Introduction to Photography
Project I: Photograms

The most direct way of understanding the action of light on light sensitive materials is to make a photogram. A photogram is made in the darkroom by placing objects on top of a photosensitive surface, exposing it to light and processing it. The photogram takes everyday objects and transforms them into something the human eye would not normally see. In this way the photogram is always unpredictable and unique, expressing its own rules of representation of objects in time and space, allowing for the viewer a new perspective.

There is no way of predicting the outcome of a photogram until you have some experience making them. You may find it is better to be surprised by your results and experiment freely. In choosing objects to use in making photograms you should try to imagine light passing around and or through them. Often the shadow an object makes is so different than the object that it is unrecognizable. Think about opaque, translucent and transparent objects. Black and white photographic paper will produce a black and white image, but it is more sensitive to some colors of light than others. The light will expose differently through colored transparent objects.

For this assignment you are to explore photography without the use of a camera. By using items that are of interest to you, create a minimum of 3 photograms that investigate the representation and perception of objects in space and time. They may be abstractions or narrative in nature, or simply exist as a reflection of the process of making the photogram.

DUE DATE: February 8th

The photographers we saw in class are:

William Henry Fox Talbot  Alexander Rodchenko  Elizibeth Bryant
Anne Atkins  Theodore Roszak  Martha Madigan
Christian Schad  Bruce Conner  Adam Fuss
Laszlo Moholy-Nagy  Arnold M. Gilbert  Robert Heinecken
Man Ray  Peter Goin  Gilbert & George

You will need the following for class on Tuesday, January 26th:

Photographic Paper
Penlight and some black paper and tape to make a funnel to control light
Objects which will block, transmit or distort light
8x10 piece of cardboard
Scissors
Hand towel