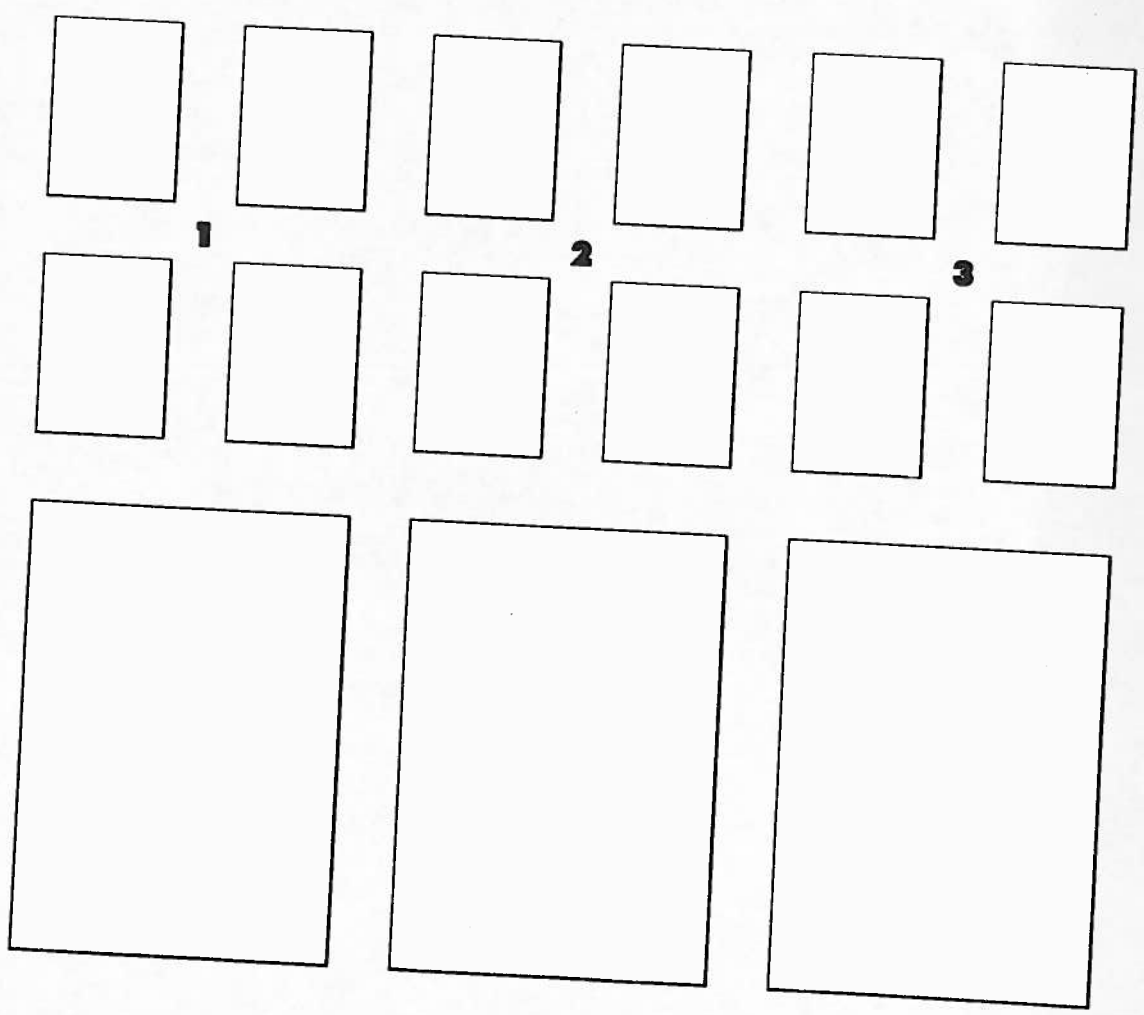


BLACK

WHITE

Negative space is an important aspect of graphic design. An equivalent of this is the Zen idea that the essence of a bowl is the part that is missing. Apply this idea to the graphic technique of using only negative shapes and visualize three of the following subjects: salt, ghost, cloud(s), whipped cream, Moby Dick, jeans, sugar, potter, beer, flour, smoke, vanilla ice-cream cone, and steam. The actual subjects themselves should not be drawn. Only the negative space can make for visually intriguing solutions. As a design consideration, the chosen images may be cropped. Use the smaller areas indicated for preliminary drawings and the larger areas for final executions.

1 2 3



BLACK AND WHITE PROBLEM:

The Zen concept that a bowl's essence is the part that is "missing" corresponds to the graphic concept of negative space. Apply this idea by using only negative shapes to interpret three of the following subjects visually: clouds, whipped cream, *Moby Dick*, *Jaws*, sugar, ghost, salt, polar bear, flour, smoke, vanilla ice-cream cone, and steam. The subjects themselves should not be drawn; only the surrounding negative space and possibly areas in shadow should be addressed, and only in the color black. As a design consideration, the images may be cropped to show only a portion of the subjects. Use the smaller areas for preliminary drawings and the larger areas for final executions.

Analysis: The idea of formulating an image by only addressing its background changes the habitual approach toward seeing. When viewers are led to focus solely on background and shadowed areas, it is the unmarked portion of the page—the white ground—that becomes magically transformed into a recognizable subject. The traditional image-making process is thereby reversed, with a greater emphasis on compositional concerns, negative-positive relationships, and formal reference.

These images tend to encourage viewers to reverse the images' negative and positive fields mentally, making the positive areas become negative and vice versa. The classic goblet-profiles image is a good example of this.

The study of volume and light is another area of exploration within this problem. Through the subtle articulation of light and shadow, an entire image can be implied. This allows the viewer to

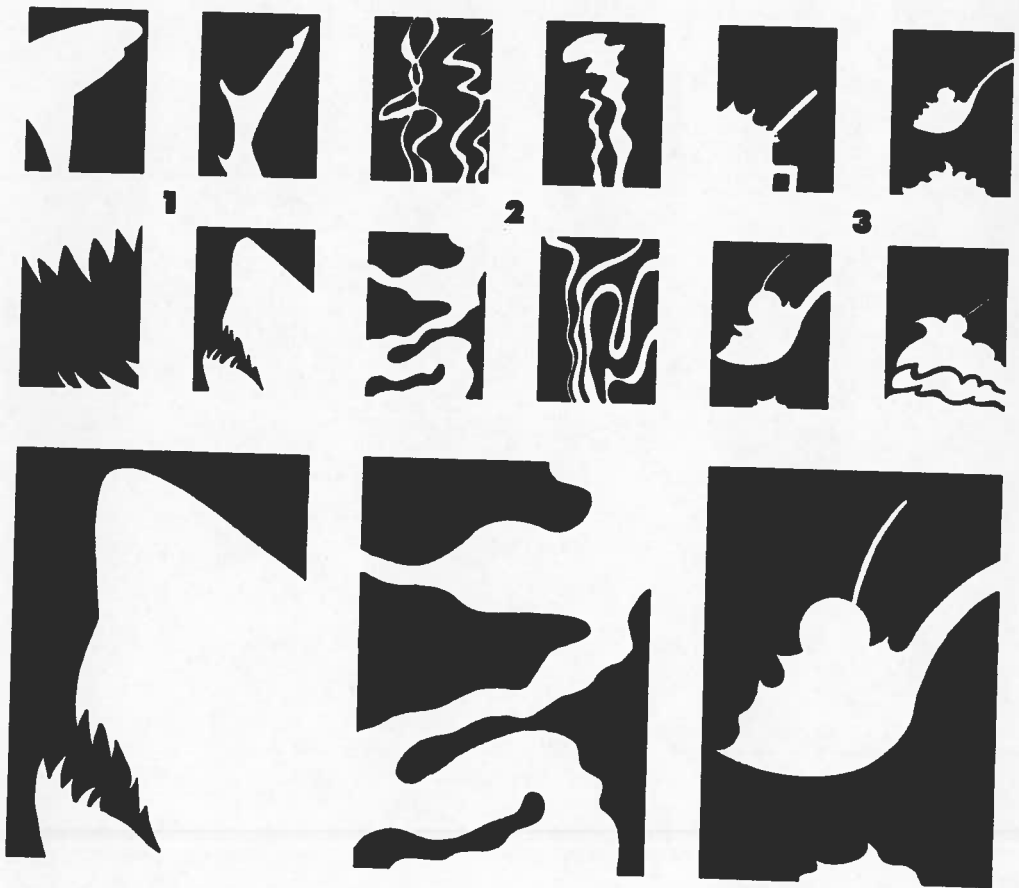
missing visual information, thereby becoming directly involved with the piece. This mechanism, like the concept of negative and positive forms reversing themselves, challenges the viewer's attention—which is the goal of visual communication.

Note: To clarify the meaning of what negative and positive relationships are, it should be understood that images appearing on the *page surface* are positive, while anything appearing farther back in space is negative. Black does not necessarily represent the negative space.

BLACK AND WHITE SOLUTIONS:

**BLACK
WHITE**

Negative space is an important aspect of graphic design. An equivalent of this is the Zen idea that the essence of a bowl is the part that is missing. Apply this idea to the graphic technique of using only negative shapes and visualize three (3) of the following subjects: clouds, whipped cream, Moby Dick, Jam, sugar grass, salt, paper, beer, flour, smoke, vanilla ice cream cone and steam. The actual subjects themselves should not be drawn. Only the negative space can make for visually intriguing solutions. As a design consideration, the chosen images may be cropped. Use the smaller areas indicated for preliminary drawings and the larger areas for final executions.



PROBLEMS: SOLUTIONS SERIES