

# Drawing up Theory: The Use of Drawing Exercise to Create Critical Thinking and Awareness

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## **Abstract**

**In my attempts to developing students' critical and reflexive world-view, I have seen three problems: the first was students' lack of ability to critically problematize their learning. The second was students' unawareness of their own preconceived ideas on important theoretical concepts. The third was the difficulty in learning abstract concepts. To find a way to tackle these problems, I developed an associative drawing-exercise. In this paper I will describe and reflect on this pedagogic method. The aim of this paper is to reflect upon how visual practices, such as drawing, can be used in learning processes where abstract theoretical concepts are to be learned and understood.**

**My empirical material is based student-interviews as well as autoethnography. Theoretically I lean on a cultural Bourdieuan and feminist power-perspective., and to understandpractical epistemology I use Young, Schön, Dewey and Aristotle, and to hooks, Taguchi and Selander & Kress for creating critical agency through multi-modal ways of learning.**

**My main findings are, that by creating an anomaly for students, by using drawings and communal painting, instead of expected traditional-desk-lecturing**

**for the “teaching” of abstract theoretical concepts, students learn more. The drawings become tools for illuminating preconceptions, raising awareness, and getting a fuller understanding of the meaning of concepts. By drawing and discussing together, students are faced with different images of the same concept and are enabled to develop (self)critical approaches to their learning. Through the aid of a simple drawing exercise, students have thus managed to both learn, and develop a critical approach to learning.**

### **Keywords**

Drawing, Theoretical concepts, Critical reflection, Learning by doing, stereotypes.