CritLib Chat: Visual Culture/Literacy

Description from CritLib page: "This chat will help us define visual literacy within our contexts and look at the ways critical librarianship can address the unique way visual information can impact and influence critical perspectives on the culture we live in."

Amanda M Meeks
AcornElectric

Getting ready for our #critlib chat on #vizlit! Just a few more minutes before we get started!
Please feel free to introduce yourself!

Violet Fox
@violetbfox

You can find all the questions for this evening's #critlib on visual culture (along with great resources) here: critlib.org/visual-culture/

Before the chat began, a few folks offered some relevant works to assist in further investigation into visual literacy and culture!

April Hathcock
@AprilHathcock

For the #critlib chat tonight I want to point out work done by colleague Nicole Brown, incl new ACRL book. amazon.com/Visual-Literac...
We started with a nice set of introductions from participants.

**AMIA**
@AMIAnet

Hi! This is @ArchivistAriel, chair of AMIA's Access Committee & tweeting fr the @AMIAnet acct tonight, participating in the #critlib chat!

2 YEARS AGO

**Jenna Freedman**
@zinelib

This is Jenna, librarian who wears three hats at @barnlib. Tweeting from NYC, supervised by my cat Farfel. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
Oliver Bendorf
@ohnbendorf

Hi #critlib! Librarian, cartoonist, poet, teacher here, @UWMadisonSLIS, work at DLF, have taught visual thinking, visual literacy, comics.

2 YEARS AGO

April Hathcock
@AprilHathcock

Hi, I'm April, acad librn from NYC. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Lauren Day
@lcaitday

My name is Lauren. I work in an academic library in Michigan. This is my first #critlib chat, though I've lurked before.

2 YEARS AGO

Ryan P. Randall
@foureyedsoul

Hi #critlib! I'm Ryan, a community college librarian in Boise & Nampa, Idaho. Into tonight's topic! Might try more gifs & jpgs than usual?

2 YEARS AGO

Beth
@bethhoppe

Hi #critlib social sciences librarian in Maine here!

2 YEARS AGO

Jasmine Burns
@Jazz_with_Jazz

Hi #critlib! Image technologies & visual literacy librarian at IU Fine Arts Library. Pumped for this chat, it's literally in my job title!!

2 YEARS AGO
Hi #critlib! I'm Stephanie, an art librarian in Savannah, GA.

Hi #critlib! New MLIS grad, all about visual stuffs—very excited for the chat!

#critlib chat starting now! All are welcome! Acad instruction lib*n RT-ing and favoring from toddler bedtime. 😻❤️☀️➡️ twitter.com/violetbox/sta...

Hi it's Emily from Chicago! Ready to learn and chat about #vizlit #critlib

Hi #critlib! I'm Patricia, an art librarian in Savannah. I do reference and instruction.

Hi #critlib! Seems appropriate that I'm late tonight because I was at #imagineOregonState, an outpost of the US Dept of Arts and Culture.
So many art librarians! Thanks for the shout out @arslisp @ARLIS_NA ! #critlib I'll be curious what pub lib* have to say about this topic.

2 YEARS AGO

I'll also be moderating tonight; sending out the first Q in 5 min after we get thru introductions. So so excited for this topic. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

QUESTION ONE:

Q1 How do you define visual literacy and how does visual lit impact and influence our library spaces, intellectually/physically? #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

One of the opening answers introduced independently produced texts & the added value of the visual within what used to be considered temporal or "throwaway" materials.

Jenna Freedman
@zinelib

Since folks are slow to respond to #critlib Q1: Learning to read zines visually as well as textually deepened my understanding of them.

2 YEARS AGO

Lisa Hubbell
@lisahubbell

A1. I think of visual literacy more in terms of museums. Housen and Yenawine's Visual Thinking Strategies vtshome.org/what-is-vts #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
Q1 for me visual literacy is abt the ability to find *and* create meaning/info thru the visual, thru image #critlib

A1 how to read images. I'm thinking via art historical teaching. And it influences us ALL the time #critlib

Late to chat...A1 visual literacy involves close observation & analysis #critlib

#critlib A1: Visual literacy is about understanding what's being communicated explicitly—but also about understanding absence.

A1 now it's more interdisciplinary and about visual communication than anything else #critlib #vizlit #librarianlens

A1. @DenverArtMuseum did great projects in late '80s introducing art novices to skills used by art experts. #critlib denverartmuseum.org/about/research...

The idea of visual literacy being concentrated more upon analysis and synthesis and less on production is brought up.
It is noted that guidelines are critical but they may hold you back from the greater range or strength that can be explored from a given set of visual images. Allow yourself some flexibility.
And we have a great use of visual literacy and culture to close out question 1 with an image from John Carpenter's classic *They Live* (1988), a film that is entirely about visual culture and the way that we "see."

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**QUESTION 1, PT 2:**

Amanda M Meeks  
@AcornElectric

Second pt of Q1: how does visual lit impact and influence our library spaces, intellectually/physically? #critlib

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It appears that no matter whether you are a librarian or an archivist, whether you are dealing with moving images or still images/slides, space management and digitization is a major issue that concerns the entire preservation/information community (although ignoring may not be the answer).

Patricia Gimenez  
@TriciaGimenez

A1.2 - how do we store, hide, ignore, acknowledge, digitize all these old slides/laminated images? #critlib
AMIA
@AMIAnet

A1p2: as an archivist, it has significantly changed the manner in which we deal with storage, space & ways to manage collections. #Critlib

2 YEARS AGO

The topic of evolving the library's physical space visually was one that allowed participants to exchange ideas & discuss things that they have personally considered in their work experience.

Emily
@Shhh_Librarian

A1 p2 so much! From signage to books we communicate a lot through those images & we have to keep that in mind #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Oliver Bendorf
@ohbendorf

Second part of Q1: Things to look at. Color. Light. Image and text collections. Using the chalk/smartboard for visual learners #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Melissa
@melissasmc

@ohbendorf this article taught me so much about color/light/space & human interaction curbed.com/2016/3/2/11140... #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Lisa Hubbell
@lisahubbell

A1. Lots of museum resource centers combine books, objects that can be handled, activities to engage and spark discussion. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

We began to investigate how library space and visual literacy can be connected to privilege and representation. We explored ways to restructure visual landscapes so that they would be supportive and representative of a racially and culturally diverse community.
Jasmine Burns
@Jazz_with_Jazz

Q1pt2 I have zero control of physical lib space but try to make hidden collections visible w/digitization/cataloging/exhibits #critlib

Amanda M Meeks
AcornElectric

What might make these hidden collections valuable from a #critlib perspective? twitter.com/Jazz_with_Jazz...

AMIA
@AMIAnet

This=an excellent way to platform unseen works or advocate collections that need that added "push"! #access #critlib twitter.com/acornelectric/

Annie Pho
@catladylib

There are some ethical q's around visual info! Also for me, thinking abt whose art gets highlighted. #critlib twitter.com/acornelectric/

Amanda M Meeks
AcornElectric

Exactly...who's art is hidden. Not just art, but who's books are on display? #critlib #judgingbooksbytheircovers twitter.com/catladylib/sta...

Nora Almeida
@nora_almeida

A2 visuals communicate cultural context. How do we ensure that culture is relatable / inclusive? #critlib
Melissa
@melissamsmc
#critlib A1.2 so much in our lib spaces is there to communicate visually—what are we saying and NOT saying and purposefully excluding?

2 YEARS AGO

Travis Wagner
@trlwagner
#critlib A1: Important to note also how visual information can propagate misinformation in situations where other literacies may be lacking.

2 YEARS AGO

Amanda M Meeks
Acorn Electric
A1 #vizlit has potential to impact our library spaces physically thru: Signage, creating handouts, spacial design, web design, etc. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Amanda M Meeks
Acorn Electric
And intellectually/as instructors: How we use visual elements may help and hinder learning, accessibility, and approachability. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Beth
@bethhoppe
A1.2 What students see, portraits of people not like them, signage that reifies hierarchy and authority. Welcoming or exclusive? #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Lisa Hubbell
@lisahubbell
@bethhoppe Choices don’t have to be exclusive. Signage can include and name different voices. Portraits can rep more broadly. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
@lisahubbell Agreed, current state of affairs reflects poorly here. #critlib

@foureyedsoul A2 As with other resources, who is represented, & how? Also, to whom & how are we communicating visually / culturally? #critlib

@trlwagner #critlib A2: Crucial to organize visual information in a way that not only discusses perceived differences, but also acknowledges sameness

@AcomElectra A2 Just as we look for bias in scholarly information, it is important to identify bias in visual information. #critlib #vizlit

@bethhoppe Q2 also questions about #vizlit and vision impairment? how do you reconcile with visual media? #critlib

@kellymce @bethhoppe I was wondering that, too! Is there a disability studies approach to #vizlit? #critlib
AMIA
@AMIAnet

A2: critical issues around visual issues remain the same as ever: #representation, #intersectionality, #advocacy, #access. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Travis Wagner
@trlwagner

#critlib A2: Also crucial to note visual literacy is inherently an accessibility issue in the actual ability to see. Ex. ADA compliant sites

2 YEARS AGO

Before we closed out Q3, the topic of bridging communities came up...

Emily
@Shhh_Librarian

A2 I don’t see many people teaching #vizlit or a semblance of it. I like the interdisciplinary POV & think that would be good angle #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Kate Crowe
@kcrowe

A2 analysis of graphic items in instruction =👍. Students are kinda used to doc analysis, not so w images. #critlib twitter.com/AcornElectric/...

2 YEARS AGO

AMIA
@AMIAnet

A2: another critical issue=being able to intersect info science communities on visual issues. We don't mingle enough to discuss. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

QUESTION 3:
Q3 How have you learned of critical issues w/in visual culture/how do you share visual literacy/skills/concepts with colleagues? #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

April Hathcock
@AprilHathcock

A3 I feel like this is a constantly evolving & collaborative process. I miss things that others see all the time and vice versa. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Jasmine Burns
@Jazz_with_Jazz

A3 Attending VTS training next month (vtshome.org) Will teach workshops to teaching faculty & librarians on campus #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Lisa Hubbell
@lisahubbell

@kellymce @bethhoppe Boston @museumofscience and others do lots of visitor research for universal design of exhibits. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Kelly McElroy
@kellymce

A3 oh, I’m thinking of times signage or emoji have come up in meetings, and bridging "what the kids these days think” conversations #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Nora Almeida
@nora_almeida

A3 we have a great ComD program & have discussed working w students to redesign lib logo & signage. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
Jasmine Burns  
@Jazz_with_Jazz

Was asked last week to explain Pinterest to Apparel Merch faculty. They are worried about sources and replicating searches #critlib

Emily  
@Shhh_Librarian

Q3 Working at an art school helps! Talking to Art His profs & others in visual libs too & having an art his degree helps 2 #critlib

Again, the topic of lack of interdisciplinary contact is raised & the topic of specialized labor becomes a topic. Having special classes in one's background or access to Special Collections colleagues is a bonus. But what if that is not an option?

AMIA  
@AMIANet

A3: w/in the film/media archiving comm, I have to reach out to librarian communities/colleagues. This=problematic. Where is collab? #critlib

Ryan P. Randall  
@foureyedsoul

A3 Film studies & media classes. Also reading lots of @giant_robot w high school friends made me aware of representation & #vizlit? #critlib

Beth  
@bethhoppe

A3 Best ally for #vizlit has been spec coll colleagues. So much to unpack from archival sources #critlib
AMIA @AMIAnet

@bethhoppe Right!! And as an media archivist, that is exactly why I feel like our communities should be hanging out more, right? #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Kelly McElroy @kellymce

@bethhoppe so true!! And visual bleeds into tactile/physical so much in special collections. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

AMIA @AMIAnet

A3: in my landscape, all we DO is visual-based. We need more interdisciplinary bridgework. #critlib #letstbefriends

2 YEARS AGO

Amanda M Meeks AcornElectric

A3 I'd like to do more w sharing #vizlit instruction strategies bc it isn't taught in library school/outside of the arts it seems #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Next, a dialogue about graphic novels/comic books & "non-traditional" visuals like emojis. This discussion centered on critical issues of race and privilege, offering valuable links to articles about emoticons and their meanings.

Stephanie @stephliana

Q2 also, differing modes of viz lit: not just photos + charts! #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Allana Mayer @allanaaaaaa

Q2 one of the things I want to talk about more is image manipulation, especially viz. body image + airbrushing, skin colour, etc. #critlib

@AcornElectric - 2 YEARS AGO
Stephanie
@stephliana

Q2: Consider comics as an example: not everyone knows how to read them (well). (is this creeping towards #metaliteracy?) #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Kelly McElroy
@kellymce

And how assumptions that snake people don't read has a complementary assumption that they are wowed/taken in by visuals #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Donna Witek
@donnarosemary

yep. and companion assumption to the first, that reading visual texts isn't reading 😞 #critlib #vizlit twitter.com/kellymce/status...

2 YEARS AGO

April Hathcock
@AprilHathcock

My Mama taught my baby bro how to read using graphic novels and comics. He refused otherwise. #critlib #vizlit twitter.com/donnarosemary/...

2 YEARS AGO

Beth
@bethhoppe

My pre-reading 4 year old is in love with Owly, low-text graphic novel. Amazing for learning narrative. #critlib twitter.com/AprilHathcock/...

2 YEARS AGO

Lisa Hubbell
@lisahubbell

@stephliana Yes! @scottmcccloud Understanding Comics opened my eyes. Chose to read it for paper in Library Management class. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
Allana Mayer
@allanaaaaaaa

I think about representation on our magazine covers more than anything these days. access to Photoshop = fluency in visual lies. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Melissa
@melissamsmc

I wonder if I use too many emoji and then /sign me so clear, so succinct. #critlib twitter.com/kellymce/status...

2 YEARS AGO

Kelly McElroy
@kellymce

A3 oh, I'm thinking of times signage or emoji have come up in meetings, and bridging "what the kids these days think" conversations #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Kelly McElroy
@kellymce

Like, adding non-white skin tones to emoji is a case study of visual representation, right? #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Kelly McElroy
@kellymce

And the fact that white ppl don't use them: theatlantic.com/politics/archi... #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Hailley Fargo
@hailthefargoats

@kellymce looking at emojis also begins to dive into ideas of power and privilege of what images we get to use in Emoji Land. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
Various other conversation was had simply about visual literacy and communications - like typography.

#critlib A3 so many disc. need visual literacy--even typefaces communicate visual information. Any Comic Sans haters out there?

there's a graphic design =professionalism =privilege (access to resources) continuum, too. perfect layout gets your resume noticed. #critlib

Yes! Realizing how polish => power (and is often predicated on privilege) is important to #vizlit & making! #critlib twitter.com/allanaaaaaa/s...
It is in art classes, but it can be tricky to try to teach both--the key is combining them. #critlib
twitter.com/allanaaaaaa/s...

2 YEARS AGO

but if we only offer Word at the public library, how will underprivileged patrons get a chance to
even try out inDesign? #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

QUESTION 4:

Last one! Q4 How do you teach or address specific visual literacy concepts/issues within your
community and library? #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

I love the way this topic has been stretched and pushed in ways I couldn't have expected! #critlib
#vizlit = <3

2 YEARS AGO

A4 As #scholcomm librn I do a lot of outreach on the importance of citing visual sources.
Plagiarism is a real prob at all levels. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

A4: working with zines is a great opportunity for #vizlit. I ask students how images complement
or complicate the text. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
A4 as the designated #vizlit librarian on my campus, I sneak it in everywhere I go. Also tend to get invited to cool committees #critlib

@Jazz_with_Jazz

2 YEARS AGO

My job is so new (created 1yr ago!) so there are no guidelines. It makes it easy for me to collaborate with anyone and everyone #critlib

@Jazz_with_Jazz

2 YEARS AGO

A4 I don’t get to teach formally, but with front-desk Qs, I enthuse about The Noun Project + Commons when they ask about clipart. #critlib

@allanaaaaaaa

2 YEARS AGO

During this question, everyone shared a variety of different projects, while two individuals discussed working with silent films as a way to establish visual literacy and engagement.

Hailley Fargo

@hailthefargoats

Q4: I did a whole workshop with elementary students with silent short films: #vizlit and how to tell a story with pictures #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Hailley Fargo

@hailthefargoats

Link to story and rough lesson plan: publish.illinois.edu/digital-litera... #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Beth

@bethhoppe

Q4 i have students explore library stuff as archaeological artifact what do they glean from what they see and how to engage with it #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
Also sometimes ask then to watch films with no sound, what do they see that gives context #critlib

@bethhoppe silent films allow people to focus on how a story is told without words which is a powerful skill to have #critlib

@hailthefargoats Yes, so good! Asking them to reflect on the same piece as only visual, sound, or transcript can be powerful #critlib

@bethhoppe sounds amazing. will crib this for sure 🧐 #critlib #vizlit

Others shared documents for all to access! Great opportunities to learn from each other as a community and share ideas.

I (painstakingly) mapped VL to framework & IL to make connections for specific assignments and objectives: docs.google.com/document/d/1w3... #critlib

A4 the mapping was a way to make #vizlit more interdisciplinary #critlib
Amanda M Meeks
AcornElectric

A4 this is super subjective, mind you, but has helped me come up with lessons and objectives that tie in multiple concepts #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Amanda M Meeks
AcornElectric

A4 @stephliana & I developed an anti-stereotypical character dev workshop for comm arts students--which was fun and tied in #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

*Kate Crowe
@kcrowe

A2 We have a set of pre-digital altered print photographs that we use in instruction in archives. #critlib #vizlit

2 YEARS AGO

*Kate Crowe
@kcrowe

A2 analysis of graphic items in instruction =✍️. Students are kinda used to doc analysis, not so w images. #critlib twitter.com/AcornElectric/...

2 YEARS AGO

Stephanie
@stephliana

@kcrowe Yes! (Are the distinctions btw "creative" and "factual" text-based works more obvious to them than in visual works?) #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Donna Witek
@donnarosemary

stuff like this makes my heart sing--our students are so smart re: this stuff. #critlib #vizlit twitter.com/stephliana/sta...

2 YEARS AGO
Beth
@bethhoppe

Asked a class to do article summaries as a series of tweets, use of emoji was amazing. #critlib twitter.com/donnarosemary/...

2 YEARS AGO

Donna Witek
@donnarosemary

A4: teaching students to read (visually) the search interfaces they are using to explore their topics for rhetorical info #critlib #vizlit

2 YEARS AGO

Melissa
@melissamsmc

#critlib A4 there are so many VL things I'm itching to teach--emoji, political ads, instagram (& creator rights), etc times infinity

2 YEARS AGO

Allana Mayer
@allanaaaaaaa

A4 ideally I'd like to run programs on photo-editing + design/layout basics, pitch it as a job skill that can boost one's resume #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Travis Wagner
@trlwagner

#critlib A4: I tell my students that they are free and able to complicate the potential interpretations of any and all visual information

2 YEARS AGO

AMIA
@AMIAnet

I recommend looking at people like @footage & his work on, well, ANYTHING. His writings & films capture visual culture perfectly. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
Ryan P. Randall
@foureyedsoul

A4 It's not quite teaching #vizlit, but I intentionally use gifs in my slides in order to make ideas (& library) more relatable. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Ryan P. Randall
@foureyedsoul

A4.1 We're also planning to install GIMP (free, akin to Photoshop) on laptops students can borrow (whenever they finally arrive...). #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Kate Crowe
@kcrowe

Q4 Goals of writ/rhet classes map well to #critlib/#critped & can to #vizlit. Bonus: all freshmen have to take them. twitter.com/AcornElectric/

2 YEARS AGO

AMIA
@AMIAnet

I also recc that people attend @homemoveday when it happens & bring their home movies. It=participatory & functions as community. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Stephanie
@stephliana

Q4 w/comm arts students, I have them consider the sources they draw from- what can they tell from just the images? what’s missing? #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Stephanie
@stephliana

Q4 as @AcornElectric said, also built a workshop to consider stereotype/representation in images, and the histories of THOSE images #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
Jasmine Burns
@Jazz_with_Jazz

Out of curiosity, anyone have experience with the International Visual Literacy Association? (ivla.org) #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Allana Mayer
@allanaaaaaa

A4 I would love to know what others have in mind for archival visual resources, esp. photo/video digitization + sharing. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Lisa Hubbell
@lisahubbell

@Shhh_Librarian @nora_almeida In a recent #critlib chat @hsifnihplod suggested starting a #critLAM chat. Museum folks interested too.

2 YEARS AGO

Ryan P. Randall
@foureyedsoul

@Shhh_Librarian @nora_almeida I think there's a TON of critical reflection in museum studies that libraries can learn from. #critlib

2 YEARS AGO

Amanda M Meeks
AcornElectric

Thanks so much for this UH-MAZING chat, #critlib!!! I feel like I have so much to think about and I welcome any follow up chats/emails/ideas

2 YEARS AGO

Kelly McElroy
@kellymce

Thank you @AcornElectric and everyone else! Got lots of new thoughts on some displays I'm doing... #critlib

2 YEARS AGO
And now, since this was a chat about visual literacy, let’s have a look at all the fabulous gifs & goodbyes that everyone tweeted!

Thanks for a great #critlib, @AcornElectric! pic.twitter.com/QDY7FPjO4x
Here’s my contribution to the #critlib #vizlit everyone is awesome gif party.
pic.twitter.com/b8KDGhU10R

@JennaFreedman @ZINELIB · 2 YEARS AGO

Donna Witek
@donnaorsemary

@AcornElectric thank you for moderating, this was fabulous #critlib #vizlit

2 YEARS AGO
Goodnight #critlib thanks for a fab chat pic.twitter.com/o1N57tE6Y

JASMINE BURNS @JAZZ_WITH_JAZZ - 2 YEARS AGO

#critlib pic.twitter.com/x828XzD7Dg

MELISSA @MELISSAMSMC - 2 YEARS AGO
Emily
@Shhh_Librarian

@AcornElectric This was fantastic! Thank you so much! #critlib #vizlit

2 YEARS AGO

Thanks for a great #critlib, @AcornElectric & everyone! Really hoping we do more #critLAM & #vizlit in the future! pic.twitter.com/4LZMozcykp

Ryan P. Randall @FOUREYEDSOUL - 2 YEARS AGO

Lisa Hubbell
@lisahubbell

Many thanks to @AcornElectric and all #critlib contributors tonight, for mashing my worlds together and bringing up new perspectives.

2 YEARS AGO
Thank you, @AcornElectric, this was such a fabulous #critlib! pic.twitter.com/uJW6ocZLXp

STEPHANIE @STEPHLIANA - 2 YEARS AGO

Ariel Schudson
@ArchivistAriel

Hahahaha! Next time the chat on #vizlit should be all awesome gifs!!!! #critlib

2 YEARS AGO