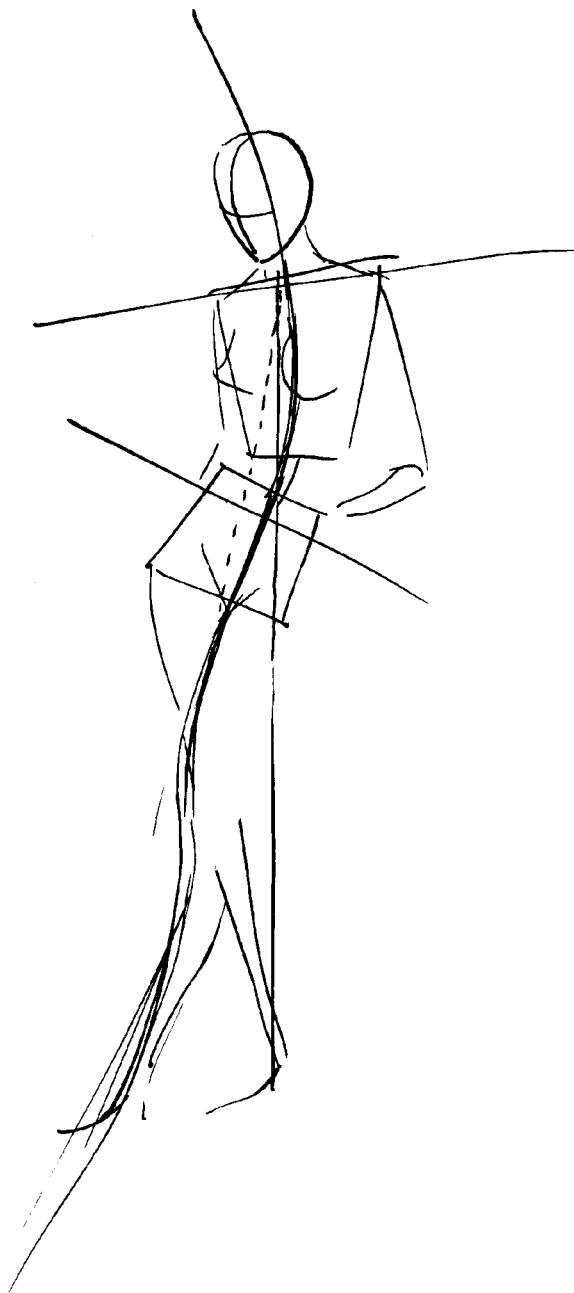


WORK ALL OVER THE  
FIGURE AT ONCE!

NOTE STAR-SHAPED  
PATTERN WHERE KNEE  
JUTS FORWARD.

# *Study Walking Poses....*

WALKING POSES EXPRESS  
PERSONALITY AND MOOD -  
KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR  
IDEAS!







ON THIS PAGE, THE WAY  
THE DRESS IS DRAWN, AS  
WELL AS THE FIGURE DRAWING  
UNDERNEATH, MAKE HER LOOK  
AS IF SHE WERE IN A HURRY.

NOTE THAT THE WRINKLES  
IN THE BLOUSE ARE DRAWN  
SHARPLY, TIGHTLY, EXPRESSING  
TENSION IN THE MATERIAL.

# ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE IS A PICTURE THAT IS MADE BY AN ACTIVE FIGURE DRAWING.

Take a figure sketch:

Tighten up the lines

DO THAT ON A PIECE OF TRACING PAPER LAID OUT OVER YOUR DRAWING.

Think of an idea of what she could be doing

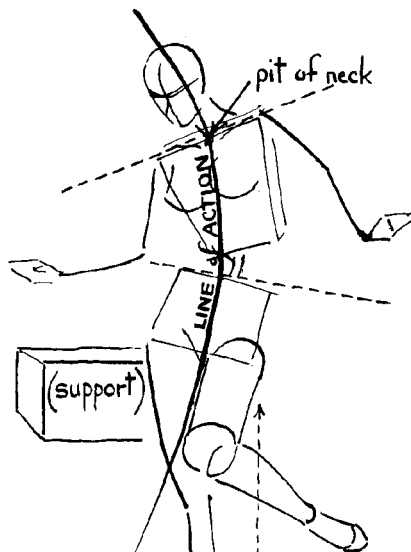
IN THIS CASE IT IS ALIGHTING FROM A CAR AND PETTING A DOG.

Make any necessary changes in the pose to fit the idea:

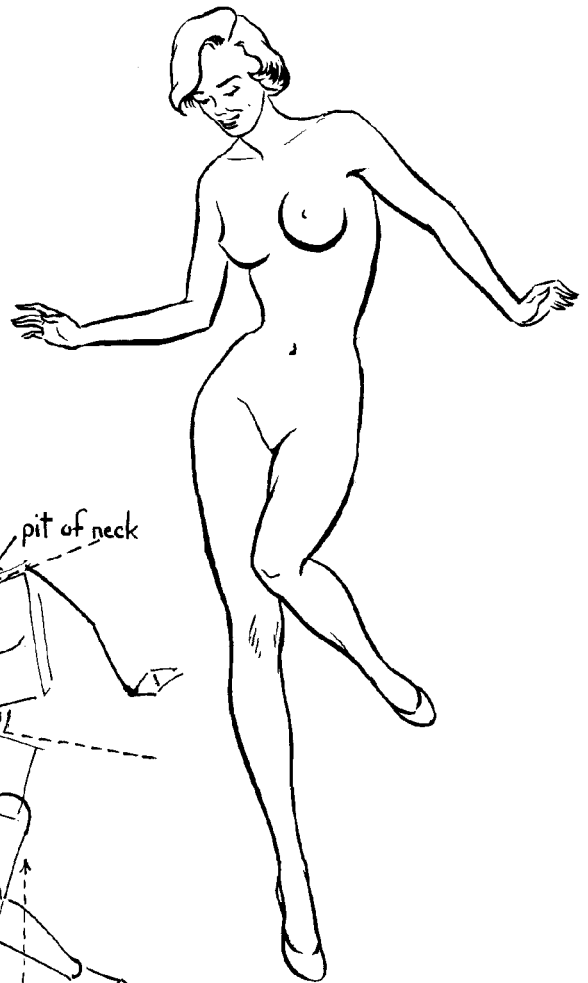
Get authentic costume ideas:

Then go to work !

YOU WILL PROBABLY ENJOY THIS IF YOU TRY IT, AND IT WILL DO WONDERS FOR YOUR FIGURE DRAWING.



NOTE THAT THE BALL OF HER RIGHT FOOT IS NOT DIRECTLY UNDER THE PIT OF HER NECK, AS IS USUALLY THE CASE IN STANDING FIGURES. THIS IS BECAUSE HER WEIGHT IS NOT COMPLETELY BALANCED BY ITSELF, SINCE SHE IS LEANING AGAINST THE CAR.



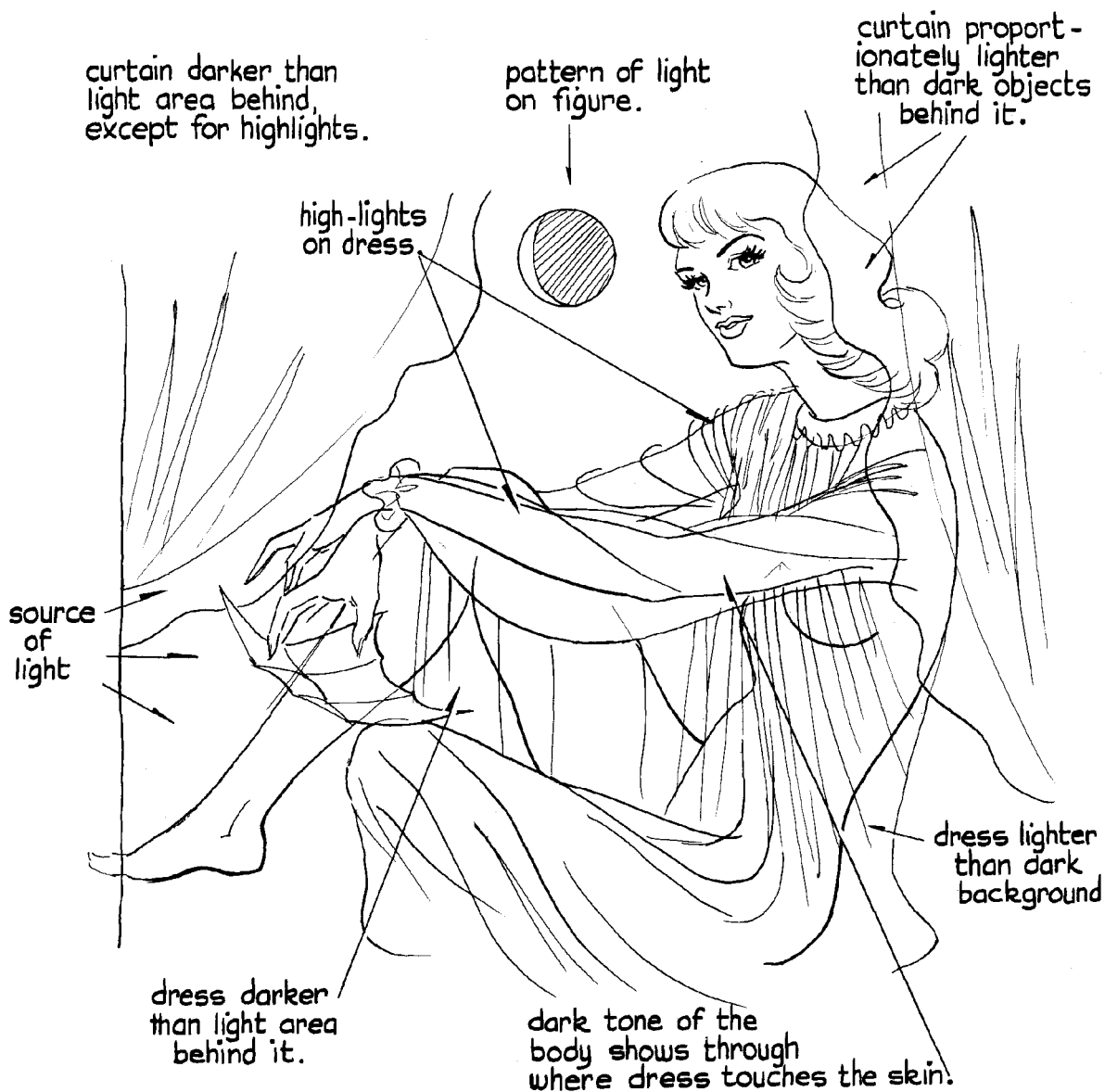




# *Study different materials and how to draw them. For instance..*

STARCHED COTTON FORMS SHARP-CORNERED FOLDS. SILK AND RAYON FALL LOOSELY, SOFTLY. SATIN HAS STRONG LIGHTS AND DARKS THAT MAKE IT SHINE. WOOL FORMS BIG, ROUND FOLDS.

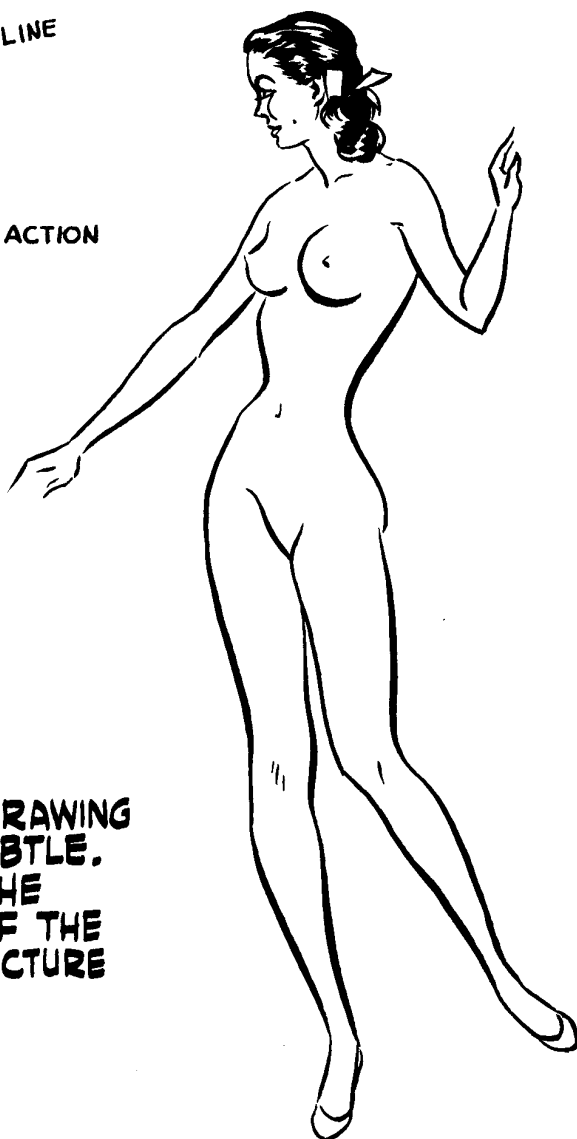
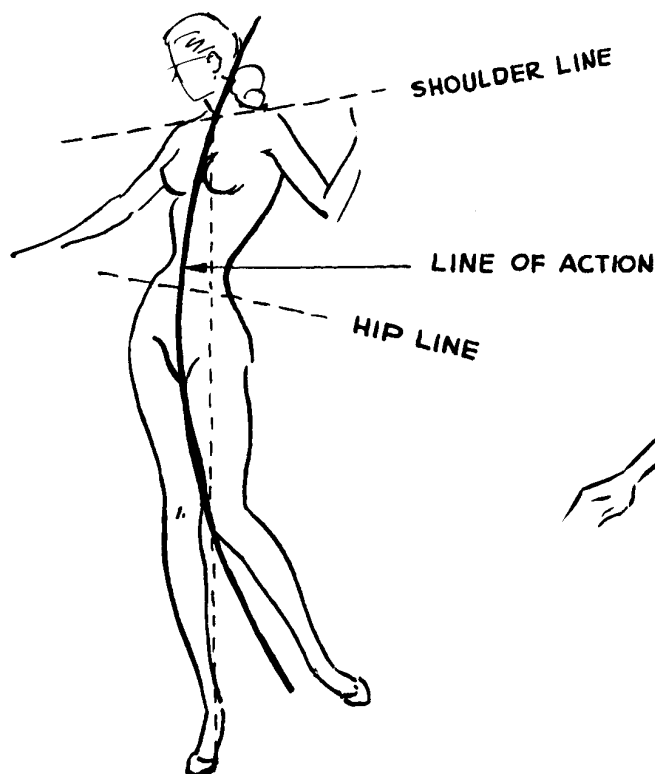
TRANSPARENCY-  
ON THE PAGE OPPOSITE  
YOU SEE A STUDY IN  
TRANSPARENCY. NOTE  
THESE FACTS







ADD INTERESTING BACKGROUNDS TO YOUR PICTURES. CLIP THEM FROM MAGAZINES, TAKE YOUR OWN PHOTOS. BUT ONCE AGAIN - DON'T COPY RIGIDLY FROM PHOTOS! I USED THIS SNAPSHOT I HAD TAKEN FOR THE DRAWING ON THE RIGHT. NOTE THAT I DID NOT USE THE PHOTOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE, BUT A MODIFIED VERSION INSTEAD. NOTE ALSO THAT I OMITTED MOST OF THE DETAIL.



THE ACTION IN THE FIGURE DRAWING FOR THIS PICTURE IS VERY SUBTLE. BUT IF I HAD NOT DRAWN THE FIGURE UNDERNEATH, MUCH OF THE EFFECT, OR IMPACT, OF THE PICTURE WOULD BE LOST.





...I've enjoyed talking to  
you. I hope you will  
now get as much pleasure  
from drawing active  
figures as I have.

Best Wishes,  
Cecile Hardy

