## Editing Software

**Adobe Photoshop.** This is proprietary and complex but super powerful. Remember: you don't have to understand all the tools to make good use of a few tools. Available on Pitt lab computers and students can get a 30-day free trial through Adobe (with option to subscribe monthly to the Creative Cloud after it expires). Adobe provides official tutorials for getting started. *https://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/tutorials.html*

* Where Photoshop features many tools and is capable of diverse, complex editing tasks, professional or prolific photographers may also use **Adobe Lightroom**, which is geared toward organizing libraries of photos and making quick, common edits.

**GIMP.** A top pick for free image manipulation software---moderately flexible, open source, cross-platform, with good support and many available plugins. *http://www.gimp.org/*

**Pixelmator.** Mac only, and not free, but you can get a 30-day trial, the full license is much more affordable than Adobe, and there's a pretty comprehensive tool set. *http://www.pixelmator.com/mac/*

**Pixlr.** This free iOS/web app is a little less flexible, but it still gives you way more control than you'd have without using dedicated image editing software. Much better than just using standard apps if you're working on something like an iPad. They also sell a relatively cheap desktop editor. *https://pixlr.com/*

**** Lynda.** So, this isn't editing software. It *is* a huge subscription-based collection of professionally produced technical tutorials that all Pitt students have access to---which makes it a great resource for anyone learning how to use editing software (or trying to troubleshoot a specific problem). *http://lynda.pitt.edu*

## Process Tips

****** Check out the list of **kinds of shots** in this photo essay assignment from a grad class in the CUNY school of journalism: *http://photo.journalism.cuny.edu/week-5/*

**Look for great work by professionals you respect; spend time just sitting with it.**
When a feature really captures your attention, Google the photographer, find out more.

*http://www.fastcodesign.com/3039881/exposure/the-24-best-photo-essays-of-2014*
*http://www.fastcodesign.com/3054576/the-22-best-photo-essays-of-2015*
*http://time.com/3687500/photojournalism-links-january/*

Visit **Lens, the photojournalism blog of The New York Times.**
*http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/*

"…presenting the finest and most interesting visual and multimedia reporting -- photographs, videos and slide shows. A showcase for Times photographers, it also seeks to highlight the best work of other newspapers, magazines and news and picture agencies…" Look at images. But read some content, too.

Features like this one on Nick Nixon offer new ways of thinking about photography:
*http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/06/08/the-photographers-eye-nicholas-nixon/*

**Foto Ruta,** a company dedicated to street photography and "creative seeing," offers five useful (simple) tips to think about. *http://foto-ruta.com/foto-rutas-guide-to-photo-essays/*

Here is one of my favorite points:

> Telling a story with images means you have to step outside the world in which you're only concerned about making the picture pretty. Stories must be both visual AND have accurate content. This means its a good idea to find out more about your topic before you go and document it. **Shoot informed.**

Here are couple more tips; these are adapted from **Bruce Herwig.**

> **It's nice not to be rushed –** Deadlines are a helpful motivator, but putting together a photo essay is not something to be rushed…Taking the photos is only the beginning. Plan on spending at least twice that amount on the rest of the project.
>
> **Sometimes you need to direct the shot you want to take –** A photos essay isn't necessarily photojournalism where you are just documenting what you see. You have flexibility to direct the outcome to get what you need.
>
> **Editing is where the real work happens –** This is can be a time consuming process. [Often I have] over 1,000 photos to sort through to end up with about 20. Always be thinking, which photos are "strongest" and which photos will help you tell the story.
>
> **Color correct for consistency –** When you have multiple cameras, locations and times of day, etc., it's easy to have your essay look disjointed. You don't want the change to be a distraction. One person should be in charge of color correcting so there is a similar look for the entire essay.
>
> > * Here's one beginner's guide, if you're using Photoshop: *http://photoshopcs.com/Tutorials/Color_Correction/technique.html*

## Presentation Options

**Option One.**

**Use software you're already familiar with.** Microsoft **Word** or **Powerpoint** can work, if you pay close attention to margins and arrangement. (Hint: in Word, try selecting image position 'behind text' for everything, move items around with the arrow keys, and use text boxes for your captions.)

You might customize your finished product by choosing a non-standard page size in the *Format* > *Document* menu, something like 8x8 or 8x14. When you finish, print/save your presentation as a PDF.

If you use Powerpoint, consider the relative benefits of saving your slides in PDF form vs. setting slide advancement timing and exporting your photo essay slideshow as a movie that automatically advances. A presentation tool like **Prezi** (*https://prezi.com/*) or SlideShare could work well for this assignment, too.

**Option Two.**

Create a Website or a **Wordpress** blog to host your images. Select a theme that is meant to support a photography portfolio, one that doesn't make your page look like a blog. I never recommend paying for themes, and some of the best ones out there aren't free, but looking at lists like this can give you a sense of what is possible: *https://colorlib.com/wp/photography-wordpress-themes/*

**Option Three.**

Experiment with a digital storytelling platform like **The Atavist** (*https://atavist.com/)* or **New Hive** (*http://newhive.com/* - especially good if you like "weird" aesthetics…there is a bit of a learning curve).

Something like **Interlude** would let you create a feature that functions like an interactive video (*https://interlude.fm/*).

If you're a regular photography and will use the service later on and don't mind the investment, paying into the community on a site like **Exposure** (*https://exposure.co/*) could be a good choice. (Search the app store.)