

# **Reading The Pictures**

## **Reading the Pictures of COVID-19: Teaching and Learning Resources**

Created By:

**Katie Irwin, Ph.D.**

Academic Outreach and Development, Reading the Pictures

July 2020

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Lesson Plan: Seeing COVID-19 in Memorialized Spaces .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Class Activities</b>	
Activity #1: Visual Framing of Workplace Safety .....	5
Activity #2: Reading a Photograph for Visual Contrasts .....	7
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	
Coronavirus and Everyday Life .....	9
Race .....	10
Visual and Emotional Impact .....	11
Time .....	12
Seeing COVID Trauma .....	13
<b>Short-Term Project: Visual Analysis of COVID-19 .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Additional Viewing and Reading Recommendations .....</b>	<b>20</b>

## Lesson Plan: Seeing COVID-19 in Memorialized Spaces

**Course Level:** Undergraduate or Graduate

**Time Required:** One 90-minute class or two 50-minute classes

**Relevant Topics:** Photography; Memory; Symbolism; History; Public Memorials

**For this lesson, teachers will need:**

- Todd Heisler’s photograph depicting a man through the New York City AIDS Memorial
  - [Individual image and analysis](#), Reading the Pictures, April 13, 2020
  - [Larger photo essay](#), *The New York Times*, April 9, 2020

**Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the class period, students will be able to:

- Analyze a photograph’s compositional features;
- Connect the photograph’s composition to broader social issues;
- Discuss how framing, narrative, and time function in a photograph;
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of seeing overlapping health crises in a single image.

### Part 1: Understanding Composition

Display Todd Heisler’s photograph that shows a man standing in the street, framed by the New York City AIDS Memorial. **Do not reveal the caption or details about the photo.** Divide students into small groups of 3-5 and ask your students to analyze the photo’s composition.

- What populates the photograph? What are we looking at?
- What colors are present? How intense or subdued are they?
- How is the photograph organized spatially? What or who gets to take up space? What appears in the foreground and background?
- As a viewer, how are you positioned in relation to the subject of the image? In what ways does your position influence your relationship to the image and its subjects?
- Where does light illuminate the scene? What is its source? Are darkness and shadows present? What is the interaction between light and dark?
- Given these compositional features, what is the overall “feel” of the image? When you observe it, what emotions are activated in you as a viewer?

Come back together as a full class and have students share their responses. Together, the class conducts a compositional analysis of the individual image.

## Part 2: Considering Framing, Narrative, and Time

With Heisler’s photo still displayed, provide the context for the image. Share the caption given in *The New York Times* photo essay: “The New York City AIDS Memorial at St. Vincent’s Triangle in Manhattan.”

Have students reconvene in their small groups. Knowing that they are looking at a photo of the AIDS Memorial as part of a visual essay on the coronavirus, have your students discuss the following elements:

- **Framing:** How does the structure of the AIDS Memorial frame the scene? What does that framing invite you to consider? Does the photo’s framing influence your interpretation?
- **Narrative:** How do lines function? Where do they direct your eyes? How do those lines construct a visual narrative that connects the AIDS crisis to COVID-19?
- **Time:** This photograph activates multiple registers of time – Past, present, and future. Where are these temporal moments present? How do they enhance the narrative that the photo constructs? In what ways does the photograph collapse time?

Reunite as a full class and have students share their insights about framing, narrative, and time. Then, weave in the day’s summary questions. Have students share their responses as a full group. (*This portion may be adapted to a homework or follow-up assignment.*)

### Summary Questions:

- 1) We began this lesson by analyzing the compositional features of Todd Heisler’s photograph, and then we considered the photo’s broader social and political interpretations, based on an analysis of framing, narrative, and time. How does reading the composition of an image enhance your understanding of that image? If we had not accounted for the photo’s composition, what might we have missed in our overall analysis?
- 2) Today’s exercise reveals how photographs can point us to see contemporary crises through the lens of previous health crises. In what ways is this valuable? What are the limits of this type of analysis?

### Additional Resources:

- To extend this lesson, supplement Todd Heisler’s photograph with:
  - [Chatting the Pictures, May 15, 2020](#). Photo #1: New York City AIDS Memorial Park.
    - Individual segment: <https://www.instagram.com/tv/CAYCb5vgSkp/>
  - [Chatting the Pictures, April 3, 2020](#). Photo #2: Temporary Homeless “Shelter” in Las Vegas. (The discussion runs from 3:30 – 7:15.)
- The New York City AIDS Memorial
  - [About the Memorial](#)
  - [Design](#)

## Class Activities

### Activity #1: Visual Framing of Workplace Safety

**Course Level:** Undergraduate or Graduate

**Time Required:** Approximately 30-45 minutes

**Relevant Topics:** Composition; Framing; Narrative; Ethics

This activity gets students to understand how a photograph's visual features construct a particular narrative. It also asks students to recognize the consequences of such visual framing.

Teachers will need:

- Tyson Foods handout photo of company workers at a poultry processing facility in Camilla, Georgia ([Chatting the Pictures, May 2, 2020](#))
  - This photo appears as Photo #1 in the photo edit

1) Divide students into small groups of 3-5 and display the Tyson Foods workers photo. **Provide the caption, but do not reveal who made the image.** (From Chatting the Pictures, the caption reads: "Tyson Foods workers at the company's poultry processing plant in Camilla, Georgia.")

2) Ask students to discuss the following questions in their small groups:

- What is this a picture of? Who and what are you looking at? Be as specific as possible.
- Describe the scene: What is the environment like? Is there anything that catches your eye or seems noteworthy?
- Knowing that this photo was made during the coronavirus outbreak, how would you assess the health and safety practices depicted in the photo? Identify specific items and actions that support your assessment.
- Who do you think made this image? What visual cues point you in that direction?

3) After 10-15 minutes, have students share their group's initial assessments of the photo.

4) Next, reveal that Tyson Foods made and circulated the photo. [View the discussion of this photo on Chatting the Pictures.](#)

5) Have students reflect on the following questions, either in their small groups or individually as a writing prompt:

- How does the photo visually frame Tyson Foods amid the coronavirus?
- Why is this photo one that Tyson Foods would create and circulate? How is this visual portrayal beneficial for the company?
- Can you identify any ethical concerns here?

- Has your overall assessment of the photo changed throughout this activity? How so?

6) Optional: To extend this activity, have students reimagine the Tyson Foods handout photo. If they were in charge of creating a photograph that communicated the company's approach to ensuring employee wellbeing and a safe working environment, what would that photo look like? Ask them to explain why they incorporated certain features and how those features differ from those in the original Tyson Foods handout photo.

## Activity #2: Reading a Photograph for Visual Contrasts

**Course Level:** Undergraduate or Graduate

**Time Required:** Approximately 45 minutes

**Relevant Topics:** Composition; Visual Contrasts; Irony; History

This activity gets students to consider the composition of an individual photo, the photo's broader social and political implications, and its connection to historical imagery.

Teachers will need:

- [Tom Brenner's photo](#) that depicts two men experiencing homelessness sitting on the floor of Union Station in Washington, D.C.

1) Display Tom Brenner's photo and its accompanying caption: "A homeless man lying on the floor of Union Station in Washington, USA."

2) Divide students into groups of 3-5 and ask them to explore the following questions:

- Who and what appears in the photo?
- What is the scene like? What items appear? What are the structures like?
- How do light and darkness function in the image? What parts of the image are most illuminated, and how does the light influence what your eye is drawn to? What parts of the image are shadowed?
- How are you placed in relation to the scene you're viewing? What type of relationship does that create between you and the image/its subjects?

3) Share responses as a class. Then, as a large group, discuss the following questions that connect the compositional features to a robust interpretation:

- As the U.S. has grappled with COVID-19, "We are all in this together" has emerged as a common refrain. Brenner's photo invites viewers to question that phrase. Take in the entire scene: the two men, the pigeon, the abandoned train station, the large sign, and the American flag. What ironies and visual tensions are present?
- What gets to occupy space in the photo? How does the prominence of the sign, and the scale of the men, amplify the tensions activated in the image?
- Re-consider the earlier discussion about light and darkness. What effects do the dark qualities of the image have on you as a viewer? In what ways does that darkness symbolize the crisis of homelessness in American society?
- If you did not have context for Brenner's photo, would you know that the photo was made during the coronavirus pandemic? Why or why not? What, visually, is distinct or remains unchanged?

4) Optional: If time permits, teachers may extend the discussion by connecting Brenner's photo to a famous historical photograph. See below:

COVID's devastating effects on U.S. economic life has drawn comparisons to the Great Depression. Consider Margaret Bourke-White's 1937 ["World's Highest Standard of Living" photograph](#). Made in Louisville, Kentucky, during the Depression and amid the fallout of the Ohio River flooding, Bourke-White's photo shows men, women, and children standing in line to receive food and clothing as "The American Way" is depicted above them on a massive billboard. How do the bottom and top halves of the image function independently? Looking at the two halves as a whole, what message does the photo construct about American society?

What do Bourke-White's and Brenner's respective images suggest about "the American way"?

Consider [Stephen Crowley's photograph](#) that shows a woman of color wearing a mask and standing below the familiar "World's Highest Standard of Living" billboard. Made in Washington, D.C., in 2020, this photo is strikingly similar to Bourke-White's 1937 image. What type of commentary does Crowley's photo provide on COVID-19, race, and economic conditions? What does the billboard's continued presence suggest about its iconicity? About the issues it circulates around?



## Discussion Questions

These questions, organized by theme, are designed for in-class consideration and conversation. The prompts may also be adapted to a writing exercise or other individual or group activity.

### CORONAVIRUS AND EVERYDAY LIFE

Around the world and across the visual landscape, photographers have been documenting COVID's impact on everyday life. These next four images invite you to consider how that impact is pictured.

Justin Sullivan's [aerial photograph of an empty San Francisco school playground](#) was made in March during California's shelter-in-place order.

How do lines work in this image? Consider the rigid features of the built environment (the school, the landscaping), and think about that rigidity in relation to the playground's blue outline. How does the blue line interrupt the otherwise contained quality of the scene? What does that malleability invite us to see?

With the perspective of time, we could look back on this photo and see the playground as a visual metaphor of the coronavirus. What elements of the scene contribute to this metaphor? Think about the shape of the playground's border, its refusal to remain contained, and its potential to escape the confines of the built environment. Consider also the drawings within the playground's borders. How do those drawings, particularly of California and the U.S. map, extend the metaphor of seeing the playground as a COVID cell or cluster?

Athit Perawongmetha's photograph shows [patrons eating inside a reopened restaurant](#) in Bangkok, Thailand, on May 8 (Photo #3 at the link).

Let your eye absorb the entire scene. What are you drawn to? Are there specific items that stand out more than others? What signals that this photo was made in a COVID world?

What is the role of lines in this image? What does their repetition suggest? Does the geometric property of the scene animate certain qualities like orderliness, containment, control, and collectivism? How do those qualities contribute to a collective reimagining of public life in the time of coronavirus?

For further insight into this image, view [the May 15 episode of Chatting the Pictures](#). The discussion of Perawongmetha's photo begins at the 6:55 minute mark.

Varying degrees of lockdowns and stay-at-home orders required millions of people around the world to limit their exposure to others and society at large.

Alessandro Grassani's photo shows [people standing at their apartment windows in Milan, Italy](#) (Photo #2 at the link). In many ways, this photo visualizes contrasts: The individual and the collective; order and disruption; disjointed and cohesive. Where do those contrasts manifest in the image? Can you identify other tensions that are visually present?

[This photo from Bangkok, Thailand](#), made by Mladen Antonov, also pictures people in their apartments during the coronavirus, although it is a very different image than Grassani's apartment photo.

How do light and darkness work in both images? In what ways do they construct an overall affective quality in both photos?

The two images illustrate the pandemic's necessary social practices: "Alone, together" and "Together, apart." What do these images communicate about social life amid COVID-19? How do they compare to other images you have encountered that show people social distancing?

## RACE

One fundamental reality of COVID's presence in the United States is that it disproportionately impacts African Americans and other communities of color. Here, we will consider two photos that picture the interacting dynamics of race and the coronavirus.

In Oliver Contreras's [April 17 photo from the White House press briefing room](#), a person of color wears protective gear and wipes down the podium.

How is the individual framed in this image? What symbols and other items structure the photograph? How do you interpret the authority that the American flag, the White House seal, and the podium lend to the scene? What power dynamics are implied by the photo's framing?

How does this photo visualize the overlapping conditions of COVID-19's disproportionate impact? Consider who we know to be most affected, the labor forces most at risk, and public health guidance on social distancing and other preventive measures.

In what ways does Contreras's photo ask us to think about the meaning of "essential" when it comes to workers and their labor? How does race figure into that definition?

Jason Armond's May 29 photo of [a woman of color at a rally for George Floyd](#) reveals multiple ways that race and COVID-19 intersect. Where in the photo do they overlap? How does the woman's mask, in particular, both articulate and allude to multiple forms of suffering and harm?

Think about the role of the gaze in this photo. What does the woman's eye contact establish with us, the viewers? How does her demand to be seen echo similar demands of African Americans?

The background of this image is blurry, focusing our attention on the woman in the center of the frame. What impact does her prominence have on your reading of this photo? How does the focus on a woman of color connect to public calls for visibility of African American women who have experienced police violence?

Browse the Reading the Pictures Instagram feed ([@readingthepictures](#)) and look at other photos made in the aftermath of George Floyd's death. Do you see other examples of COVID-19 appearing in images of racial justice activism? How is the coronavirus pictured in those images? What makes Armond's photo of the masked woman distinct from others?

## **VISUAL AND EMOTIONAL IMPACT**

Since Reading the Pictures has been covering the pandemic, two photos that picture medical staff in hospitals have emerged as some of our most popular Instagram content.

Consider Colby Hutson's [compassionate nurse in Austin](#) image and Nicole Hubbard's image of a [married nurse couple embracing](#). What visual qualities do these images share? In what ways are the images different, and what effects do those differences have on you as a viewer? How do these images compare to others of medical workers during the pandemic?

Both photos invite us, the viewers, into their respective scenes. How are we positioned in relation to the subjects of both photos? What does that placement do in terms of allowing us to access the scene and its subjects?

Hutson's photo of the nurse in Austin visualizes a more somber situation than Hubbard's photo of the married nurses. What elements of Hutson's photo amplify the somber reality of COVID? How do those elements interact to portray an overall picture of the coronavirus in the U.S.?

The AP article that published Nicole Hubbard's photo [also published an un-cropped version](#) of the same image (see Image 3 in slideshow). How do these two photographs of the same scene function differently? Are there aspects of the cropped version that

resonate more than the full photograph? Why do you suppose the tighter focused image circulated more than its counterpart?

What do these images not show us? That is, who is not pictured in the two hospital photos? What do those absences ask of our imaginations?

## TIME

[Chris McGrath's photo for Getty Images](#) shows a darkened and mostly abandoned public street in Istanbul, Turkey, on April 1. What, specifically, are we looking at? How do the photo's content and composition interact and create a portrait of the coronavirus in early spring 2020?

Looking back at this photo from our current perspective, how does McGrath's image condense COVID-19's progression? What visual features communicate the emotional stages of grappling with coronavirus?

David Butow's [image of two masked individuals](#) standing with New York City looming in the background also activates questions about time.

With the current crisis in mind, it is difficult to look at this image and not think of 9/11. How does composition work in this photograph? What specific visual features contribute to the overall traumatic expression that this image offers?

By situating us in view of the New York City skyline, Butow's photograph collapses time and brings the past into the present. What does this ask us to question, to see, to understand about the coronavirus and its impact on the U.S. and the world?

Considering that this photo was made on April 18, 2020, how do you think you might have viewed the photo at that time? Given what we know now about COVID-19, do you think that this photo has more of an impact today than when it first appeared? Why do you suppose certain images achieve greater meaning as time passes?

What do both of these photos suggest about photography's capacity to represent a crisis in its moment and throughout time? How does the passage of time offer viewers additional opportunities for viewing and witnessing?

## SEEING COVID TRAUMA

This section focuses on the article, [“Here Are the Photos of People Suffering and Dying of Covid.”](#) published May 26, 2020.

\*Note: An extended discussion of three photos contained in this article is available in the May 31 installment of Chatting the Pictures. See [Chatting the Pictures: Here Are the Photos of People Suffering and Dying of Coronavirus.](#)

Photo selection is a critical component of this piece and the images it engages. What do the photos of COVID patients visually emphasize? What do these photos not show, and how do those absences compare to other coronavirus images you’ve encountered?

Consider how we are placed in relation to the various images. What type of relationship between the photo’s viewers and the photo’s subjects does that placement enable? How do space, viewer placement, and other elements of composition create opportunities for intimacy and empathy?

Most of the images in this article depict one to a few subjects per photo. Can pictures of an individual or a few individuals communicate the scale of a global crisis? Where do you see that magnitude achieved, and what visual features does it require? What constraints or limits exist within this mode of looking?

This post emerged in response to a [New York Times article](#) that argued that photos of people suffering from COVID-19 or succumbing to the disease were scarce in U.S. media. As this Reading the Pictures article demonstrates, many were published. If we didn’t encounter photos that revealed the devastating realities of COVID-19, how would our understanding of the coronavirus be different? What are the consequences of choosing not to look?

The bottom of the article pictures six images made by photographers who have or had a connection to the medical profession. How do these images compare to those analyzed in the article? Do you notice similarities in terms of content, composition, style, framing, and narrative? Knowing that the six images were made by people experienced in medical care, do their images offer additional insight into seeing, interpreting, and understanding COVID-19’s impact on the U.S. and its people?

## Short-Term Project: Visual Analysis of COVID-19

In this independent project, students will develop an original visual analysis of COVID-19 imagery. They will gain experience working in-depth with a single image, allowing them to see the significance of the individual photograph in visualizing a health crisis and the human response to it. The project culminates in a final written essay and an in-class gallery talk, formats that provide students the opportunity to organize their ideas on paper and to adapt them for a more conversational setting. Overall, the goal of the project is for students to enhance skills related to writing, thinking, and speaking about images.

The project unfolds in stages, and the amount of time devoted to each stage is flexible for each teacher's calendar. Ideally, this project would be introduced, developed, and completed over four to six weeks.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this project, students will:

- Develop an independent project that presents an original argument about the visual representation of COVID-19;
- Identify the compositional features of an image;
- Workshop their ideas with peers and incorporate feedback into their projects;
- Write an analysis that explores the visual representation of COVID-19;
- Present their analysis and image to classmates;
- Answer key questions regarding representation, narrative, presence, and absence.

\*This project pairs well with **Activity #2** in this packet, as it builds on skills gained during that class period and asks students to perform similar analytical processes over an extended time period.

### Part 1: Image Survey and Selection

Provide a list of photographers who have been documenting COVID-19 and link students to examples of each photographer's published work. Students should survey the available imagery and select one image to use for the project.

Over the next two pages, find a list of photographers whose coverage of the coronavirus is represented in Reading the Pictures programming. Links to examples of each photographer's published work, and/or their Instagram feeds, accompany each suggested name. We also provide a few links to online photo galleries that offer visual coverage of COVID both within and beyond the U.S.

Depending on your course, you may want to provide additional criteria or advice to students to assist them in selecting a photo.

[Coronavirus in Italy: Scenes from the Eye of the Storm.](#) *Vanity Fair*. March 26, 2020.

[Latin American Photographers Document the Pandemic – In Pictures.](#) *The Guardian*. May 8, 2020.

[Bergamo, Italy: “We Take the Dead From Morning Till Night.”](#) *The New York Times*. March 27, 2020.

[These Photos Show the Staggering Food Bank Lines Across America.](#) *Mother Jones*. April 13, 2020.

### **Peter van Agtmael**

- [“The Last of the First Responders”: Inside One Funeral Home’s COVID-19 Crisis.](#) *Vanity Fair*.

### **Victor J. Blue**

- [“Code Blue”: A Brooklyn I.C.U. Fights for Each Life in a Coronavirus Surge.](#) *The New York Times*.
- [“We’re in Disaster Mode”: Courage Inside a Brooklyn Hospital Confronting Coronavirus.](#) *The New York Times*.

### **Elinor Carucci, @elinorcarucci**

- [A Photographer’s Diary of Life in Isolation.](#) *The Cut*.

### **Timothy Clary, @timothyclary**

### **Carolyn Cole**

- [How a Small Texas Hospital is Finding Ways to Save COVID Patients.](#) *Los Angeles Times*.
- [Coronavirus Rises in Texas: This Hospital Quadrupled Capacity and Yet is Almost Full.](#) *Los Angeles Times*.

### **Karen Cunningham-Blake, @karencunninghamofficial**

- [COVID-19 through a Nurse’s Lens.](#) *The New Yorker*.

### **Stephen Ferry, @stephenedwardferry**

- [Queens, New York](#) (Instagram post)
- [Brooklyn, New York](#) (Instagram post)
- [Mt. Sinai Hospital](#) (Instagram post)

**Todd Heisler, @heislerphoto**

- [How the Virus Robs Families of the Rituals of Mourning.](#) *The New York Times.*
- [What New York Looks Like Now: A Photo Journey.](#) *The New York Times.*

**Ryan Christopher Jones**

- [The Last Anointing.](#) *The New York Times.*

**Stephanie Keith, @steffikeith**

**Isadora Kosofsky, @isadorakosofsky**

- [After Months Apart, Mother's Day Visits Through a Doorway.](#) *The New York Times.*

**Chris McGrath, @cmcgrath\_photo**

**Philip Montgomery**

- [The Coronavirus Crisis Reveals New York at Its Best and Worst.](#) *The New Yorker.*
- [The Epicenter: A Week Inside New York's Public Hospitals.](#) *The New York Times Magazine.*
- [How Do You Maintain Dignity for the Dead in a Pandemic?](#) *The New York Times Magazine.*

**John Moore, @jbmoorephoto**

- [How First Responders Are Tackling This Unprecedented Threat.](#) CNN/Getty Images.

**Marcus Yam**

- [Its COVID Unit is Full. Photos Show Life Inside this San Diego Hospital.](#) *Los Angeles Times.*
- [Coronavirus in Tijuana.](#) *Los Angeles Times.*



## Part 2: Seeing Composition

For a homework assignment, have students write down the compositional features of their image. They should consider:

- Content: What does the image depict? What populates the photograph?
- Color: What colors animate the image? How intense or subdued are they?
- Light: How does light appear in the image? Where is it coming from? Are shadows present? Are parts of the image dark?
- Space: How is the image's content organized? What appears in the foreground and background? As a viewer, how are you placed in relation to what you're looking at? What type of dynamic does that placement create between you and the photo?
- What kind of emotional response does this image generate for you?

Ask students to bring their notes and a copy of their image to class.

## Part 3: Workshop

The goal of the workshop is for students to practice informally how to talk about their image, to gather feedback that can inform their later analysis, and to provide constructive feedback on their classmates' projects.

Divide students into small groups of 3-5. During one class period, have students share in their small groups their image and insights about composition. Students may also talk about what attracted them to their image, as well as how they anticipate developing their analysis during the project's next stage.

Have students submit a short compositional analysis.

## Part 4: Developing the Analysis

This stage of the project can be completed over the course of one or two weeks. If scheduling permits, teachers may find it useful to check in with students during class time or office hours to offer guidance on each student's approach to the project.

With an understanding of their image's features, the next stage of the project asks students to consider the social, political, and ethical qualities that their image activates. Below, we offer a few sample questions to guide students in their analysis; teachers may find that they need to provide additional or alternative prompts that more specifically address their course's content.

Once teachers finalize the prompts, have students respond to those prompts in a written essay.

Suggested questions:

- How is COVID-19 visualized in the photograph? Is it present in an obvious way, or is its presence more subtle? What do you make of that presence or absence?
- How does framing work? Are there elements of the image that get portrayed in a favorable (or negative) manner? How does the image's framing invite you to read the image in a particular way?
- What political, social, and/or ethical issues does the photograph animate?
- Consider the date the image was made. How does the image address, point to, or avoid issues/practices that were occurring at the same time? To answer this question, spend time browsing news publications (e.g. *The New York Times*; *The Washington Post*; AP; Reuters; Getty; CNN) to view contemporaneous images.
- Think about the photo's composition that you explored earlier in this project. How do those visual qualities enhance your overall reading of the image?
- What does this image reveal about the coronavirus, its influence, and its impact? What does it conceal?

## Part 5: Gallery Talk

Depending on class size, designate 2-3 class periods as gallery days. Assign each student one gallery day during which they will display and talk about their project's image. (You might also assign students to write a brief gallery statement to display alongside their image.) On their assigned gallery day, students will share with their classmates their insights about their project's photo. Ideally, for each gallery day, around half of the class should present and half should visit the gallery.

## Part 6: Reflection

Following the gallery experience, have students reflect on the processes of developing and completing their projects. You could also ask students to reflect on the broader class-curated collection of COVID imagery.

In a short follow-up assignment or classroom discussion, have students answer the following questions:

- Tell me about your experience working with the image you selected. What parts of the project did you find most beneficial? Did you encounter difficulties or frustrations throughout the process? What did you learn about the role of still images in representing social issues? In other words, what can the individual image do, and what are its limits?
- Do you now look at/think about your project's image differently than you did when you first chose it? How has your perspective changed?
- Think about all of the images you saw and learned about during the gallery talk. How was COVID-19 visually represented through your classmates' projects? Did

certain visual features and narratives predominate? What might that suggest about the range of available visual material?

- Did you see anything new, different, or surprising in your classroom gallery? If so, what was noteworthy to you about those photos? What does that say to you about conventional, or “typical,” COVID-19 images that you might have become accustomed to seeing?
- Was there anything absent from the gallery? That is, can you identify additional ways of visualizing the coronavirus beyond those displayed in your classmates’ projects? What would you like to see, and what perspectives would those additional representations offer?

## **Additional Viewing and Reading Recommendations:**

[Chatting the Pictures: Coronavirus Politics – From the White House, to the Café, to the Gun Shop.](#) March 23, 2020.

[Chatting the Pictures with Pete Souza: Presidential Photos in a Health Crisis.](#) April 20, 2020.

[Chatting the Pictures: Life and Death in New York; Distanced Mother’s Day; Restaurants Adapt.](#) May 15, 2020.

[How Could the Strongest Country in the World Fall So Far?](#) April 6, 2020.

[The Infected Primary.](#) April 12, 2020.

[Why Medical Workers Challenging Anti-Stay at Home Protesters Won the Internet.](#) April 21, 2020.

[Masked Man Waits in Line for COVID Test.](#) Instagram photo and analysis. April 21, 2020.

[The Postal Service in the Days of the Virus.](#) Instagram photo and analysis. April 22, 2020.

[“Healing Touch, COVID-19.”](#) Instagram photo and analysis. April 30, 2020.

[The Virus Has Not Been Kind to Our Elders.](#) May 12, 2020.

[Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.](#) Instagram photo and analysis. May 25, 2020.