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ZAMISDAT

THE UNDERGROUND INFORMATORIUM

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At last! I published my first zine, not a very hard thing to do in terms of technical expertise, but time-consuming, yes! Although I must admit I have more time on my hands these days than I've had since the summer breaks during elementary school. I would first like to thank you for picking up this zine and taking the time to read it. Inside this issue you will find an informative history on dissident self-publishing in the Soviet Union and tutorial on how to make your own zine using two free easy-to-install computer programs found on the internet: Gimp (GNU Image Manipulator Program) and Scribus, which are similar to Adobe's Photoshop and its desktop publishing programs like InDesign, PageMaker or Illustrator, respectively.

The reason why I chose these programs is because they are free. While you may pay only \$25 for a used printer that you find on Craigslist, and \$5 for a stack of printer paper, you can expect to pay over \$500 for Photoshop! InDesign will cost you at least \$200. And while Gimp and Scribus aren't exact replicas of their Adobe counterparts, they are pretty close.

Besides being free, there are many differences between the programs, each one having its advantages and disadvantages. Gimp and Scribus are open-source, which means you can add scripts and modify the code to your liking, you cannot do this with proprietary programs. The user interface (UI) in Photoshop is made of one window with several tabs, while the UI in Gimp is composed of many windows. Photoshop is available for only Windows and Mac; Gimp is available for Windows, Mac and Linux. Although Gimp is free, Photoshop does contain more features and functions that are not seen in Gimp, which is why most professionals choose Photoshop, despite the hefty dollar amount. Nevertheless, it is the money factor that could make the difference between silence and making yourself heard.

The first amendment of the U. S. Constitution gives citizens the right of freedom of speech, a right not shared by many people in the world. And while we may live in an enlightened society where we are granted

certain political rights, economic factors can still prohibit these rights, namely the freedom of speech. In reality, most of us do not have the money to start a publishing company and to pay the costs of market research and distribution without taking out a big loan, and it is very difficult to acquire the funds for this type of venture, especially now. Even publishing on the internet can be difficult since most internet service providers charge to host your website or to pay for a static IP address to host your own site. Of course with the right amount of know-how, you can host your own website at home using different ports or without using a static IP address. There are ways around this and I just may make this the subject of a future article. However, zine publishing is alive and well and more robust than ever and can give anybody the chance to make themselves heard using common tools found on the internet.

The reason I believe zine publishing has the advantage over Web publishing is because of the visibility factor, you can simply make your zine more visible in open spaces like libraries, coffee shops, bookstores, etc, unless your website is well known. And like newspapers or magazines, a zine gives people something tangible to hold onto, take with them and show other people.

Even editorial decisions can restrict what information gets circulated into the mainstream media. There are several reasons for this, whether they are matters of space, money, level of importance, credibility, etc. For the average citizen with an extremely low budget and hardly any control over mainstream news media, zine printing gives them the ability to document or promote events, or express their opinions on certain matters otherwise not picked up by your local paper. With the tutorial that I present you, it is now easier than ever to get your point across. But if you are going to be informative, get all of the facts, don't leave anything out, or else you may unknowingly censor crucial bits of information. Zine printing is a very powerful tool, but with power comes responsibility, so be mindful of what you print because it can bring you unwanted attention.

I also wrote for you a brief story about samizdat, an amalgated term of two Russian words that stands for 'self-publishing', an underground system of communication used to evade censorship during the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe and Russia.

You might notice that the title of this zine is 'Zamisdat', this is not a misspelling, just a simple word play.

Samizdat is important because it demonstrates the power of ordinary people to express themselves under heavy weight of monolithic tyranny. I wanted to accompany a story on samizdat with the tutorial because they are related. I believe samizdat was a way to share information that was forbidden. Today in the the information age, certain types of information are still forbidden. While there is a difference between censorship of free expression and crackdowns on illegal file-sharing and probably calamitous to generalize the two, both are designed to withhold ideas under certain conditions. Whereas the tutorial expresses the 'how', the story about samizdat is a matter of 'why'.

If you are a student, a journalist, a grassroots organizer, a promoter, an advertiser or just a printing hobbyist, you do not have to feel constrained by a lack of money and be able to exercise your freedom in the truest sense. Now you have the power to publish at home, all you need is a computer, a printer, some paper and two free computer programs; the first two items can be acquired for little to no money at all. Zine publishing is as much about individual freedom as it is to inform others. In as much we have enjoyed this great freedom for over two hundred years, we should never take it for granted because history teaches us that human progress can be reversed for the interests of the few, and should it ever happen again, ordinary people have the power to stop it.

-David Minsky



A BRIEF HISTORY OF SAMIZDAT FROM RUSSIA TO THE DIGITAL AGE

By David Minsky

Illegal information books, music, movies are disseminated in underground networks from person to person under the cover of secrecy and total anonymity and at the risk of personal peril, in a constant state of censorship, repression, surveillance and evasion from insidious secret agents and if caught, punishment could mean decades in prison. Sounds like Soviet Russia, right? No, this is the internet, and unlike the Soviet Union, there are no borders. Welcome to samizdat in the digital age, where censored material, pirated movies, music, books, academic journals and sundry copyrighted or otherwise restricted material encoded in bits are transmitted clandestinely between users like the days of old through the digital back alleys of the information superhighway.

Samizdat, an amalgamation of two Russian terms, *sam* – meaning self, and *izdat* – meaning publishing house, combined it literally means 'self-publishing', was a dissident activity during the era of the Soviet Bloc where censored media was reproduced by hand and circulated from person to person in secret. Mostly comprised of printed literature, pamphlets and periodicals, it was copied with printing presses – usually under strict control of the government, carbon paper or tediously by hand or typewriter. People caught committing this illegal activity faced confinement in prisons, labor camps or psychiatric hospitals. Despite the harsh punishments, samizdat flourished for decades among secret networks of discordant citizens.

One of the reasons it survived was because of the citizens' desire for the type of information forbidden by the government, especially in urban areas, according to Samuel Ramer, a scholar of modern Russian history at Tulane University.

"It was not a system of massive circulation of materials," he said. "The population, or at least its most educated elements, knew that they were being cut off from a lot, and as the 'forbidden' attracts, they went after it as best they could."

The exact number of publications will never be known, but of those that are known, roughly 6,600 are collected in *Arhiv Samizdata*, a collection made possible by U.S. government-backed Radio Liberty in Munich in the 1970s when the phenomenon first became known. Of those archived, nearly 5,500 were printed and circulated in the period before glasnost – when Gorbachev sought to make government more transparent. Western news media, contemporary arts, and even Shakespeare was forbidden. Anything not sanctioned by the Soviet government was, of course, censored and considered illegal.

Self-publishing has existed, long before the Soviet Union, but samizdat is distinguished by its proliferation and clandestine nature. Twenty years after the collapse and dissolution of the Soviet Union we have the internet and now there is a global digital samizdat on the rise that has much to do with file sharing as well as with countering censorship. With the ubiquity and secrecy of file-sharing darknets, one of the more popular methods of digital samizdat is known as Tor, or The Onion Router, an online volunteer network of people who use their computers to help others evade surveillance and enable anonymity.

With crackdowns on intellectual property file-sharing becoming more frequent, and punishments becoming more harsh, people look for ways to evade detection. In countries where internet censorship is a part of daily life, citizens search for ways to express themselves. As

with any darknet, there is no way to find out what is being shared or published by whom unless you are in the loop.

Originally developed for the U.S. Navy in 2001 with the purpose of protecting U.S. government communications, the open-source network has been made available for journalists, activists, law enforcement, the military, software pirates, regular users and many others who have online privacy in mind. In fact, the U.S. government uses Tor for intelligence gathering, according to its website, torproject.org. In addition to the public network made available by the volunteers, users also make their own private networks with Tor.

Tor software is now maintained by The Tor Project, a non-profit organization, and has helped millions of activists worldwide communicate with the rest of the internet.

Amid the civil unrest that pervaded the Arab Spring earlier this year in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria and Libya, and during the 2009 Iranian presidential elections when their governments were accused of censoring the internet, Tor enabled citizens and journalists in both countries to freely communicate with the outside world without restriction. Journalists in China regularly use Tor to circumvent internet censorship imposed by the government.

Tor uses onion routing, which encrypts and routes communications randomly throughout a network of relays that are run by the volunteers throughout the globe who employ the Tor software. It works much in the same way as a bit torrent network in the sense that a populous and diverse user base equals better anonymity, and it is also decentralized by design, which is how it differs from a normal proxy server. With its hidden services feature, Tor allows its users to host websites with its own internal top-level domain, or .onion domain, only viewable if you have the program installed and running. From here, users can host a variety of content anonymously.

It is extremely resilient. Private networks

are virtually impossible to detect and shut down and with the public Tor network, .onion domains are not registered with ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers). In order to shut down the network, one would have to shut down nine internet directory authorities, then go after the users based in 80 different countries who run the relays, according to Andrew Lewman, executive director of The Tor Project.

The public network does have its weaknesses. For one thing, it is extremely latent since only a few thousand people are known to run relays on a full-time basis, which limits the amount of security the network is supposed to provide, leaving users more susceptible to exposure. Despite the setbacks, the network is growing and fortunately the software is easy to use and is available for Windows, Mac and Unix-based operating systems.

But can something so advantageous to protecting online privacy also be used nefariously?

“Yes it can,” Lewman said. “For the same reasons cars, trucks, trains buses, cell phones and cameras do the same thing. Tor is a technology, whether it is good or bad depends on who is using it.”

Anything can be published or traded without restraint: anonymous defamation, unauthorized leaks of secret information, even child pornography. Amid concerns that pedophiles were using Tor to trade child pornography, developers at The Metasploit Project – an open-source computer security project, devised a series of measures that detect and locate specific computers to an organization or residence that searched for and downloaded images of child pornography. The benefit of this method is that it leaves relay operators alone because their IP addresses are the only ones openly viewable in the network.

For now it seems that this service is no worse than other vehicles used to facilitate crime. Authorities are aware that criminals can use Tor and have contacted The Tor Project to investigate certain crimes in which Tor was allegedly used, although the non-



Tor logo

Source: torproject.org

profit would not comment on which ones. There isn't direct evidence that criminals use Tor, although theoretically they can but even if they do, not much can be done by anyone, Lewman said.

On questions of criminal use of Tor, Lewman refers people to the website's abuse section.

"Of course, like all privacy-oriented networks on the net, it attracts its share of jerks," it states. "Criminals could in theory use Tor, but they already have better options, and it seems unlikely that taking Tor away from the world will stop them from doing their bad things."

The non-profit even has a pre-written response on their website for relay operators to internet service providers who accuse them of hosting copyrighted or any other restricted material.

Similar public services exist for the sake of internet privacy, including JonDonym, I2P and Ipredator, developed by the creators of Sweden-based file-sharing website The Pirate Bay, and Freenet, which is more akin to Tor's hidden services than its proxy.

Despite the network being used for criminal activity, there is no telling what the future holds for Tor. Up to now lawmakers have largely ignored the technology because they don't understand it, Lewman said.

"More likely to be regulated is 'online anonymity' in some failed idea that one can regulate this," Lewman said.

Whether you're a dissident journalist reporting facts outside a barrier of censorship, an activist trying to be heard, a business executive hiding trade secrets, a pirate exposing trade secrets, a government spy, a whistleblower, or just a regular person who cares about their online privacy, Tor is the information-sharing samizdat of the digital age.

"Knowledge in a sense is power, and over time samizdat armed society with arguments and facts that might well have remained unknown without the appearance of samizdat," Ramer said.

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Do-it-yourself print and PDF publishing at home made easy with GIMP, Scribus and your printer!

By David Minsky

Now that you have a little background info on self-publishing, here is a little tutorial to show you how to get started. If you are in the business of publishing, a journalist, a student of journalism looking to start your career, or just a hobbyist who loves to make graphics and print stuff, you do not have to shell out hundreds of dollars to pay for professional programs or risk criminal prosecution and/or lawsuits for downloading them illegally. This tutorial is not meant to be comprehensive, just to demonstrate simply what you can do with modest tools. I will show you the basics; design details and content is entirely up to you.

This tutorial already assumes that you have a computer and a printer (with toner and cartridges), however, if you don't then I suggest you try to acquire them for cheap on

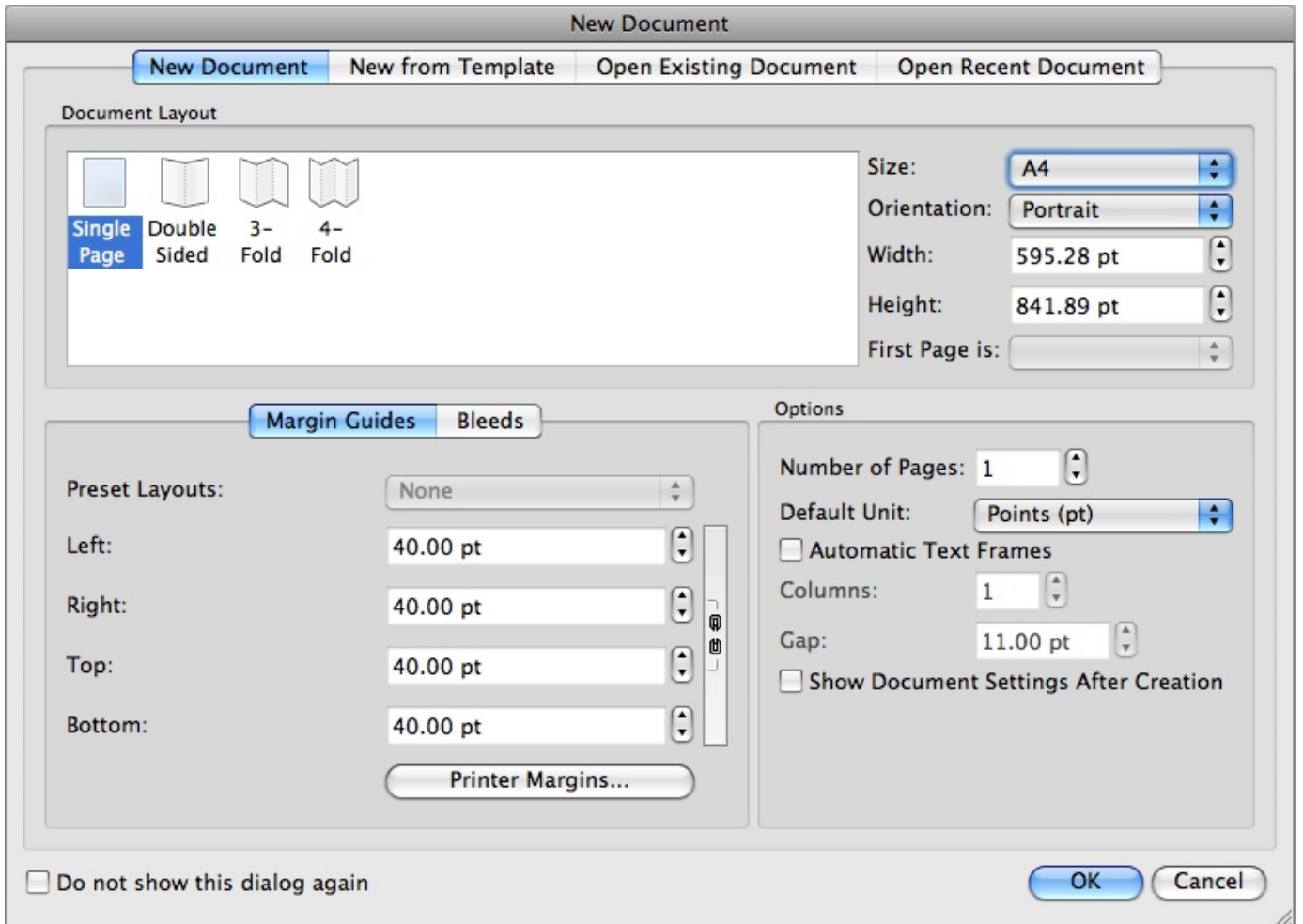
Craigslist and if you cannot, then try to convince your local librarian of the wonderful benefits of using GNU Image Manipulator Program (Gimp) and Scribus, two free programs that can be easily downloaded and installed on any Windows, Mac or Linux. This tutorial is specifically written for Windows and Mac users because it assumes that Linux users already know how to download and install the software binaries and dependencies. The pictures are taken from a MacOS. There are many detailed tutorials about how to customize graphics and page layout but this one puts them together and keeps it short and to the point in a step-by-step process. Most importantly, have fun with this because there is a lot of room for creativity.

Download and Installation

1. Go to www.gimp.org/downloads and <http://wiki.scribus.net/canvas/Download> and search for the appropriate download package for your operating system.
2. For the OS/X, you will download a .dmg file and for Windows, a .exe file for each program. After downloading, double-click on your file and it should install automatically. There you go, the programs are installed. Now let's have a look at Scribus.

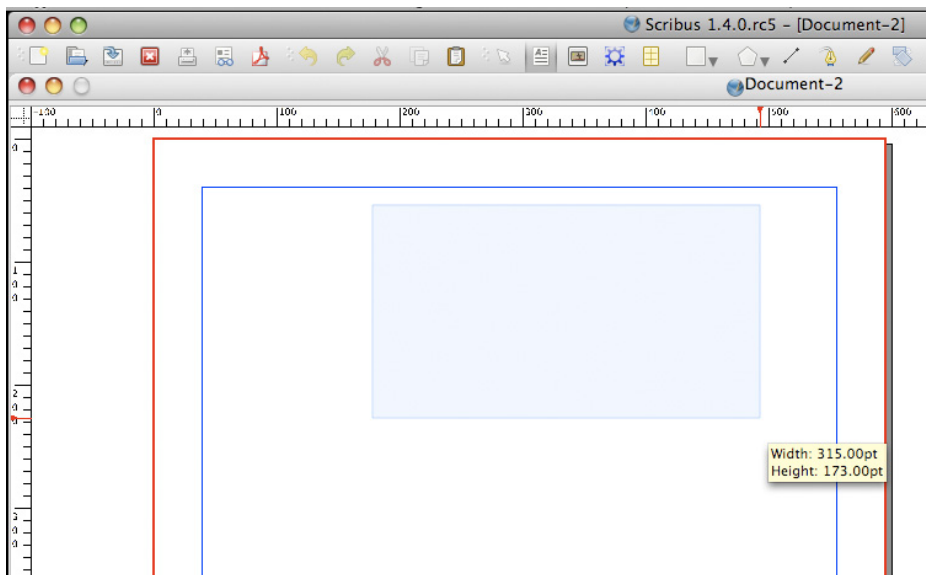
Scribus

Scribus can be used to create page layout for pamphlets, booklets, brochures, business cards, magazines, newsletters, PDFs, etc., but for now the focus is on creating a PDF and a zine, but we will use 8.5" x 11" printer paper because it is abundant and cheap, usually about \$5 or less for a new stack at an office supplies store.



1. Click on the Scribus icon on your desktop or in your Applications or Programs folder and you will get this screen. Then click on 'New Document' and 'Single Page', leave the size as it is and leave the orientation as it is, unless if you're making a zine, then drop the orientation menu down to 'Landscape' and use that. Now click 'OK'.

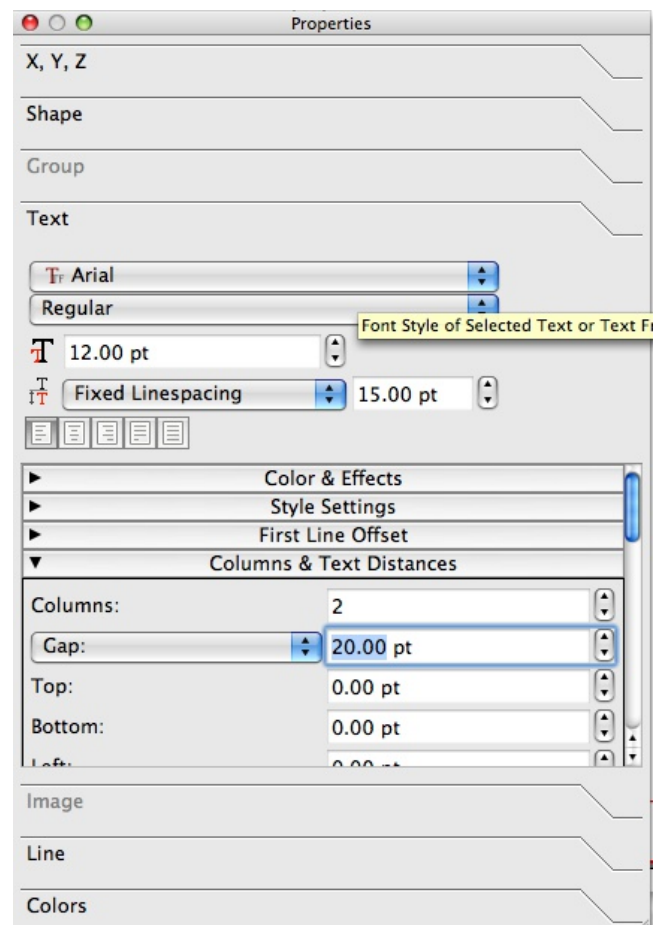
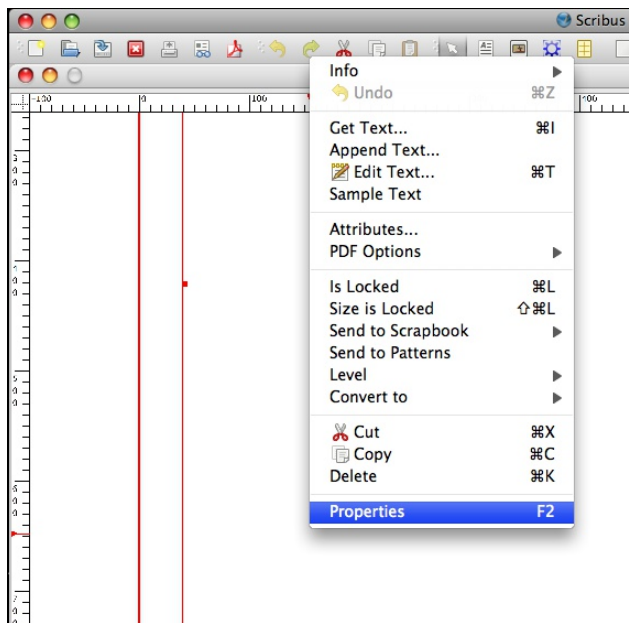
2. Now you can't just simply start typing onto your newly created page, you have to insert a text frame by pressing the 'ctrl' and 'C' keys simultaneously (Windows) or just simply pressing the 'T' key on your Mac keyboard. The mouse cursor will change into a small box with the letter 'A' in it to indicate a text frame, now with your mouse click and drag to create a box that will be the frame into which you enter text, like this:



3. Adjust the text frame by clicking on each of the red squares in each corner and side of the frame and dragging it to the appropriate size by using the X and Y (width and height) coordinates. In this case make it 516pt by 760pt:



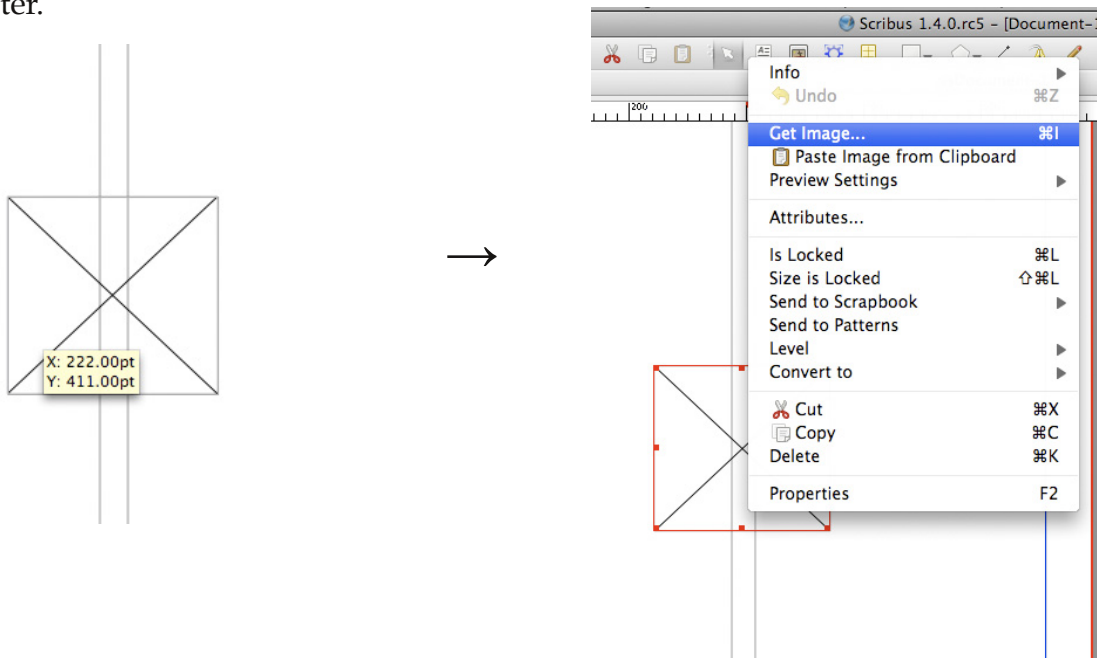
4. To enter text, hover your mouse cursor over the box and click the right mouse button (Windows), or with a Mac, hold the 'ctrl' key down while simultaneously clicking the mouse button and a menu will pop up, then scroll to 'Properties'.



5. Click on the 'Text' tab and give your frame two columns, and space each column by 20 pt. Once you are finished with that, click on 'X, Y, Z', then click on the padlock icon to lock the frame into place. To begin typing into the frame, right-click or 'ctrl' and mouse-click and then select 'Edit Text'. A box will appear called 'Story Editor' where you can start typing and from here you can change the size of the text, the font, the color and add other effects to it. When you add the effects, they will not appear in the editor, but in the text frame on the page.

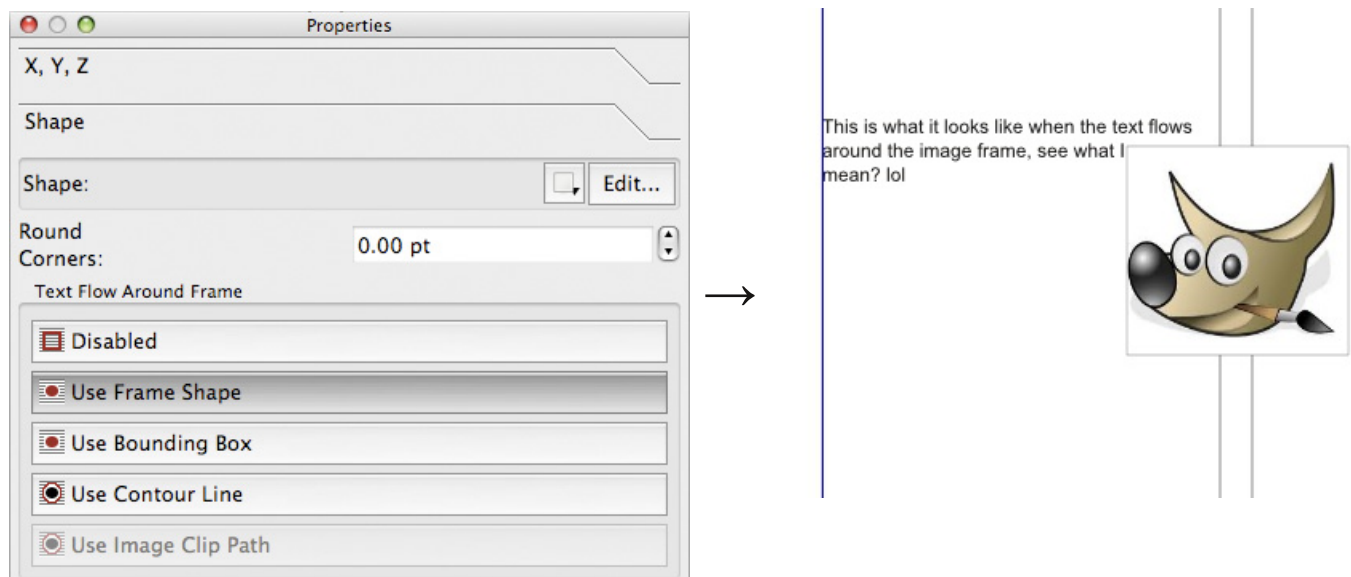
6. If you want, make room for a header so resize the width and height of your text frame to allow space for a header and fill them remaining space with another text frame or you can use an image frame.

7. Next, insert an image frame by simultaneously pressing 'ctrl' and 'I' keys on your Windows keyboard, or just simply 'I' on a Mac keyboard. The mouse cursor will change, then click and drag to create an image box and size it to your liking. Hover the mouse cursor over the frame, then click and drag the box to the center of the page, using X and Y coordinates as a guide. Hover the cursor over the frame and right-click (Windows), or 'ctrl' and mouse click (Mac) to bring up the menu again, click on 'Get Image' and find an image that you have somewhere on your computer.



8. Your image will appear within the frame but it may look as if it doesn't fit, either too big or too small, but you can solve this by bringing the menu back up (right-click or 'ctrl' + mouse click) and clicking on 'Adjust Image to Frame', or conversely if you want to size the frame according to the image, then you would click on 'Adjust Frame to Image'.

9. Notice that as you are typing that the text will appear behind your image frame. You can solve this by bringing the properties menu back and clicking on 'Properties', select the 'Shape' tab and then select 'Use Frame Shape' and your text will flow around the image.



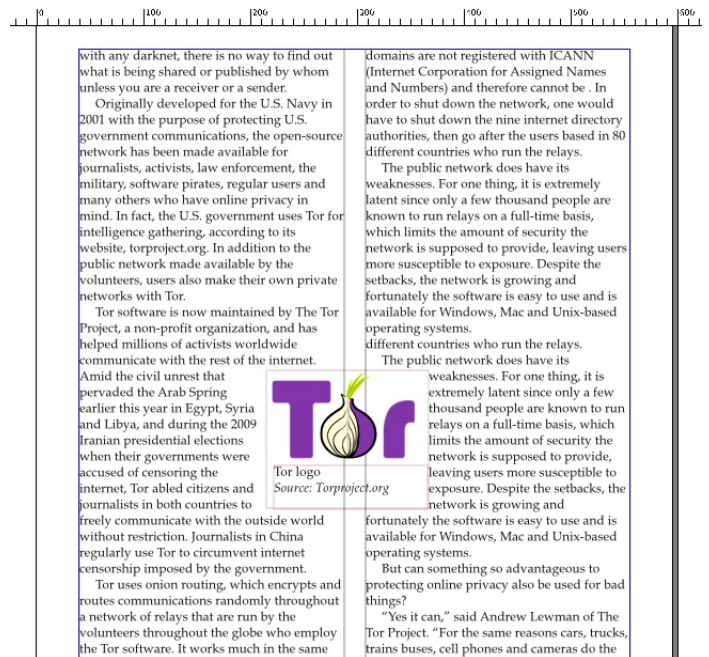
10. Ok now that you have your image, but you want to retouch it a little bit, hover your mouse cursor over the image, bring up the properties menu and select 'Edit Image', and suddenly Gimp will open up for you. This is another reason why Scribus and Gimp are good programs because they are made for each other. Once you have Gimp opened up, play around with the options and see what kind of effect they make, or try to find a tutorial on the effect you are trying to achieve.

If you want color on your pages, then do this first before you place a text frame. Create an image frame, resize it so that it covers the entire page, hover your mouse cursor over the frame, right-click or 'ctrl' and mouse-click to bring the properties menu again. Scroll to the bottom and select the 'Colors' tab, then look for and select the paint bucket icon that is to the right of the paintbrush icon. Then select your color of choice in the color menu below the icons and your entire image frame will be filled with that color.

To create another page, look to the top menu bar in the program and click on 'Insert', then 'Page', another window similar to the first one will pop up asking you make your specifications. Now if you want to make a zine, orient your page to 'Landscape', but still be mindful of margins because each printer is different in how margins are manipulated so I suggest you become familiar with yours. Everything previously mentioned in this tutorial can be applied to zine making except that you will need to know how a little bit on how magazines are binded together.

Quick guide to make a zine and a PDF

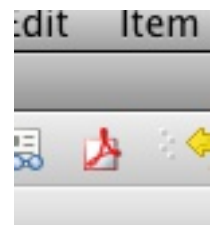
1. The first page will be your cover page. Divide it in half, your cover will be on the right-hand side. Keep margins in mind.
2. Make a second page, divide it in half, mind your margins, put the inside page of the cover on the left-hand side.



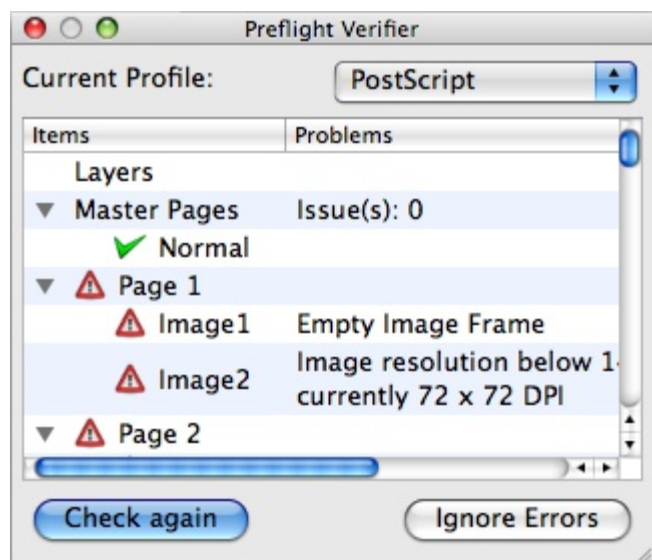
With two columns, a 20 pt gap between columns, 12-point text, Book Antiqua Regular font, a graphic in the center of the page and no header here is what you can expect your page to look like.

3. From here on, each page you make will be divided in half and each side will alternate from the previous page. For example, if you are typing an article on the left-hand side of the page and you run out of room, insert another page, orient the page to 'Landscape', and create a text frame then place it on the right-hand side. Each page you create in Scribus is actually four pages in the zine; for a 18 page zine, you will need 5 pages for content, including one page for a cover. You will eventually have to begin alternating the pages back up to the first page, beginning with the last page. For instance, if you are on the tenth page in Scribus, then your content flows from the left-hand side of the page to the right-hand side, then continues in reverse to the left-hand side of the ninth page, then to the right-hand side of the eighth, and so on, until you reach the right-hand side of the second page, which is the inside of the cover, then at that point you should be finished.

4. Using 10-point size and Book Antiqua font, you can expect to fit about 450-500 words per page, that is if you do not use graphics.



5. Now it's time to print. Keep in mind that each page has print on both sides. Before you print, you can either print directly from Scribus or you can save it as a PDF. To create a PDF, look for the Adobe Acrobat icon at the top menu bar, to the left of the first yellow



arrow, click on it. This is the 'Save as PDF' option. You might get some errors, have no fear because most of the errors, if not all of them, will either be 'Text Overflow' where your text frame goes beyond the margins, or they will be image resolution. Don't worry much about the image resolution, but you want to make sure everything is within your margins because anything flowing over the margins could get clipped when it's printed. When you are satisfied, click 'Ignore Errors' and save it to the folder of your choice, and then click 'Save' and it will proceed to create a PDF. When you print your cover page, take it and place it back into the tray exactly how it comes out. Do this with each page in logical order.

6. Once you have your master copy, you may print additional copies, or if you want to cut down on using your print cartridge and toner, then you may use a copy machine to make two-sided copies, but most place will probably charge your \$0.10 per page.

7. Stack all of the pages on top of each other, with the cover on the bottom facing down,

then you will take the stack, fold it over from the left to right horizontally so that the all of the left-hand sides of the pages are laying on top of the right-hand sides, like a book. Now give it two staples evenly down the center of the fold on the cover.

At this point I will depart with you on how to use Gimp to create graphics because there is a lot of exploring you must do and it would simply take too much of my time to try and explain it all. I will, however, give you a brief explanation on how to make header graphic.

Gimp

Whew! If you made it this far, then perhaps you are willing to go a bit further. I will now briefly show you how to make a simple header graphic with Gimp.

Open up Gimp by double-clicking the icon in the folder in which you saved it. You will see the Toolbox on the left, the Layers, Channels, Paths, Undo - Brushes, Patterns, Gradients box on the right, and a small window in the middle. Look to the menu bar at the top of the middle window and click on 'File', then 'New', leave the default settings, and click 'OK'. You will now have a new 640 pixels by 480 pixels, untitled, blank canvas.

Look to the left Toolbox and click on the icon that looks like bold 'A', that is the text tool which creates a new text layer. Then hover the mouse cursor over the blank canvas, click and drag your mouse, the text editor box will pop up asking you to enter some text. I simply typed in 'A Nice Header'. You have the options to change the font, size, color, etc. of the text in the bottom half of the Toolbox on the left. I recommend that you choose a nice thick and bold font for this example. If you change the text size bigger than what your box will allow, resize your text editor so that you can see what you typed.

Look to the bottom half of the Toolbox on the left and click on 'Path from Text'. Now look to the top menu and click on 'Select', then 'From Path', and text will be highlighted with dotted lines, this is what you want. Now click on 'Select' again in the top menu bar, then

scroll down to 'Shrink' and click on it. A small box will appear asking how many pixels to shrink the outline, this is good for making text with a thickened border and a different color for the body. I chose to shrink by two pixels. Once you have done this, you can fill the new shrunken area with a different color and leave the original area the same color (black) to use as a border.

Click on the paint bucket icon in the

A Nice Header

Toolbox, which is the 'Bucket Fill' tool, next to the 'Text Tool'. Click on top of the two overlapping squares that are below all of the tools representing foreground and background colors and from here you can manipulate them. In this example, HTML color notation 8f6d6d is used.

For the final effect, add a drop shadow effect, which is done by clicking on 'Filters' in the top menu bar, scroll down to 'Light and Shadow' then scroll to 'Drop Shadow'. A box will pop up asking for some specifications, just click 'OK' for now and see the effect it produces. You can always go back and play around with these settings later.

And there you have it! Apply this to the top of your page in Scribus. This is, of course, only a tiny example of what can be done with Gimp. You can create graphics, edit graphics, edit pictures, create animation and much more. What is possible with Gimp is limited only to your creativity. Play around with all of the options, read a complete tutorial, have a little patience, but most importantly have a little fun (I did).

A quick note on Scribus. After you install Scribus and open the program, a small prompt might pop up informing you that you do not have Ghostscript installed. You do not necessarily need this to use Scribus, although you will not be able to use options like 'Print Preview'. Not a big deal, installing Ghostscript is entirely up to you. If you decide to do it,

then follow the instructions from the prompt.

There you have it. I hope this tutorial was informative for you. If you have any questions or comments or if you think I forgot something, please let me know by sending an email to dminsky@tulane.edu or minskyda@gmail.com.