

# To Draw the Line: Resharing Authority and Taking Care of Drawing as an Emergent Agent in Artistic Research

Marika Tervahartiala  
Aalto University

## Biography

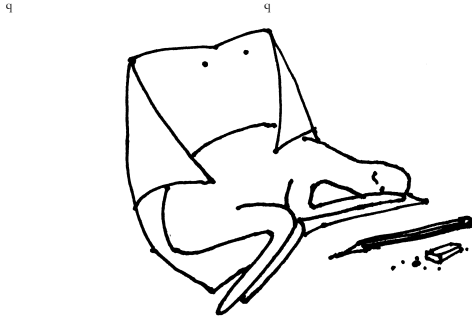
**Marika Tervahartiala** is a practising art educator, expert on participatory and community arts and a doctoral candidate finalizing her thesis in art education in Aalto University, Finland. She is an autoethnographer and a drawer. A curious lifelong learner and visual thinker: most often researching, meaning-making, being present and participating by drawing, with Drawing and in drawings. Otherwise she is probably reading comics and drinking tea.

## Abstract

**Drawing (a non-human entity) and a human researcher-drawer offer a caring visual-verbal research exploration about drawn care and care for Drawing as part of ongoing research. The artistic research is a combination of scholarly drawing, drawn bi-directional autoethnographies created in inseparable cooperation with an emergent agent: Drawing. The researcher searches for ways to care for her co-researcher Drawing and reader in the text and in/with/by drawing. The words and visuals in this article aim to complement and complement each other; their open-endedness mirroring the process[es] of not- and [un]knowing in/with/by Drawing.**

## Keywords

**Drawing, visual autoethnography, artistic research, unknowing**



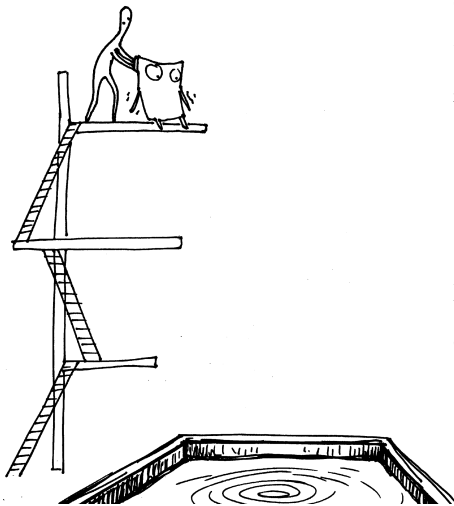
### **To Draw the Line: Resharing Authority and Taking Care of Drawing as an Emergent Agent in Artistic Research**

Drawing (a non-human entity) and a human researcher-drawer offer a caring visual-verbal research exploration about drawn care and care for Drawing as part of ongoing research. The artistic research is a combination of scholarly drawing, drawn bi-directional autoethnographies created in inseparable cooperation with an emergent agent: Drawing. The researcher searches for ways to care for her co-researcher Drawing and reader in the text and in/with/by drawing. The words and visuals in this article aim to complement and compliment each other; their open-endedness mirroring the process[es] of not and [un]knowing in/with/by Drawing.

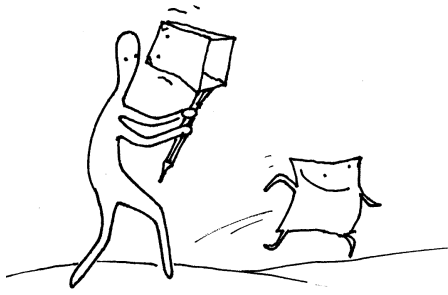


### **Radical Care Manifesto of Drawing**

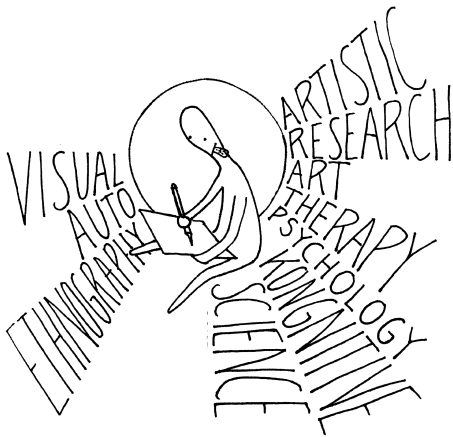
Drawing cares for becoming[s], the wonder[s] of what might be, and as such it is stepping



## TO DRAW THE LINE

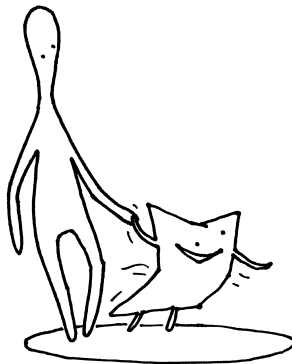


away from assigned paths (Sousanis, 2015b). Drawing cares for the reader and the drawer-researcher in other ways than words do. As a return service, the drawer has an ethical responsibility (Israel & Hay, 2006) to take care of the Drawing, an emergent non-human entity. Showing care for a drawn “being” in research is quite radical.



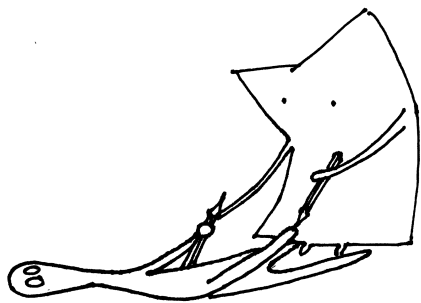
Radically caring means trying to build up a dialog with an unknown reader: to have and to hold the receiver in mind throughout the whole drawing-writing-researching process.

To withdraw from knowing for the Other and instead not- and unknowing is care. An attempt to avoid any reductive popularization and polarization is an act of care. In an academic text, it is radical and caring to consciously arouse emotions, to draw as much (or more) as to write and to strive to touch the senses as we are not just “...disembodied...afloat in a sea of words...” (Sousanis, 2015b, p. 55).



It shows radical care to cyclically ask—and to ask again. To respond without being sure, certain or knowledgeable—or making such an impression. To share bits/lines of

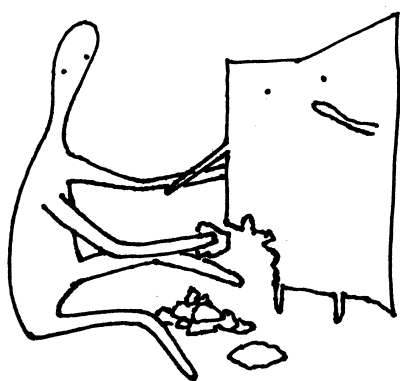
## TO DRAW THE LINE



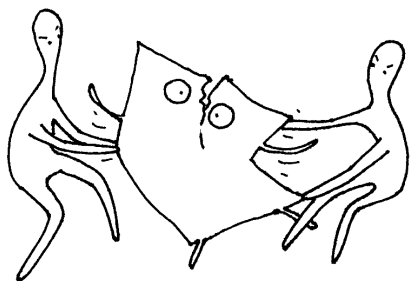
re-search-understanding(s) as perforated, porous and sponge-like. It is radical not to express [re]search [outcomes] solely in words: not to explain the visual puncture or not to have captions in connection with the images. It is caring to act against guidelines if they're devaluing or threatening the entity and the autonomy of Drawing.



To give Drawing an equal space to influence in an academic text is radical—and to let it take care of the content, the reader and the drawer on its own terms is caring. The autonomy of Drawing requires the researcher to withhold from defining in words what drawn care is, could or should be—instead to re-search it by drawing, in drawing and with Drawing, even by withdrawing and therefore resharing the authority of the research.

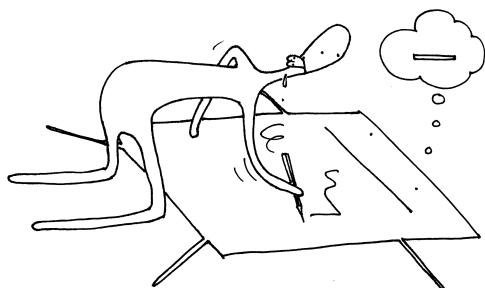


It shows radical care to claim that knowing and knowledge [of drawn care] is not resolved, rigid, locked and fixedly established, but could fluidly be built caringly together in/with/by drawing and Drawing—and the unknown receiver as well.



### The Caring Drawing & Drawer

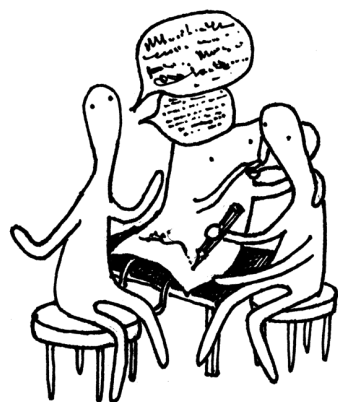
The comic-like figures I draw most often are a drawing and untitled human-like being(s): the caring co-authors of this artistic research article. In my exposition, drawing is “...an emergent method and methodology, an event and an entity, in the epistemology of a constant state of becoming. When utilized, harnessed and respected to the potential of its emergent being as an oddity and a chameleon spirit, it can turn every disciplinary hue to its own, with no harm done to its assigning itself fluently to the post-disciplinary transformation.” (Tervahartiala, 2020, p. 103).



I see Drawing as “...a living process for communicating and understanding...” (Four Arrows, 2008, p. 6). To me, it is also an ontology, a being, even my co-autoethnographer, and as such it has to be referred to with a capital letter. With a lowercase d, drawing is an artistic method of producing a picture. If concurrently, referred to with a slash: D/drawing. Drawing’s authority and knowledge are far beyond me to



## TO DRAW THE LINE

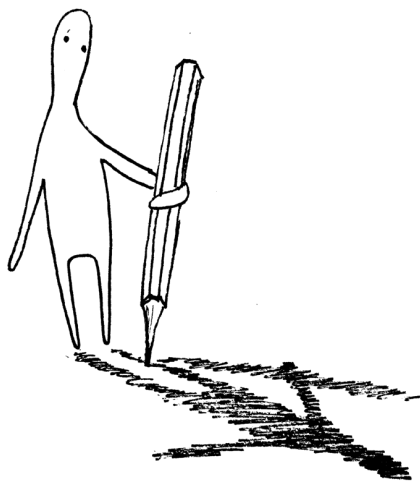


articulate (Tervahartiala, 2020). Therefore, I recognize, respect and care for it on its terms: the structure of the paper is also organized to give space for d/Drawing(s).

These delineations, entities fooling around in my pictures, have developed over the years (published, but not drawn for the first time in Kivilakoski & Tervahartiala, 2015). With every line drawn, they have been becoming more definite: sharpening their appearance and voices, negotiating how they want to proceed [with]in the drawing process. I've learned to trust Drawing, knowing what will be(come) in the artistic research process and how it should be cared for as a knower, as an entity with equal authority.

The presented process[es] of drawing doesn't illustrate finished thoughts or research outcomes. Drawing is artistic research: coming to [un]know[ing] in itself. Drawing and I are devoted to a mutual process of co-researching, co-creating and coming to an understanding together. The attached quite simple comic-like drawings do not aim to be art, nor to be interpreted in the context of arts.

## TO DRAW THE LINE

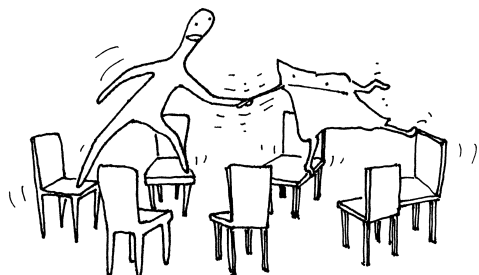


Their artistic “value” or “quality” is irrelevant, as drawing here is a research method, methodology and even ontology.

The article focuses on the multitude of drawn radical care. Firstly, my holistic wellbeing as a researcher and being a whole authentic “me” is dependent on d/Drawing. The question of radical care this article encompasses is bound to my and Drawing’s relationship as co-researchers. Therefore, I care for Drawing, as it equally cares for me. We have a shared research focus of radical care between us visual autoethnographers: a human—a non-human entity. Multidimensional research perspectives are cumulative and iterative: the care Drawing shows for me (and vice versa) broadens to enclose the readers, too. The multitude of care becomes possible only if Drawing has genuine autonomy and authority: opportunities to act.

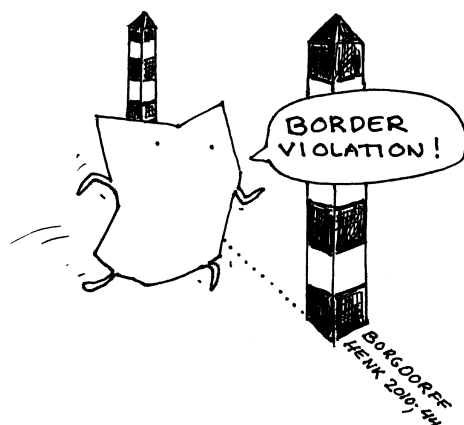
Our inextricably entangled drawn autoethographies arise from our personalities: it is not possible to change the “style” or “outlooks” of drawing(s) as I am not a singular drawer. Concrete drawings are the

## TO DRAW THE LINE



visual manifestation or exposition of my and Drawing's ongoing research dialog, of our double-exposure autoethnographies and search for caring co-existence.

### Background & Orientation

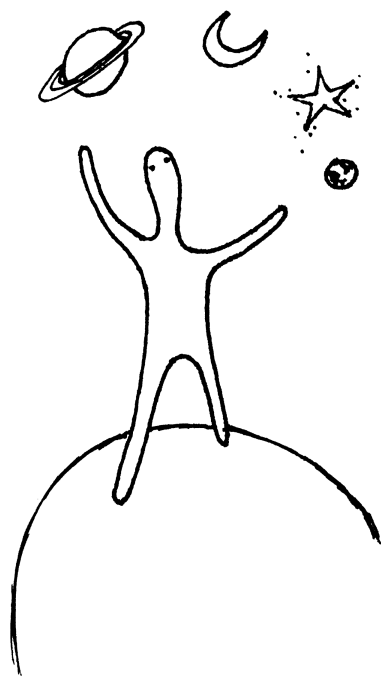


I've always surrounded myself with imaginative ways to combine words and visuals: with comics, cartoons, innovatively illustrated and written stories (e.g. Selznick, 2007), novels expanding the boundaries of written/drawn/artwork (Foer, 2010; Hall, 2007; Yli-Juonikas, 2012). Visual story[t/y]elling is my way of being in the world and grasping it. Also, as a researcher I am theoretically drawn to these themes, approaching drawing from kaleidoscopic perspectives (Kiilakoski & Tervahartiala, 2015; Raita, 2006; Tervahartiala, 2010, 2020). In my theorization of drawing I've relied on research on comics and their theorization (e.g., Eisner, 1985; Kuttner, Sousanis, & Weaver-Hightower, 2017; Lehtimaja, 2006, 2008, 2009; McCloud, 1993, 1994, 2006; Sousanis, 2015a, 2015b,





## TO DRAW THE LINE

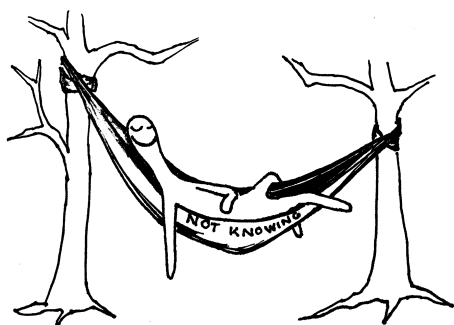


2012), spiritual research (e.g., Anderson & Linder, 2019; Clements, 2011) and visual [auto]ethnography (e.g., Bochner & Ellis, 2003; Ingold, 2011; Rambo, 2007).

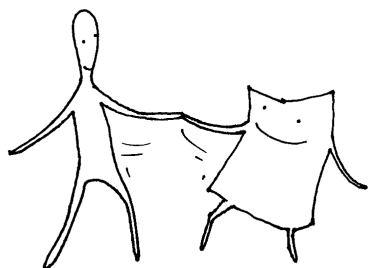
Overall, my research orientation and the foundation for expressing myself visually inextricably arises from the fields of art education and especially artistic research (Mäkelä & Routarinne 2006, Mäkelä & O'Riley, 2012; Varto 2009, 2013, 2017). My art educational view is based on transformative, liberating and critical traditions, emphasizing the Finnish perspective. These diverse approaches are knit (but not forced) together to protect and foster Drawing. A care-full reader might see in the drawings also distant echoes from Buddhism, [pedagogical] love and dialog(ical approaches), respect for and of Other(s), maybe even hints of the philosophies of Levinas and Freire (Freire 1970, 1998; McLaren, 2009; scholarly comics by Lehtimaja, 2006, 2009).

Caring with, in and by drawing is an entanglement of lines, sidetracks and trails in the terrains of autoethnography and artistic research. In this research, Drawing does and

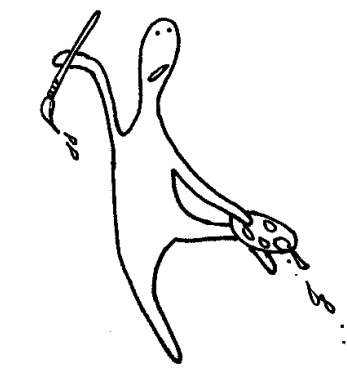
## TO DRAW THE LINE



is inseparable visual autoethnography and artistic research. These drawings do belong to scholarly visual journaling, and at times they serve in visualizing information and may show a glimpse of critical art educational approach. Art such as D/drawing is indeed a strange tool (Noë, 2015) and the complex should be allowed to remain complex (Sousanis, 2015b).



My and Drawing's goal in the spirit of Sousanis' research is an expedition toward an approach to "...discover new ways of seeing, to open spaces for possibilities, and to find 'fresh methods' for animating and awakening" (Sousanis, 2015b, p. 27)—and taking care! Our contribution could also be considered as an exposition in accordance with Arlander (2017). With my foolish [pun intended] research companion Drawing, we visually and verbally aim to communicate "...to galvanize the heart as well as the mind; to rouse his readers from their existential slumber. Not just to present them with a series of

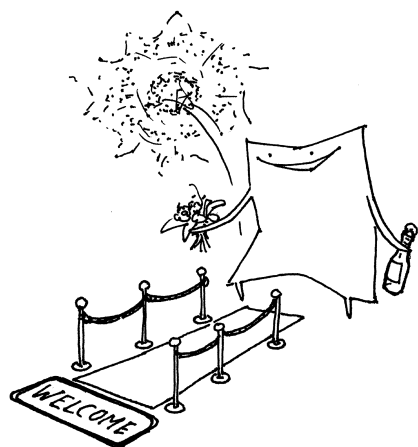


## TO DRAW THE LINE



intriguing ideas or philosophical approaches”  
(Held, 2013, p. 9).

We’re aiming to unveil in/with/by drawing these underlying philosophical and theoretical assumptions and riding this miscellaneous herd on with a thin (0.8mm) marker pen, stirring and re-orienting, unorganized and meandering, as Drawing avoids all linearity: here inconsistency is not a virtue but a necessity. The written part aims to mirror the process of artistic research: not polishing away marks of stumbling or blundering, but allowing the traces of wandering and repetitive vagabond thoughts to remain observable.



### Dear Reader,

To my understanding, having a sincere and respectful relationship with Other(s) is essential for authentic communication.

Therefore we, the two equal authors of this article, seek to communicate caringly, without hiding behind wordy words or artsy lines. We sincerely try to keep on revealing, unveiling and drawing out bit by bit our sifting not and unknowing.

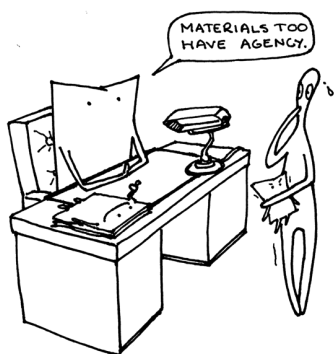


## TO DRAW THE LINE

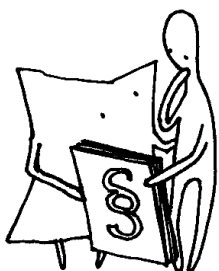


The non-verbal openness of the drawings aims to be caring: they're meant to be "theSpace" to remain doubtful or confused.

D/drawing is asking and wondering instead of asserting and knowing. Guttorm (2015b) similarly describes writing as an inquiry and suitably poetically writes [about] the research process(es).



Drawing and I are quite exposed, as we have decided not to have explanatory verbal coverage of/for the drawings. We have been following Scarles' (2010) thought, "Where words fail, visuals ignite," but we're also aware that we might have failed in our attempt at drawn care and care for Drawing. What if our verbal safety net is too loosely woven, if the drawings don't hold up and hold true?

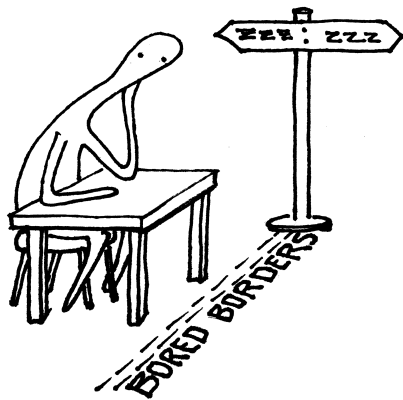


In our vulnerable position, we ask you to meet us halfway as a gesture of goodwill. Let yourself be mindful, as "Overcoming a linear, static view requires such a shift in awareness" (Sousanis, 2015b, p. 44). Allow yourself to wonder-ponder, not fixing your thoughts

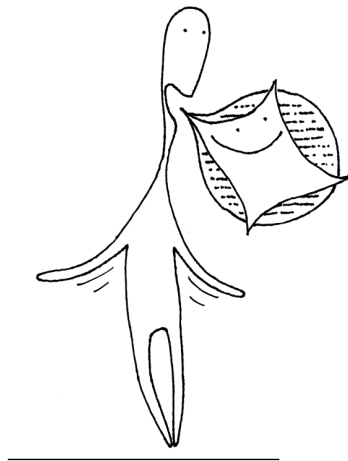
## TO DRAW THE LINE



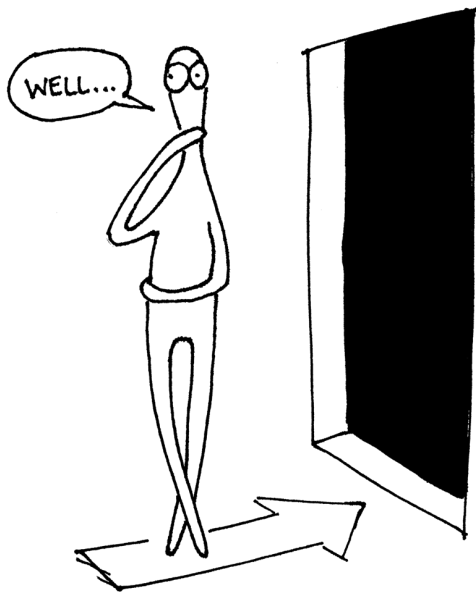
urgently on the spot[light; line<sup>ii</sup>]. Take a break; let go of the haste to get ahead [in] reading. In drawings lie possibilities for your gaze and mind to wander, to achieve a moment of being in touch with and taking care of yourself.



Drawing belongs to the contemplative (artistic) methods and practices for staying non-judgmentally observant. These vary from contemplative photography (Tanska & Tanska, 2020) to observational sketching (Heath, Chapman, & The Morgan Centre Sketchers, 2018) and creative visual/written journaling (Shields, 2016). Words are an important tool in interpreting observations, but as Tanska and Tanska (2020) state about contemplative photography, language is often an obstacle to immediate observation and presence. The same applies to drawing. Prejudices and internalized perceptions of academic writing, and drawing may also be an unconscious obstacle preventing “being with.” Tanska and Tanska describe language as “...an interpretive network spread over the world that compares, classifies, evaluates, and

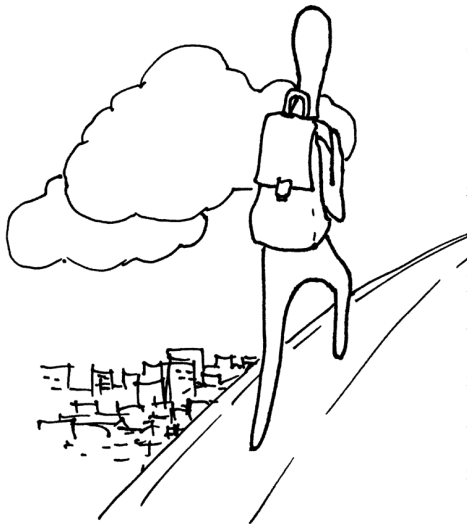


## TO DRAW THE LINE



stores” (Tanska & Tanska, 2020, p. 70, transl. by author). All artistic research methods, including drawing[s], guide to being steadfastly observant and keeping up persistent receptiveness. Drawing tries to find out how to endorse and remain lingering in open-endedness.

Drawn slips and surges, ponderings, wonderings and wanderings are all bound to a non-judgmental research mindset. For me, a human researcher, the act of drawing and the entity of Drawing are a constant source of awe, wonder and curiosity. Drawing encourages me to be amazed, enchanted; to think further and to daringly ask as many questions as needed or wanted. To take my time. To mess rather than to clear things up, to stir more, to blend and mix. In visual “what ifs” lie sudden sanctuaries and stillness.



Drawings let the question(s and answers) unfold line by line: condensing and becoming more and more focused with all the lines drawn, revealing a different perspective or the multiplicity of readings. To sketch, to produce a picture, is a pocket edition exploration in

## TO DRAW THE LINE

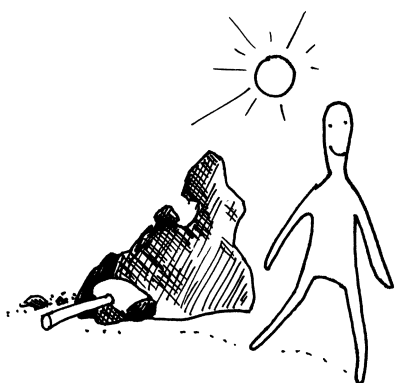


lines. Beyond clear self-awareness, without my consent, I'm drawn into the unknown whiteness of my journal's pages, turning them into blundering maps of getting lost. Or found?

### Desire Paths

My dad worked as a small provincial town gardener. Years ago, he had an idea of making paths in the city gardens without planning, by just letting the citizens freely choose their routes, paving the routes only afterwards.

Desire lines or paths is a term used for paths formed without knowing beforehand the most popular route. It is not necessarily the easiest, shortest or most economical route, but a desire path can be in other ways meaningful for its users (scenery, excitement, personal memories, etc.) Shortcuts confronting the existing city infrastructure are desire lines, too.



Similarly to desire lines, several novels play with the idea of “choose your own adventure”: the reader making choices about the storyline. The author may also spread it beyond a

## TO DRAW THE LINE



concrete book: either online or in the real world (e.g., Hall, 2007; Yli-Juonikas, 2012).

The storyline of this article is loose. It is as repetitive as the process of drawing—and withdrawing from any pre-set order to approach this story in and of words and visuals.

Disruptions of the storyline come close to our upcoming research discussing the possibilities to publish artistic research drawings

“otherwise.” So does also a recent art educational dictionary resembling a three-part flipbook (Ylityöpisto-kollektiivi, 2021). In the dictionary, words and images are equal actors whose relationships and meanings are conducted by the way the viewer-reader uses and reads the book. Flipping and opening pages into different combinations create kinds of desire paths. In addition, the free order of reading the drawings of this article mirrors the artistic research process: the diverse and parallel ways of knowing and viewing. Readers of research are rarely offered such freedom or multitudes of layers. New publication platforms [e.g. Research Catalogue] are to offer these possibilities.

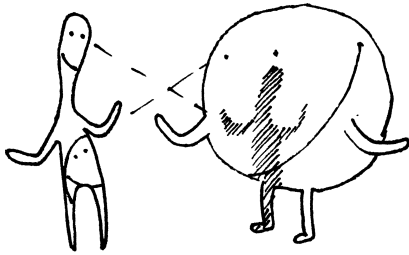




## TO DRAW THE LINE



As an act of care, the reader's freedom to move around in this article is emphasized: chapters and pictures can be read in free order and plenty of spacious no-man's-land drawings have been offered. Drawings and text are organized with care into a constellation: not fixed but negotiable and playful. The drawings lead the reader to observe where their "walks" and wandering gazes will take them. Where will readers' verbal-visual paths [between] drawing[s] – and text! – form without planning? How with the help of drawings does one take a desire path through an academic article?

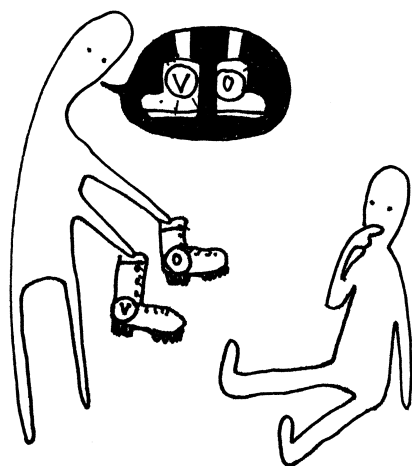


Should the drawing or painting be understood as a final image to be inspected and interpreted, as is conventional in studies of visual culture, or should we rather think of it as a node in a matrix of trails to be followed by observant eyes? Are drawings or paintings of things in the world, or are they like things in the world, in the sense that we have to find our ways through and among them, inhabiting them as we do the world itself? (Ingold, 2011, p. 577)



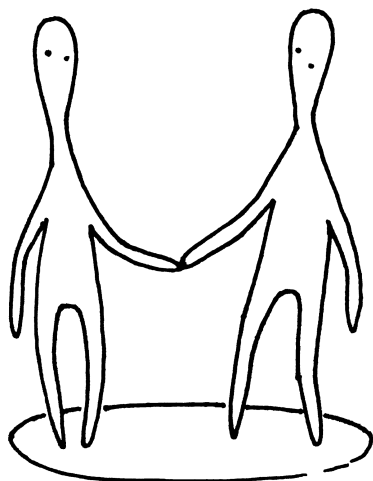
With(in) drawings, the reader can easily move around and aside the linearity of the text. The reader has possibilities to participate in the

## TO DRAW THE LINE



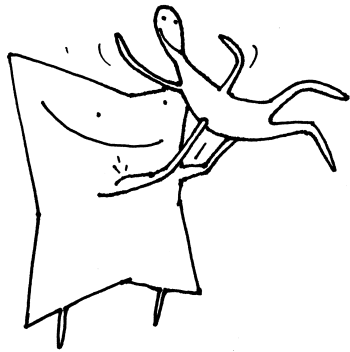
construction of the drawings<sup>iii</sup>, their meanings. According to my interpretation of radical care, the reader has the right to roam and explore. Drawing is and drawings are the anti-totalizing force of this article: the possibility to take a hike in and with the drawings. As Fitch aptly puts it:

Art has to resonate with an audience – to encourage them to intuit and to be conscious of their own intuition. If it is ‘too finished’ it can become more like a magic trick where the effort of the viewer is to wonder how it was made rather than what it is doing to me. I like it when a work of art leaves parts for a viewer to complete, or, I suppose you could say, leaves room for one to draw his or her own conclusions from it. I think drawing therefore is a way to manifest an act of curiosity. There are many ways to get from Point A to Point B and drawing can be that very personal journey. (Fitch, 2011, p. 149)



Researchers’ need to draw-point out and pave the road for the reader is the challenging inconsistency here. How does one avoid unnecessary patronizing [guide]lines or verbal guiding? As Lorri Neilsen claims in the context of poetic inquiry, “We use language and symbol systems to capture, or fix, at least momentarily, to give our discoveries or

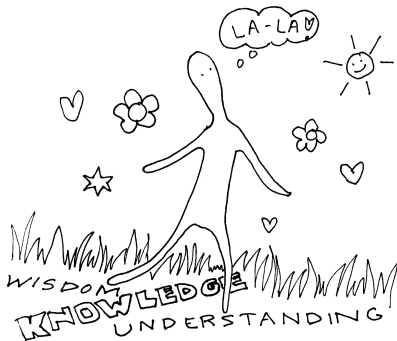
## TO DRAW THE LINE



creations weight. But ultimately, we know we must let go. Everything, finally, falls away” (Cox, 2008, p. 104). How do we let go of the reader? How do we not take too much care? The insight of the impossibility of knowing [anything] for the Other [person] is familiar in Western psychology as well as in Buddhist texts. Even quotes in social media are willing to describe the impossibility of walking a mile in another person’s shoes.<sup>iv</sup>

The dichotomy lies in the researcher-drawer’s contradicting desires:

1. To take care of the reader and respect the readers’ free will to take whatever path seems right for him/her/it.
2. As an author to welcome, embrace and let go of the urge to assure the reader of the excellence of a particular chosen route.



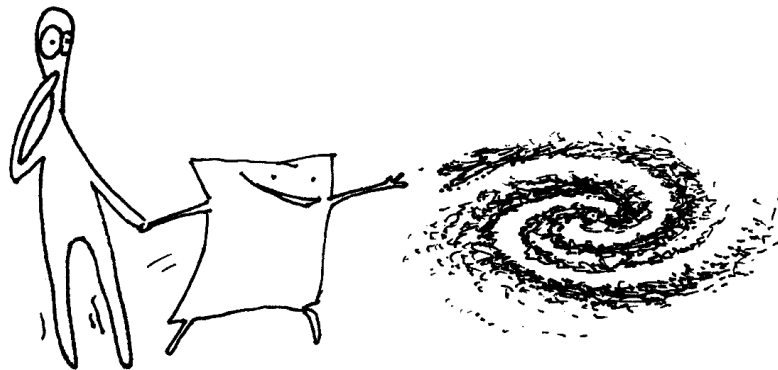
No doubt, many readers would enjoy the exact predictability of an academic article’s established structures as they “know” for the reader how to proceed. The proven and habitual ways to take over texts are effortless compared to new and still unfamiliar ways of reading (research) [e.g., Research Catalogue].

## TO DRAW THE LINE

Drawings are here for a mindset of a curious explorer: to seize and embrace the unknown and unknowing, all things yet-not-known and becoming. As Ingold summarizes, “Could it be that images do not stand for things but rather help you find them?” (Ingold, 2011, p. 577). In this article, we would love to see you form your very own desire path or line: a route in/with/of Drawing’s lines.

Rather – and this is our second conclusion – we must recognize in the power of the imagination the creative impulse of life itself in continually bringing forth the forms we encounter, whether in art, through reading, writing or painting, or in nature, through walking in the landscape.

Remember: the line does not represent the fish. (Ingold, 2011, p. 610)

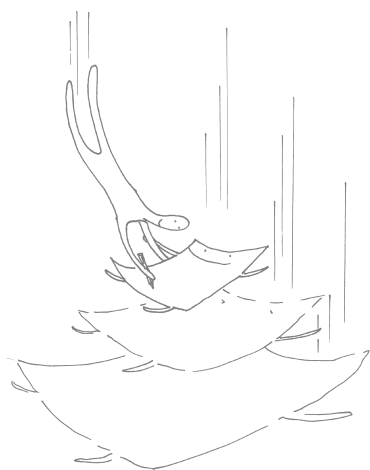


## TO DRAW THE LINE



### Lured to Drawn Care

This chapterish verbal part clarifies drawing as care for the reader. The aim is to lure the reader into drawing: to the visual meaning-making and [un]knowing of another kind. You'd better keep an eye on the slippery lines (mis)leading you in(to) the edges—it just might be fun! With drawings, you have better chances to avoid exhaustion as they take care of your reading-absorbing-endurance—just as the poems in Robin Cox's poetical inquiries offer additional entry points to the content of the research and simultaneously resting spots or reflective pauses (Cox, 2008). Equally, drawings are oases for withdrawals from organized reading(s); safe havens for participation and disagreement.



Maybe you'll find yourself interrupting reading the words on/line(online) and gazing at the drawings instead, choosing your own desire line(s). Drawing relies on your imagination: your ability to fulfill blanks, the empty spaces-places with whatever you desire. [Draw one, if you dare!]



## TO DRAW THE LINE

You might also get lost in drawings. It may also happen with words. The possibility to get lost, to end up in unknown places, is part of the drawn care we're offering.



This article isn't a part of a coloring or activity book, but the reader transforms the content into interaction, into a visual-verbal dialog. Just grab a pen and draw, write, color outside the lines! Or are you the one running with scissors? Why settle for what the researcher and drawer visually or literally offers? Within reach lies in lines the possibility to discover, to imagine and to continue the thought we've set in motion. As the "...rhythmic interplays of action, perception, and cognition at the heart of



Drawing..." (Kantrowitz, Fava, & Brew, 2017, p. 52) belong to the reader, too.

### **From Non-thinking to Conscious Not- and Unknowing**

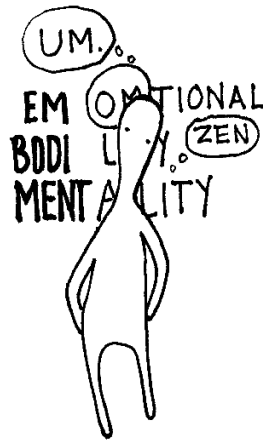
Kantrowitz et al. (2017) draw out cognitive processes of drawing layered and complex, including "...thoughtful and considered inner dialogs – sometimes verbal, sometimes very difficult to put into words – as well as non-thinking (i.e., procedural responses and routines that lie beyond the reach of conscious awareness)" (Kantrowitz et al., 2017, p. 52). In their research, the drawing process unveils itself as "...a subtle and choreographed dance between the inner and outer

## TO DRAW THE LINE



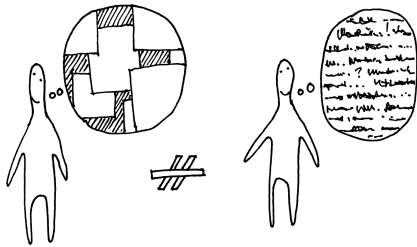
worlds of expert drawers, as thoughts and perceptions were externalized, reconfigured, and revised in lines and marks” (Kantrowitz et al., 2017, p. 52).

Besides non-thinking, the challenging concepts of not-knowing and unknowing have to be drawn out – or as Varto (2013) discusses artistic research practice, as “otherwise than knowing.” The rationale for not-knowing and unknowing lies in the artistic research process. Artistic [research] methods demand the artist/researcher give up the authority to – or at least share it with – “art” (here: Drawing).



In the context of care, not-knowing is apprehension: it is accepting that (fully) understanding the needs of the other is out of reach. It is literally not knowing how to care for another being from one’s singular perspective. Not-knowing means persevering without affirming or passing any interpretation of the other or the care. Grasping with intellect or with emotion doesn’t help to care more or to care more aptly: only accepting the entirety of not-knowing brings along and turns into care. The same applies whether caring for the reader or caring for Drawing. As the

## TO DRAW THE LINE



individual needs for care are shifting and variable, the true act of care, the rightful response, is to remain in the state of not-knowing. Not-knowing is ethical care toward an unknown emergent entity. As a human researcher I cannot know or define the essence of non-human Drawing. The drawer-researcher has to withdraw from knowing/drawing and let Drawing know/draw instead.



On the other hand, in order to make care and caring possible, unknowing is also necessary: the conscious ripping off of previous impressions and assumptions of care and of the “Other.” Care isn’t only not-knowing but also unknowing: deconstructing assumptions and expectations, especially of the Other, whether a human or non-human entity. Readers here have been taken care of like this: authors giving up on beliefs and guesses about readers of academic articles. Unknowing eventually creates a space for The Other[?]s need] to be and to become. Care becomes apparent. Unknowing is caring as it clears space for openness and acceptance to emerge. They are [at] the heart of care.





## TO DRAW THE LINE

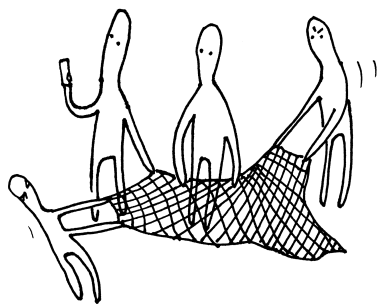


Unknowing with[in] drawing and with Drawing comes close to contemplation. It requires settling down for drawing and withDrawing [pun intended] like a first-timer. Unknowing is purposely letting go of any habitual expectations, undoing the “usual”: dropping conventional “supposing” (Varto, 2013). Even though I have been (research-)drawing for almost twenty years, yet every time I have to unknow my previous experiences of [becoming] drawing: the predictions of the process unfolding, Drawing wanting to be cared for and caring for me. As an artist and an autoethnographer, it is necessary to, by unknowing, create acceptance toward all what will become; to overcome habits in order to do artistic research (Varto, 2013).



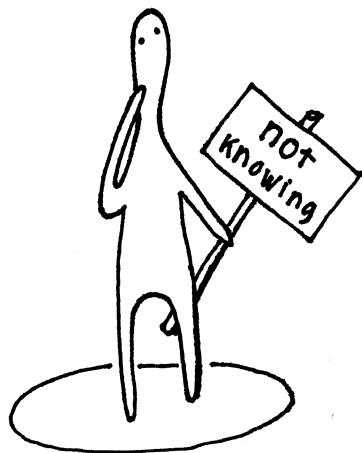
Therefore the acts of constant not-knowing and unknowing are the ultimate care. The not-and unknowing enable becoming, transforming, sifting to remain. The care is continuous acceptance for [being in] change and becoming instead of “certain,” “known” or set and fixed. Not and unknowing are the

## TO DRAW THE LINE

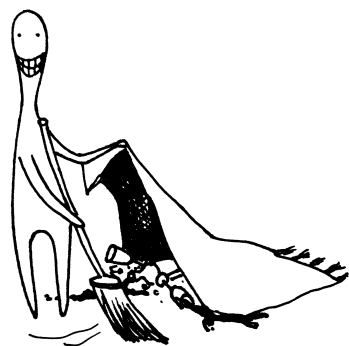


approval for being open-ended, inconsistent, incoherent and even infinite.

The ethical responsibility in research is to take care of Drawing's autonomy, to protect it from abuse: to develop and maintain trust with it (Anderson & Linder, 2019; Creswell, 2009; Israel & Hay, 2006). Mutually with [in] Drawing, I'm safe, fully acknowledged and accepted. The Drawing patiently waits for me to stop doodle-fumbling. Luckily, Varto describes: "The researcher's search at its best resembles the fumbling of the blind in the dark: one does not think one sees the subject and doesn't know either that there are tools" (Varto 2017, p. 23, transl. by author). As long as is needed, Drawing willingly transforms and offers itself as a tool for doodling and re-searching. In turns, me and Drawing not-know and unknow [for] each other non-judgmentally. In my turn, I openly listen and follow the line the Drawing shares with me. If I am about to "know" and/or full of myself, there's no space for Drawing to know beyond my knowledge.



## TO DRAW THE LINE

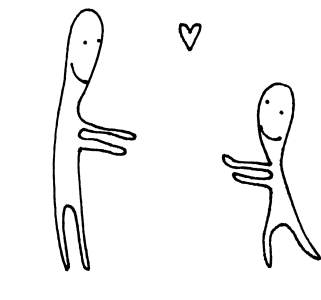


Drawing is tickling unthinkable becoming. The creation of myriads of possibilities happens on paper: lines putting themselves together into drawings, scattered hints of ideas joining, composing, composing composting! (Suominen, 2016, p. 9), opening toward understandable visual imagery.

### Stick[in(g) to] Openness

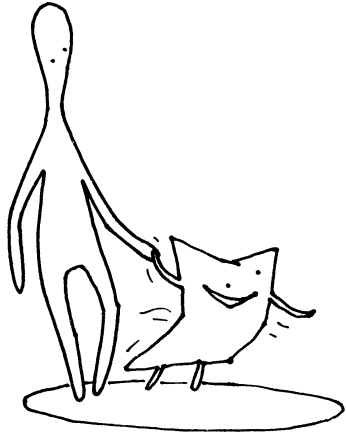


In the process of research of/about/with d/Drawing, I'm "thinking through drawing", which is a self-empowering research practice. It is too bold to claim the Drawing "transformative," "democratic" or "critical," but it has a tendency to have such qualities: drawing is willing to draw the line. It keeps unknowing, keeping things open: an interpretation, a feeling, a movement, [to] an open thought.



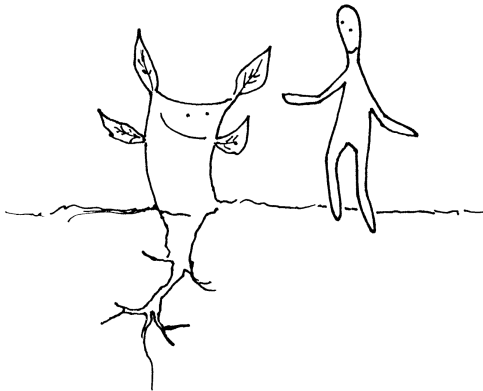
In research there is easily eagerness, pressure and/or expectations to solve or to get rid of anything unfamiliar, uneasy, unknown or unfinished. Therefore, it is also easy to lose the moment of unknowing, bringing along

## TO DRAW THE LINE



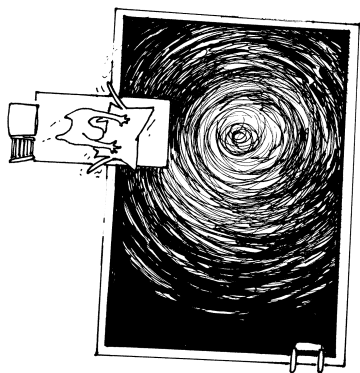
the wonder[ing], a glimpse of (if not eternity and divine but at least) a radically openly being with the world.

But how does one bear with slowness, cluelessness, not and unknowing (Cox, 2008; Varto, 2013)? Drawing is the practice to “be with” and “live through.” It asks us to gently move aside needs to explain, dismantle or disassemble; needs to gut and weed, conclusively sort out, analyze and solve. Drawing asks me as a researcher and an artist to tolerate my urge to decide, control, lead and to know what will be.



To become, Drawing insists on me being radically open, uncovered, vulnerable, bare and plain. This kind-hearted entity allows me to play with it even when I selfishly want to be witty, sharp, smart and charming, somehow unique with this ability to draw, as if it was something singularly “mine”—no, it is not. And what an enchanting spell the Drawing has cast on me: any self-centered attempt to entertain by drawing, to show-off or to make an impression turns out something dull, without spark of life and

## TO DRAW THE LINE



spirit, without a sign of presence. It's truly a peculiar feeling to be in contact with Drawing. The more I try to capture this "being with" moment, or to allure and tease Drawing to emerge, the more swiftly it hides from me.

### Clear Language, Messy Thoughts



I do not necessarily want to take language to its limits (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004) or have the know-how to do so as, for example, Guttorm (2014) has in her dissertation. Such poetical inquiries often use creative layouts besides the creative use of language. Quite to the contrary, the language here aims to be caring and helpful for the reader, as the artistic researching is already done in drawings, with Drawing. On the other hand, in order to write about drawing, it is necessary that the language used has to be equivalent to drawing. Slashes and parentheses endorse open-endedness and multiple readings and disrupt the linear workflow. As a visual artist, it is agonizing to write about drawing: to try to capture in and with words the emergent

TO DRAW THE LINE



essence of a non-verbal entity. It is as I've been asked to run as fast as possible with both shoelaces<sup>vi</sup> tied together.

Of us two researchers, I'm the one in charge and responsible for the written part. It aims to be sturdy enough for easy traveling and simultaneously to remain a bit open-ended

with a hint of hesitation, unknowing and flowing. I carefully tried to remember and look after the reader over my shoulder. Still there is no way to be sure if the readers (...or the drawings or Drawing...) have been

sufficiently cared for in the text. As Pinker puts it: "The problem is that just trying harder to put yourself in someone else's shoes doesn't make you a whole lot more accurate in figuring out what that person knows" (Pinker, 2014, p. 63).

Or desires, needs, wants, seeks.

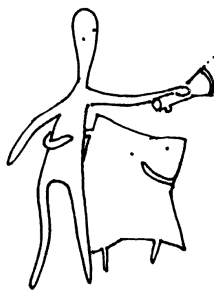


Drawing and I

have no intention to know

but to not, and unknow  
for you

(no comma, point, period, no end or whatsoever



is it okay to leave it like this?

just let it be

unleash

let go

## TO DRAW THE LINE

---

<sup>i</sup> There is no proper way to refer to Sousanis's dissertation as it relies on visual thinking; words and images are inextricably linked. This citation of words leaves % of the content out and is an insult to his radical inquiry in meaning-making. So far, I have been unable to find an appropriate way to do justice to his work in citations.

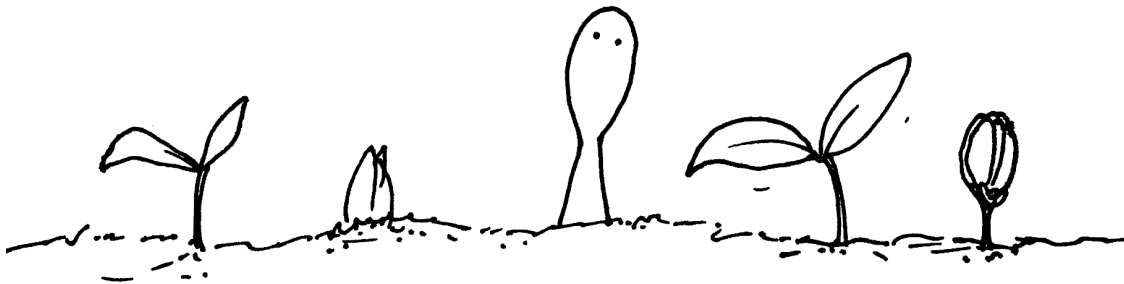
<sup>ii</sup> Sousanis has a metaphor of narrowing and fragmentation of research focuses, as "...a cascade of individual searchlights..." - and you should see the visualization in Sousanis (2015b, p.35).

<sup>iii</sup> Oh, go for it, grab a pen!

<sup>iv</sup> Shoes are keeping up appearances, see pages 17 and 29. Well, for hikers, proper shoes are highly important. Sousanis (2015b, p.144) has exactly the same priorities in life - and in comics.

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.thinkingthroughdrawing.org/>

<sup>vi</sup> <sup>6</sup>Sousanis (2015b, p.111) visually broke down the steps on how to tie shoes effectively. Have a look.



## References

- Anderson, R., & Linder, J. (2019). Spirituality and emergent research methods. In L. Zsolnai & B. Flanagan (Eds.), *Routledge international handbook of spirituality and society* (pp. 48–55). Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781315445489
- Arlander, A. (2017). Taiteellinen tutkimus ja moninaistuvat tekstit. In E. Karjula & T. Mahlamäki (Eds.), *Kurinalaisuutta ja kuvittelua — näkökulmia luovaan tietokirjoittamiseen* (pp. 164–184). Tarke.
- Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. (2003). An introduction to the arts and narrative research: Art as inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(4), 506-514.
- Campen, C. V. (2007). *Synesthesia in art and science*. MIT.
- Clements, J. (2011). Organic inquiry. research in partnership with spirit. In R. Anderson & W. Braud (Eds.), *Transforming self and others through research: Transpersonal research methods and skills for the human sciences and humanities* (pp. 131–159). State University of New York Press.
- Cox, R., & Glenn, L. (2008). 3rd presentation Robin Cox’s story, “The creative potential of not knowing”. In F. Arrows & D. T. Jacobs (Eds.), *The authentic dissertation: Alternative ways of knowing, research, and representation* (pp. 99–110). Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.
- Deleuze, G., & Félix, G. (2004). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism & schizophrenia*. Continuum.
- Eisner, W. (1985). *Comics and sequential art*. Poorhouse Press.
- Fitch, D. (2011). Drawing from drawing. In A. Kantrowitz, A. Brew, & M. Fava (Eds.), *Thinking through drawing: Practice into knowledge* (pp. 147–150). Teachers College Press.
- Foer, J. (2010). *Tree of codes*. Visual Editions.
- Four Arrows (Wahinkpe Topa), D., aka Jacobs. (2008). *The authentic dissertation. Alternative ways of knowing, research, and representation*. Routledge.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Herder & Herder.
- Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy and civic courage*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Guttorm, H. (2014). Sommitelmia ja kiepsahduksia. Nomadisia kirjoituksia tutkimuksen tulemisesta (ja käsityön sukupuolisopimuksesta). *Kasvatustieteellisiä tutkimuksia* 252.
- Hall, S. (2007). *Haiteksti*. Werner Söderström Osakeyhtiö.
- Heath, S., Chapman, L., & The Morgan Centre Sketchers. (2018). Observational sketching as method. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 21(6), 713-728. doi: 10.1080/13645579.2018.1484990
- Held, S. (2013). *Abraham Joshua Heschel*. Indiana University Press. <https://www.perlego.com/book/2448666/abraham-joshua-heschel-pdf>
- Ingold, T. (2011). *Being alive: Essays on movement, knowledge and description*. Routledge.



## TO DRAW THE LINE

- Israel, M., & Hay, I. (2006). *Research ethics for social scientists: Between ethical conduct and regulatory compliance*. Sage.
- Kantrowitz, A., Fava, M., & Brew, A. (2017). Drawing together research and pedagogy. *Art Education*, 70(3), 50-60. doi: 10.1080/00043125.2017.1286863
- Kiilakoski, T., & Tervahartiala, M. (2015). Taiteen osallisuus, osallisuuden taide — Tulkintoja taidelähtöisten menetelmien käytöstä koulussa. In *Sosiaalipedagoginen aikakauskirja. Vuosikirja 2015* (pp. 31–67). Suomen sosiaalipedagoginen seura ry.
- Kuttner, P., Sousanis, N., & Weaver-Hightower, M. B. (2017). How to draw comics the scholarly way. Creating comics-based research in the academy. In P. Leavy (Ed.), (pp. 396–422). Guilford Publications. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aalto-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4979052>
- Lehtimaja, L. (2006). *Freiren kyydissä*. Like.
- Lehtimaja, L. (2008). *Levinasin kasvot*. Like.
- Lehtimaja, L. (2009). Levinasin toinen ruuduissa. In O.-P. Moisio & J. Suoranta (Eds.), *Kriittisen pedagogiikan kysymyksiä 3* (pp. 127–137). Tampereen yliopiston kasvatustieteiden laitos.
- McCloud, S. (1993). *Understanding comics*. Kitchen Sink Press.
- McCloud, S. (1994). *Sarjakuva – Näkymätön taide*. The Good Fellows.
- McCloud, S. (2006). *Making comics*. Harper.
- McLaren, P. (2009). *Che, Freire ja vallankumouksen pedagogiikka*. Like.
- Mäkelä, M., & O’Riley, T. (Eds.). (2012). *The art of research II. Process, results and contribution*. Aalto ARTS Books.
- Mäkelä, S., M. & Routarinne (Ed.). (2006). *The art of research. Research practices in art and design*. University of Art and Design.
- Noë, A. (2015). *Strange tools: Art and human nature*. Hill and Wang.
- Pinker, S. (2014). *The sense of style: The thinking person’s guide to writing in the 21st century*. Penguin Books.
- Raita, M. (2006). Kerrottu kuvataideopettajuus. In K. Kettunen, M. Hiltunen, S. Laitinen, & M. Rastas (Eds.), *Kuvien keskellä: Kuvataideopettajaliitto 100 vuotta*. Like Kustannus Oy.
- Rambo, C. (2007). Sketching as autoethnographic practice. *Symbolic Interaction*, 30(4), 531–542. doi: doi.org/10.1525/si.2007.30.4.531
- Scarles, C. (2010). Where words fail, visuals ignite: Opportunities for visual autoethnography in tourism research. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37(4), 905-926.
- Selznick, B. (2007). *The invention of Hugo Cabret: A novel in words and pictures*.
- Shields, S. S. (2016). How I learned to swim: The visual journal as a companion to creative inquiry. *International Journal of Education the Arts*, 17(8). <http://www.ijea.org/v17n8/>
- Solnit, R. (2019). *Whose story is this? Old conflicts, new chapters*. Granta Books.
- Sousanis, N. (2012). The shape of our thoughts: A meditation on & in comics. *Visual Arts Research*, 38(1), 1-10. doi: 10.5406/visuartsrese.38.1.0001

## TO DRAW THE LINE

- Sousanis, N. (2015a). Grids and gestures: A comics making exercise. *SANE Journal: Sequential Art Narrative in Education*, 2(1), Article 8. doi: 10.5406/visuartsrese.38.1.0001
- Sousanis, N. (2015b). *Unflattening*. Harvard University Press.
- Suominen, A. (Ed.). (2016). *Taidekasvatus ympäristöhuolen aikakaudella - avauksia, suuntia, mahdollisuuksia*. Aalto ARTS Books.
- Tanska, J., & Tanska, J. (2020). *Lempeä linssi. Valokuvaus tienä läsnäoloon*. Kirjapaja.
- Tervahartiala, M. (2010). Tehdään yhdessä –työpajat. In T. Koskinen, P. Mustonen, & R. Sariola (Eds.), *Taidekasvatuksen Helsinki. Lasten ja nuorten taide- ja kulttuurikasvatus*. Helsingin kaupungin tietokeskus.
- Tervahartiala, M. (2020). Challenges and solutions in ethnographic research. Ethnography with a twist. In T. Lähdesmäki, E. Koskinen-Koivisto, & V. L. A. Čeginskas Koistinen (Eds.), *Sharpening the pencil. A visual journey towards the outlines of drawing as an autoethnographical method*. Routledge.
- Varto, J. (2009). *Basics of artistic research. ontological, epistemological and historical justifications*. University of Art and Design Helsinki.
- Varto, J. (2013). *Otherwise than knowing*. Aalto ARTS Books.
- Varto, J. (2017). *Taiteellinen tutkimus. Mitä se on? Kuka sitä tekee? miksi?* Aalto ARTS Books.
- Yli-Juonikas, J. (2012). *Neuromaani*. Kustannusosakeyhtiö Otava.
- Ylityöpisto-kollektiivi. (2021). *Erinomaisen jouheva. Kuvataidekasvatuksen sanakirja*. Aalto ARTS Books.