

VOX

**Love of
animals**



ENGLISH EDITION

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NO.5 - APRIL 2019



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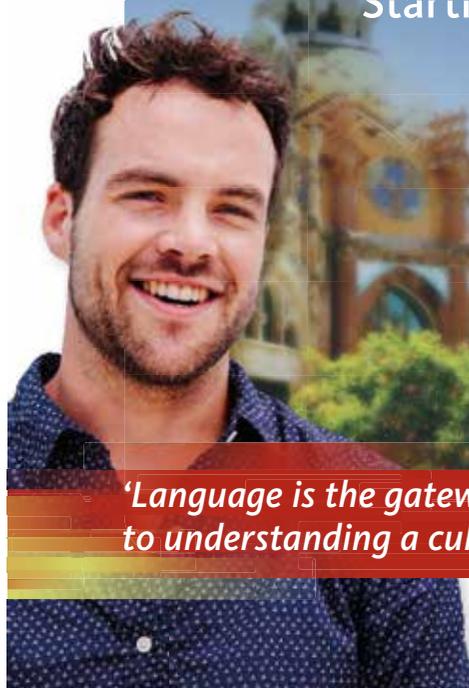


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FRONT AND BACK COVER ART: JEROEN MURRÉ

EDITORIAL

LOVE OF ANIMALS

We kill mosquitoes, but not cats. We think it's normal to eat veal, but dog meat on the menu (as in China) goes too far.

When we see an endangered polar bear hanging on to a melting ice floe, we have to fight back the tears. But nobody seems to care about the now extinct screw-worm. The relationship between humans and animals is complex.

For this special edition devoted to animals, we asked students whether they still eat meat. Yes, said 60%. But the majority of the three hundred students who completed the Vox survey say they eat fewer meat balls and chicken wings than three years ago (see p. 9). Things are starting to change.

Four researchers talk about the comfort they derive from their relationship with their horse, dog, rabbit and parrot.

Nothing beats some quiet time with your pet before or after a long working day. At the same time, animals are systematically killed on Campus. Mice, rats, fish and frogs are still used for animal testing. "It's always horrible to have to kill an animal," says one of the researchers (page 24).

"But it's unavoidable if you want to do good research."

People are always the ones to decide. Some animals are useful, others a pest. The retiring Thinking Laureate wrote an alarming book on the topic (page 14), grimly entitled *Extinctie* (Extinction). The question is what will happen to us when the useful animals disappear as well.

Annemarie Haverkamp
editor in chief Vox



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ABOVE PAR BART KIEMENEY



PHOTO: BERT BEELEN

Ride all the stages of the Tour de France, one day ahead of the professional peloton: this is the plan of Professor of Cancer Epidemiology Bart Kiemeney. By doing so he hopes to raise € 50,000 for the Radboud Oncology Fund. Together with 24 other cycling enthusiasts, he'll

be riding 3500 kilometres through France. He's accomplished this feat once before, seven years ago, though with less media attention. Kiemeney looks forward most to the high mountains. "Even though the Queen stage, a ride of 207 kilometres through the Alps that includes climbing the Galibrier (a summit of 2642 metres, Eds.), will probably be a struggle after two-and-a-half weeks in the saddle." www.tourdefrancevanbart.nl

NOTE TAKEN

'It's been a long journey, but it's brought me a lot of satisfaction'

In 1986, **Christine Schunck** started her PhD research on Catholic missions to Curacao. On 28 March of this year, the by now 76-year old finally defended her thesis in the Nijmegen Aula. In Focus on Radio 1, she shared the personal and academic obstacles she had to face.

IN THE NEWS



The Rafter re-opens On 26 March, the new Rafter finally opened its doors. Before the renovation, which began in the summer of 2018, visitors only had a choice of three hot meals, of which one vegetarian. Now they can choose from six brand-new food corners, serving among other things hamburgers, pizzas and wok meals. The new Rafter also marked the end of Meat Free Monday, which gave rise to mixed feelings. Gerben Smit, Director of the Property Management Department, responded that more vegetarian and vegan options would be offered every day. The only thing that hasn't changed is the name: the Rafter is still the Rafter.

Fire In late February, a fire broke out in a student house on the corner of the Groesbeeksedwarsweg and the Fort Kijk in de Potstraat, probably due to a short circuit. There were no casualties. A week later, the authorities announced that the building had most probably been illegally converted into rooms. Since no permit had been issued allowing conversion into rooms, the Nijmegen Environment Agency had been unable to check the building for fire safety in the last few years. In response to the fire, City Party DNF wants to address the issue of illegal room rental.





PHOTO: TOM HESSELS

The new Rafter has more vegetarian and vegan options.

Mockery Lecturers regularly make mocking or insulting remarks about the Christian faith, according to University Student Council members Lisa de Jager (CSN) and Job Verwaaij. In mid-March, they raised the issue in their meeting with the Executive Board. Biology student Jet Westerink, among others, shared with *Vox* her experience of this in the lecture halls: "Lecturers may, for example, explain that people used to believe God had created the world. The students laugh along with them. As if you would have to be really stupid to believe something like that." The Executive Board was surprised to hear about this, and promised to discuss the matter with the Deans.

Demonstration With a five-metre long inflatable pipeline, students from Nijmegen Fossielvrij demonstrated in mid-March against a lecture at the Huygens building by Dirk Smit, chief scientist at Shell. The students believe Radboud University should refuse any collaboration with fossil-fuel companies, and put more pressure on its partners to follow suit. Smit himself was unimpressed by the demonstrators: "Of course they have a right to doubt Shell's good intentions. But I can't take people seriously if they propagate populist ideas and half-truths."

Catholic identity PhD student Jurijn Timon de Vos (24) plans to spend the next four years investigating the Catholic identity of Radboud University. De Vos will

primarily look at how the University can express its Catholic identity in modern times. How can Catholicism and the University be combined? What are the potential pitfalls and opportunities for scientific inquiry? De Vos can't afford any delay. The University wants to present his research in 2023, on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

Elections The Provincial Elections revealed once again how popular GroenLinks is among students. At polling station 40, in the Rafter, the green party won one third of the votes. D66 trailed behind with 19% of the votes. The Partij voor de Dieren came third (11%). While Forum voor Democratie was the big winner at national level, it got very little support from Nijmegen students: only 5% voted for Thierry Baudet's party.

Petition by Nijmegen researchers Following remarks by the same Thierry Baudet, twelve Nijmegen researchers decided to call upon the Executive Board to stand up for academic freedom and the autonomy of its researchers. In his winning speech, Baudet suggested that universities are undermining Dutch culture. The next day, the Executive Board published a short response in which they indicated that "(...) openness and transparency combined with scientific work at a university is the best answer to any kind of insinuation." According to some of the researchers, the Board could have been more forceful in its response.

EATING MEAT. CAN YOU STILL GET AWAY WITH IT?

The campus is deeply divided on this issue. Should we still eat animals? Death is part of life and there's no such thing as CO₂-neutral food, says one professor. The other compares factory farming to a concentration camp. In the meantime, the average student consumes less meat than before.

Text: Pim ten Broeke, Stan van Pelt en Martine Zuidweg / **Illustration:** JeRoen Murré



Here's a fact. Our planet is in poor shape, concludes a UN report published in March. And this is due in part to meat production, which requires huge amounts of water and leads to high greenhouse gas emissions.

Yet that isn't why Psychology Professor Roos Vonk decided to stop eating meat three decades ago. Animals are not here for our use and convenience, says Vonk. Who are we to lock them up in small cages or, in her own words, 'concentration camps'? "I know the word

**WE SLAUGHTER
1.8 MILLION
ANIMALS PER DAY**

THE MYSTERY OF THE FISH-EATING VEGETARIAN

Some vegetarians eat fish. As if fish doesn't count as meat. According to Professor of Organismal Animal Physiology Gert Flik, this is due to the fact that people greatly underestimate the emotional life of fish. "People say: 'These things are cold and slimy, they don't display any emotion, they don't feel pain, and there are lots of them.' From my perspective, none of these are well thought-out reasons for believing you can treat fish differently from chickens or pigs."

With respect to emotions, Flik is clear: fish do display emotion. The reason we don't notice this is that fish don't have facial expression muscles in their heads. Fish express emotions by rotating their eyes. They can also drop their lower jaw to bring forward colour patterns that make the fish seem larger, more attractive, or more threatening. Also, fish do react to pain stimuli. If a fish is bitten by a predatory fish or grazes against an object in the water, it feels it. "Just like humans, pigs and chickens, in fact like all vertebrates, fish have nervous tissue that transmits pain stimuli to the brain."

Flik's research concludes this too. When you put a zebra fish in a tank divided into a black and a white compartment, it automatically swims to the dark side because it feels safer there. The zebra fish is more vulnerable in the light, where it can be picked out by a heron. In an experiment, Flik administered small electric shocks every time the fish swam to the dark side of the tank. After a while, the fish chose the safe option, and remained on the light side of the tank.

"This means A: that fish are good at learning and remembering things, and B: that you can influence complex behaviour with adverse stimuli. This means fish can process these stimuli in their brain."

And here's the strange thing: this doesn't stop Flik from eating fish. Because he is, for better or for worse, an 'omnivore', as he calls it. "Omnivores like humans do better on a varied diet." And he likes the taste of fish (and meat). But only if the animals are not subjected to unnecessary suffering. "I prefer to eat fish with a sustainability label."

evokes resistance, but I still use it. Just take a look at some YouTube videos of barns full of breeding sows. It's exactly like a concentration camp, where animals are reduced to objects."

During her studies, in the 1980s, being a vegetarian was something different. She had to justify herself continuously. Things have changed in this respect. These days, when she tells people she's a vegetarian, her table companions fall over each other to apologise: "We don't eat that much meat either, you know!"

The fact that the current concerns about climate change raises people's awareness of their meat consumption is a very good thing, says Vonk. She sees clear signs that things are changing. "I see that the understanding that animals have feelings and are capable of suffering is slowly making its way into mainstream society."

Professor of Political Theory Marcel Wissenburg is not so sure. It depends what social circles you move in. Among left-wing intellectuals, being a vegetarian may be a hot topic, he says in his room in the Elinor Ostrom building, "but if I look around in Nijmegen, at my neighbours and other people, I see something quite different. These people are clearly not bothered by such whims."

Of course his neighbours think about issues like animal suffering and cruelty. And some say they would prefer to eat less factory-produced meat. "But if you have to pay double for the same piece of meat and you're on a tight budget already, the choice is easily made."

Snail

Two extremes on campus, and both represent a large section of the population. Are humans allowed to kill animals? Yes, says Wissenburg. "Killing is not intrinsically bad; death is part of a natural life, and we have no obligation to treat animals better than they're treated by the rest of nature."

But to slaughter them without stunning, that goes too far, he says, "because we know that there are better ways to die". Unlike animals, people can weigh good and evil, and choose to act accordingly. "I don't often see snails pondering issues like this."

What does he eat? A lot of game, mainly wild fowl. This has more to do with his low cholesterol diet than with a politically correct choice. His diet doesn't allow him to eat red meat, pork or lamb. "Lamb in particular is apparently very bad for me, which is a pity because I really like it. But what can you do? I'd like to live to see my retirement."

For the rest, he tries anything that appeals to him. "A few days a week, I eat fish and, I'm not afraid to admit it, just because I wanted to see what they tasted like, some things from the Vegetarian Butcher. I've replaced the sausages in my monthly English breakfast with this brand's sausages. They're really incredibly tasty."

Wissenburg caused a stir when he campaigned against the Meat Free Monday introduced by campus restaurant De Refter three years ago (and cancelled since). He says he wants to be free to decide what he eats himself. What's more: "The University is a place where people



For **Elena Freudenberg**, third-year Philosophy student, it's a no brainer: eating meat is simply not done. Neither is eating other animal products, for that matter. Freudenberg is a vegan, and she tries to convince others to follow suit. As a member of the Anonymous for the Voiceless group, she frequently takes to the streets, to show the public

images of how animals are slaughtered.

"It's incredibly violent, the way the meat industry deals with animals," she says. "Pigs are gassed, or killed with tongs that deliver an extremely high voltage. They are stunned first, but since the animals are so large, stunning doesn't always have immediate effect. So either the pigs are choking for five minutes, or they're still half-conscious when they get electrocuted."

What a lot of people don't know, she says, is that similarly horrible practices underlie the production of animal products such as milk and eggs. "A cow can only give milk if she's calved. This means cows are continuously getting inseminated, continuously pregnant, until they're completely exhausted. At which point, they're slaughtered." The same applies to egg production: "Since only hens lay eggs, male chicks are put on a conveyor belt and gassed or minced as soon as they hatch." Freudenberg just wants to make it clear that animals also get killed for animal products other than meat. In addition to animal welfare, climate change is another reason she refrains from eating animal products. "Large sections of the tropical rainforest are cut down to grow soy for cattle feed. When you see how much land the bio industry uses, you realise how inefficient this is compared to growing plant-based foods."

think, where they can reach rational decisions. It's not a place where you impose things on others."

As far as Vonk is concerned, Meat Free Monday is the least we can do. "We eat a lot more meat than is natural or healthy for us. In the past, people wouldn't have been able to eat meat every day. They would occasionally catch a wild boar, and then make it last for months on end. In the 1950s, people ate meat twice a week at most; it was a real luxury item. Now we kill 1.8 million animals a day in the Netherlands alone. Our mass production has gotten completely out of hand." Even better than a meat-free Monday would be a broad daily assortment of vegetarian and vegan dishes.

STUDENT SURVEY

Eating meat hasn't yet had its day, as apparent from a survey among a little under three hundred students on Campus. 60% eat meat four times a week. Nevertheless, things seem to be changing: the majority eats **less meat** than three years ago. Also, half of the respondents voted for a return of **Meat Free Monday**.

A few striking gender differences: men are more likely to see themselves as meat eaters (72%) than women (52%), when buying meat men tend to focus on **lowest price** (66.4%) while women focus on **animal welfare** (69.7%), and Meat Free Monday is more popular among women (56.7%) than men (39.3%). Note: gender distribution differed across faculties.

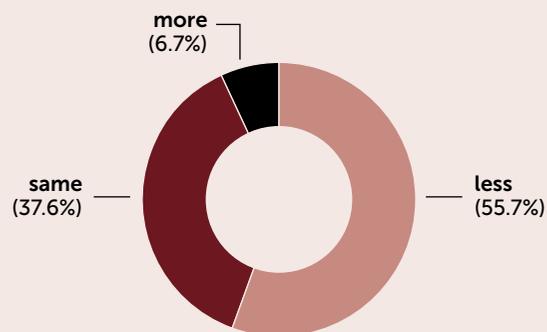
The Law Faculty was overrepresented among women (35.1%), and the Science Faculty among men (29.1%). In other words, the observed gender differences may partially be due to differences among faculties.

NUMBER OF DAYS MEAT OR FISH EATEN PER WEEK

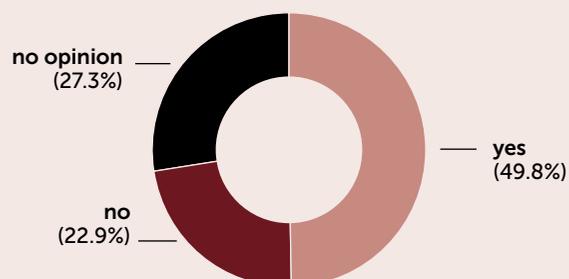
Average among the respondents



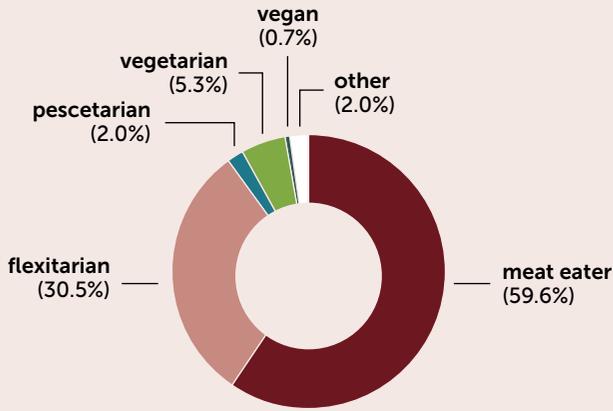
MEAT CONSUMPTION COMPARED TO 3 YEARS AGO



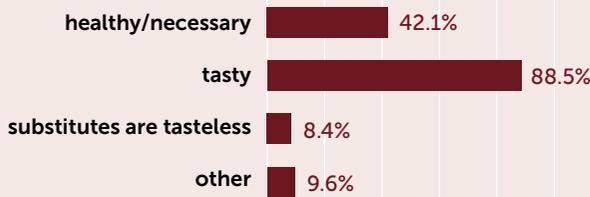
SHOULD THE MEAT FREE MONDAY COME BACK?



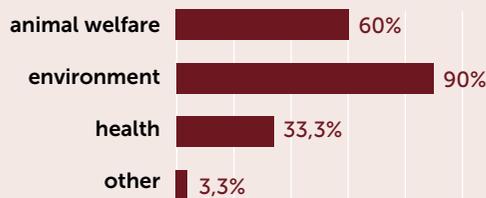
I SEE MYSELF AS A ...



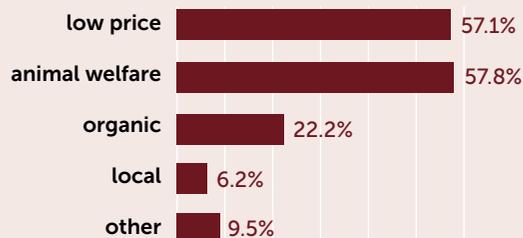
I EAT MEAT BECAUSE IT'S ...



I DON'T EAT MEAT FOR REASONS TO DO WITH ...



WHEN I BUY MEAT, THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IS ...



Croquette

Vonk is uncompromising on the subject of animal killing. Even with stunning, pigs and chickens go through hell at the slaughterhouse, she says. "Everything is focused on maximising speed and quantity, so the people working in slaughter houses have no time to calm the animals down. Many animals aren't even stunned properly. And of course they resist; they don't want to die." If you claim to only eat 'animal-friendly' meat, you're in complete denial. "You're just trying to make yourself feel better."

Vonk's intuition that the Dutch diet is changing is correct, says Sociologist of Consumption Hans Dagevos from Wageningen University & Research. "We see all kinds of changes," he says, such as a rise of plant-based meat substitutes. "Over the last few years, these products have greatly improved, and the sector is constantly putting out new products. The Dutch are very good at creating plant-based alternatives."

And yet, this hasn't led to a reduction in meat consumption. The average Dutch person still eats



Cecile Collin, student in Communication and Influence, is a vegetarian. She believes people no longer need to eat meat. "Nutritionists and researchers agreed a long time ago that you won't drop dead if you eat a vegetarian diet," she argues. "In

fact, you're more likely to live longer." The only reason people are still attached to their beef steak is taste and force of habit. "I also found it difficult to stop, so I can really understand this. If you're used to eating potatoes, meat and vegetables every day, removing the meat makes for a boring meal. I've had to learn to cook differently. I make more curries, for example. Culinary traditions from other continents are often more geared towards a vegetarian diet." An added advantage of being a vegetarian, according to Cecile, is how cheap it is. "I discovered being a vegetarian is really cheap, as long as you don't just eat meat substitutes from the Vegetarian Butcher." Taking to the streets to convince others to become vegetarian is not something Collins is likely to do. Nor does she think Meat Free Monday is a good idea. "It's not up to me to decide for others," she says. "You have to be motivated from within. It's nice if you've really thought about it, and you can look at piglets on a farm and think: Relax, I'm not going to eat you!"



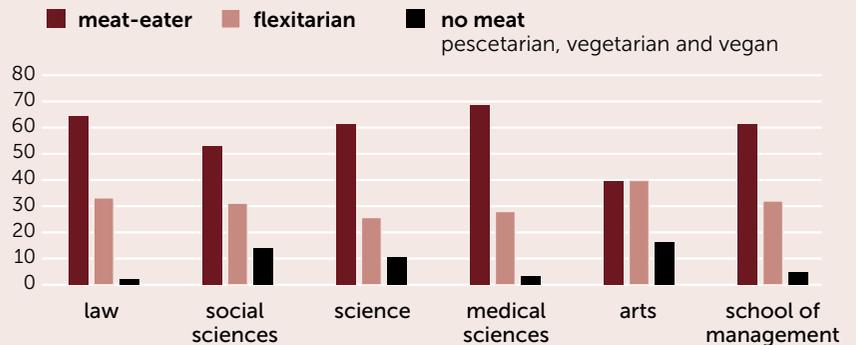
Sander Bouwmans, Business Administration student, eats approximately 250 grams of meat a day. "I do strength training and gymnastics, and it's my hobby to get stronger. This means my body needs more protein. Meat is a simple, tasty protein source. That's why I eat a lot of chicken, tuna, salmon and minced beef."

According to Bouwmans, when it comes to muscle building, meat can't be replaced so easily with meat substitutes. "Meat is an easier and cheaper source of protein than meat substitutes. Plus I don't really like the taste and texture of meat substitutes." Eating meat is not unhealthy, in his opinion: "I have a healthy diet and eat 400 grams of vegetables a day. I don't smoke, and I don't drink much. I don't think you can conclude a vegetarian diet is healthier. And if you eat only vegan, you have to take supplements. You miss out on some minerals that can only be found in meat and animal products."

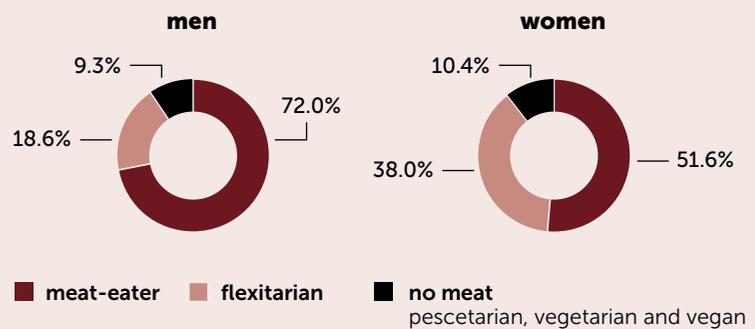
Bouwmans doesn't feel bad about it. "I sometimes think about animal suffering and the climate, but on the other hand, there're so many other things that are bad for the environment, that this doesn't stop me from eating meat." The Business Administration student thinks it's fine if some people don't want to eat meat, but they shouldn't put pressure on others to stop eating meat. "You can have your own ideology, but you shouldn't try to influence others. Trying to scare people to stop them eating meat isn't fair."

MEAT-EATER VS. VEGETARIAN PER FACULTY

in percent



MEAT-EATER VS. VEGETARIAN PER GENDER



38 kilograms of meat per year, just as he or she did ten years ago. So Marcel Wissenburg is also correct in his observation that people aren't prepared to give up their steak.

Currently, meat substitutes represent no more than 1 or 2 % of the total market. In online surveys, people often say they intend to eat less meat, but they don't follow up on it, says Dagevos. Then you have the big meat eaters, usually men, who sometimes consume up to 300 grams of meat a day. A rump steak at dinner time, a croquette as a snack, salami on your sandwich, and a sausage in front of the TV. And that while the Nutrition Centre recommends 70 grams a day.

Roos Vonk and her ilk are a minority in the Netherlands. Dagevos estimates that a little less than 5% of the population is vegetarian, approximately 800,000 people. It's unclear whether highly educated people eat less meat than the rest of the Dutch population. There are no reliable data, which according to the sociologist points to the Dutch government's lack of interest in steering meat consumption.

And yet, this will have to change, he says. "The Ministry of Public Health, Welfare and Sports wants the Dutch diet to be in line with the food guide pyramid by 2030. That means 25 kilograms of meat per person per year, rather than the current 38 kilograms. Quite a challenge, especially if you think that we haven't even managed to reduce consumption by 1 kilogram per year over the past ten years. Something will have to be done, and it will be down to the government to do it."

Does he have any ideas? A lot more research, mostly in social sciences. "If we understand the customer better, we can identify opportunities to reduce meat consumption." What else? Better information about healthy portions and the impact of meat consumption on the climate.

Well, Marcel Wissenburg isn't going to give up his wild fowl for it. He doesn't believe a meat-free diet will reduce CO₂ emissions as drastically as people hope. If people don't eat meat, they'll eat something else that will cause CO₂ emissions, he says. There's no such thing as climate-neutral food. ★

'SPIRITUALLY,
SHE'S MY TEACHER'



Charissa and Milagrosa

"Four years ago I decided to return to my great love: horses. That was when I met Mila. I actually wanted a gelding or a stallion, but we immediately clicked. I didn't choose her; she chose me. Mila is incredibly independent. She does what she wants and doesn't let herself be pushed around. I'm like that too, so I understand her. But I'm also impatient –

which can be difficult at times when I want something from her. It took her nine months to fully accept me. At times, she's incredibly feisty, at other times very meek. In the forest, she can completely flip when she sees a plastic bag or a fallen tree.

Last year I had this idea of walking the pilgrim's route to Santiago de Compostella in Spain with Mila, in stages. My goal was to deepen our bond more. Unfortunately, I developed a serious knee injury. I couldn't walk or cycle. Luckily I could still ride, which allowed me to spend time in nature. Mila was my legs. This has made our bond much stronger. Do I still plan to walk all the way to Compostella? I don't know – I don't feel such a strong need anymore, but adventure still calls.

I'm also a mother of two. My relationship with Mila is, of course, very different. I take care of her, but spiritually, she's my teacher. She's wise. Horses don't project their feelings onto others, the way people do. They're open, forgiving, and have no ego issues.

My dream is to become a horse trainer in a place where I can have my own herd – doing it my way. Where the horses don't have to be locked up in a stable, but can roam free. Who knows, maybe I'll get around to it once my children leave home."

Charissa Domingus is a lecturer and researcher at the Law Faculty. Milagrosa is a Spanish mare.

HUMANS
&
ANIMALS

'Even human extinction leaves us unmoved'





The extinction of animal species leaves us unmoved. Retiring Thinker Laureate René ten Bos wrote *Extinctie* (Extinction), about why we remain unmoved. 'Ultimately, humans too are an endangered species.'

Text: Annemarie Haverkamp
Photography: Erik van 't Hullenaar

At the Cultuurcafé, René ten Bos (59) demonstrates how to kill a chicken: clasp it firmly under your arm, hit it on the head, and then slit its throat.

"Lengthwise, not crosswise. That way it bleeds faster. My dad always said it should be over as quickly as possible."

As a little boy, he thought it was great fun, this chicken killing business. "But it's a memory from fifty years ago. At the time I thought it was funny to see a headless chicken run around. I don't think I would enjoy it much now." His father, a cotton miller from Twente, earned money on the side as an assistant poulterer. Slaughtered chickens brought a welcome addition to the Ten Bos family budget.

This March, Philosopher and Thinker Laureate Ten Bos published a new book, *Extinctie*, about endangered species. The chicken is not one of them, by the way. You might call the chicken a successful species, says Ten Bos. "There are millions of chickens in this country alone."

Compare this number to lone individuals like Lonesome George, the last male specimen of the giant turtle species *chelonoidis abingdonii*, who roamed around the Galapagos Island Pinta for many years. He died on 24 June 2012, aged over 100. Or take Sudan, the white rhinoceros who died last year in a Kenyan nature reserve. Guards were protecting this last surviving male with their lives, but unfortunately he had no progeny, so the white rhinoceros became extinct before our very eyes. Lonesome George and Sudan have become icons for endangered species.

"These are charismatic animals," says Ten Bos. "But we have no images at all for the vast majority of endangered species. This drama is unfolding away from the eyes of the wide public."



'THE LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY IS SERIOUS WE'VE LOST SO MUCH ALREADY'

And that's precisely the problem: we remain unmoved by this wave of extinction, because we don't have images for it. How can you mourn the disappearance from our landscape of the great grey shrike if you don't know that it used to be a common bird? "Only old country folk get tears in their eyes when they hear about it."

In his book, he describes the sadness that overtakes him when people believe they're hiking in 'nature', when in fact they're "walking through a desert landscape of their own making". There's even a term for it: the *shifting baseline syndrome*. "A process by which after a while, knowledge about the state of an environment is lost, because people are unaware of the changes that are taking place."

We don't know any better, so we don't shed any tears. But even if we are well informed, still, there is no indignation or public outcry. "In my lectures, I can tell people that animals

are currently becoming extinct at a rate 45,000 times faster than normal, but then they ask 'What's normal?' and how do you arrive at this figure."

Why an alarming book about endangered animal species? You write that extinction should be on everyone's agenda. This seems to go further than objective scientific investigation.

"It's a theme that touches me; I think it's a great pity that species are disappearing, and it makes me sad. I already talked about extinction in one of my earlier books, *Het geniale dier* (The gifted animal). I wanted to explore this topic further and use it – for example in the lectures I've given over the past two years – to draw people's attention to the catastrophic consequences of our actions."

What do you hope to achieve?

"I hope to raise awareness. These days,

environmental discussions often take place against a backdrop of personal responsibility. If you stop eating meat and travelling by plane, and everyone follows suit, everything will be ok. But this is naive; it's not how things work. Air travel continues to grow and expand every year. By thinking like this, you miss the systemic elements. What's more, it makes the discussion sensitive to escalation and conflict. Look at the recent climate march, which drew 40,000 people. They got responses like: 'Yes, but you've all got mobile phones, which is also not good for the environment.'"

So what does work?

"Slowly preparing people for rigorous change. Thirty years ago, if you mentioned sustainability in a corporate environment, you were dismissed as a flip-flop-wearing hippie. But things have changed. The loss of biodiversity is serious; we've lost so much already. The underlying cause is the disruption of the nitrogen cycle, which is our most urgent problem. This is an issue far greater than you and me."

One might object that species have always been going extinct. Survival of the fittest, and all that. Why is today's extinction so problematic?

"Because so many animal species are being driven into extinction by human activities. In addition to global warming, we overhunt, overfish, etc. Compared to one hundred years ago, the number of fish in the world's seas has dropped by 94%. Or look at insects. A few years ago even a short drive on a summer day would cause a bloodbath on your windshield. That's no longer the case. Even at microbial level diversity is decreasing. Ultimately, humans too are an endangered species. But we're so incapable of imaging our own demise, even this leaves us unmoved."

Surely, there're also species we'd rather see the back of? You write about the screw-worm, which destroys entire herds and has been exterminated in Curacao and in Libya.

"Yes, the screw-worm is a pest. If you have a wound on your head, it crawls inside and eats your brains out. Not very nice, I can tell you. Plus the screw-worm has no use: it doesn't contribute anything – it only takes. In some

'THE SCREW-WORM CRAWLS INSIDE AND EATS YOUR BRAINS OUT'

countries, people have systematically exterminated it. It has absolutely no intrinsic value for us. It's a parasite."

So we're the ones who decide whether an animal is useful or not.

"We look at economic value. Or ecological value. Does an animal have a role in the ecosystem? You might argue a mosquito is useful as food for swallows."

Do we have a tendency to think of cuddly animals as more useful?

"You can't cuddle a whale, yet whales move us. But a biologist might say dogs and cats are clever animals, because they've allowed themselves to become domesticated. It's the best survival strategy. You have Siberian cats and Siberian tigers. Cats are more intelligent, from an evolutionary perspective. We feed them Whiskas and they thrive. Tigers are tricky creatures that need our help to survive. Cats come and rub up against our legs, which is why we like them. I somehow can't imagine a screw-worm doing that."

The extinction you write about is brought about by humans. Your book also discusses the potential solution of 'reducing the earth's human population'.

"Yes, but as I wrote, I don't believe in the political viability of so-called antinatalism."

Why not?

"I'm very much against top-down solutions. Are we going to tell some ethnicities, or continents: 'Stop reproducing like rabbits'? In coming decades the biggest population explosion will take place in Africa. For the people there, a large family is probably the best guarantee of a safe future. What works better is to raise the level of welfare, which automatically reduces the need for a large family."

Prosperous people consume more. They eat more meat, are more likely to travel by plane...

"So should people in Africa just remain poor? Because they pollute less per individual? Who are we to make these decisions for others? Make sure they can sell their products to us in a sustainable manner. Make sure the Sahel is

once again covered in trees – that's happening already, incidentally. Improved welfare is beneficial for the planet, just not in the short run."

In your book you also describe human extinction? Is this a solution to stop the extinction of other species?

"No. We've set so many things in motion, there's no way to stop it by allowing ourselves to become extinct. And how are you planning to do it? Collective suicide? That's a ridiculous idea. And with no guarantee of success – there's always someone who bails out."

You're wearing snakeskin boots. In De Groene Amsterdammer you even admitted having ten more pairs in your wardrobe. Is this something you can still get away with these days?

"Of course there are people who find it unacceptable. But to them, I say: 'Fuck you!' Finger-pointing makes me rebellious. I don't eat meat, so I'm allowed to wear lots of boots made of animal skin. Humans are above all creatures of compensation, you know. By the way I'd never tell another person to stop eating meat. Who am I to say that?" *

ABOUT RENÉ TEN BOS

René ten Bos was appointed Thinker Laureate in 2017. For the past two years he has delivered over four hundred lectures. According to his own estimate, this means he reached a live audience of approximately 30,000 people. He writes a weekly column for *Het Financieele Dagblad*. On 1 April he passed his title to Daan Rovers. Ten Bos will continue to investigate the philosophy of health issues at Radboud university medical center and he will retain his position as Professor at the Nijmegen School of Management.



COLUMN

Nathalie

Nathalie Elenbaas studies Communication Science and moved to Nijmegen from her home in the Noordoostpolder.

Eels

You're probably imagining a regular farm: a house with a thatched roof, a big yard with barns, tractors, and of course cows, pigs and/or chickens. What you probably don't imagine is eel. A farm where barns are filled not with potatoes, but with water tanks full of thousands of eels.

When I tell people my parents run an eel farm, they usually have no idea what it might look like. Which is not so strange, I guess, considering that there are only nine farms like this in all of the Netherlands.

The eel is a fish with surprisingly exotic life requirements. Eels can only reproduce in one place in the whole world, and since that place happens to be in the Bermuda triangle, nobody really knows how they actually do it. Yet they still manage to produce little baby eels weighing only 0.3 grams by the time they come to the farm. It takes them a year or two to grow big enough to be sold.

"You probably eat eel every day," is people's standard response. Well, actually, no. Delicacy or not, we don't eat eel more than once or twice a year, on special occasions. A restaurant owner doesn't eat from his own menu every day either, does he?

In the category 'unusual domestic animals', we clearly score quite high with our thousands of eels. Even though it's not something I usually think about. To the horror of my girlfriends, I have no problems touching and holding eels. It's only during holidays, when I gladly jump in to help my parents run their business, that I realise once again that our swimming livestock is kind of special.

THE CAMPUS AS ZOO

When the students go home at the end of the day, the campus comes to life with wildlife like stone martens, mice and birds. Some species we protect, others we try to control at all costs.

Text: Laura Klompenhouwer / **Images:** Getty Images



You may not be aware of this on a daily basis, but Radboud University Campus happens to be the territory of all kinds of animals. To find out more about the exceptional animals living here, we contacted Ferry Soetekouw from the Department of Property Management. As project leader of the redevelopment of the woods around the Berchmanianum, it was his task to map which species walk, fly and crawl over the grounds.

We met Soetekouw at the Elinor Ostrom building for an animal tour around campus. But before we leave, Soetekouw has to make a phone call. "Can you get the ladder set up?" he asks a colleague at the Houtlaan location. "I've promised the ecologist to check on the stone martens."

An inventory of the animal species living in the woods was a requirement for obtaining permission for construction activities on campus. "We had to know what species to take into account when building the new Faculty of Social Sciences, renovating the Berchmanianum and redesigning the woods."

On the Willem Nuyenslaan, which runs along the woods, Soetekouw stops. He takes out his phone and scrolls through the lengthy document compiled by ecologists about the animals living in the area. "We have starlings, sparrows and blackbirds, of course, but they don't require any special measures." A small selection from the other species that live in the woods: Alpine newts, foxes and owls.

From the forest edge, Soetekouw looks at the inconspicuous boxes, a few metres up in the trees. Bat boxes. "We have a few different species of bats here: dwarf bats, common noctules and Serontine bats." It's hard to assess what bats need precisely, explains Soetekouw. For example when it comes to the placement of the bat boxes: "It's not an exact science. You don't know for sure which spot is ideal." Soetekouw turns left towards the Berchmania-

HAPPY WITH BEES, NOT WITH WASPS



num. On our right we see a wooden insect hotel hanging near a ploughed field. "It looks a bit bare now, but this is going to be a flower meadow." The hotel was designed as attractive four-star accommodation for all kinds of insects this spring and summer: from bees and butterflies to ladybirds and earwigs.

While these insects are treasured, on the nearby Pieter Bondamplein, preparations are underway to combat a related species. An insect that can cause a lot of damage and is therefore

PEOPLE HAVE TO MAKE COMPROMISES

Why do we exterminate mice, but protect bats? Why do we hang bat boxes in the woods, while waging a battle against one of its close relatives?

This is due to our dominant perspective on non-human nature, says Martin Drenthen, Nature Philosopher at the Institute for Science in Society. "People tend to assess nature based on how useful it is to them." The first efforts to protect nature, in the late nineteenth century, mainly focused on human needs. Nature had to be preserved so people could reap its fruits in the long term. The second phase in nature conservation, in the early twentieth century, was also motivated by human need: "Namely the need to enjoy unspoilt nature." And to do this we had to protect nature against ourselves. It was only many years later that the concept of nature conservation simply to protect life became fashionable. "Respect for nature and good stewardship, these concepts are more important today."

An area of forest for the hawk, special light for the bats, a shelter for the stone marten. These are examples of small adjustments people can make to make room for animals. "Nearly all landscapes are not only inhabited by humans, but by other species too. Bats are a particularly good example. We live side by side, yet rarely meet. They're mainly active at night, when we're not around. What's relevant to us is irrelevant to them. Our lives barely overlap at all. We can easily afford to take them into consideration. This is more difficult when it comes to species that cause us inconvenience. But there too, the challenge is to find a way to co-exist and understand that people also sometimes have to make compromises."



actively controlled: the wasp. The first 'wasp traps' are placed in early April. It's important to set them up early, to attract wasp queens and prevent them from building new nests.

Mousetrap

Of all pests, it is however not the wasp, but the mouse that is the main focus of pest controllers. "A mouse can go through a hole the diameter of a pencil. And it only needs 3 to 5 grams of food per day to survive. At Radboud University, people can eat and drink anywhere. All doors and windows open and close." Ingrid Roelofsen, contract manager for Cleaning, Waste and Pest Control at the Property Management Department, sums up the situation. What she means is that Radboud University is an ideal environment for mice. In practice, the most effective way to control mice populations is not to leave waste and food left-overs lying around. Students and staff members can help by putting waste in the waste bins.

One of the ways mice are caught on campus is with the 'radar': a white plastic tube on the floor, with motion sensors that go off when a mouse passes through it. This causes the red shutters at the ends of the tube to fall shut and the mouse can't escape. It also releases

'IT WAS ONE BIG MESS OF EXCREMENT AND LITTER LEFT BY THE STONE MARTENS'



CO₂, which makes the mouse unconscious and ultimately kills it.

We're heading once more in the direction of the Berchmanianum through the woods. On the right a path leads deeper into the woods, but it's closed off. This piece of campus nature is fenced off, because a hawk nest has been spotted there. "In February, March and April, there shouldn't be too much activity around the nest, so the hawk can hatch her eggs if she wants," says Soetekouw.

On the edge of the 'hawk wood' a special shelter has been built for the stone martens the ecologists found. They were living in the attic of an outbuilding of the Berchmanianum, on the Houtlaan 2. "These used to be the fathers' apartments." Once they left, the stone martens moved in. Now there's a bicycle shed on the

ground floor. Soetekouw climbs up the ladder prepared for him, opens a wooden hatch in the roof of the bicycle shed, and climbs up into the attic. "It was one big mess of excrement and litter left by the stone martens." He walks through the dusty dark space under the roof. The space was cleaned last year, but the stone martens are still welcome. They've been given a specially designed wooden box with glass and rock wool. Ferry Soetekouw looks for tracks, but the stone martens don't seem to have found their way upstairs since the renovation.

Outside, on the car park, measures have also been taken to accommodate campus animals. Soetekouw points to the street lights. "We now use LED lights that shine downwards, instead of up. It's better for the bats. And we only need the light below anyway." *





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Russian police officers detain a participant of
an unauthorized opposition rally in Moscow, 2017.

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Marcel and Ticho

"I had to go and meet the breeders. They wanted to check me out, see whether I was good dog-owner material. Thirteen years ago, my daughter absolutely insisted on getting a Spanish water dog. Once she and my wife had chosen Ticho, I was expected to also make an appearance, as head of the household. Luckily, I passed the test.

I've always had pets. As a child, I had a dog, fish and later a hamster.

There have been lots of studies on the effects of owning pets – especially dogs. A dog helps you grow old in good health, it seems. People with dogs walk more, so they automatically spend more time outdoors and moving. And a dog is really good company. Not

like a goldfish. Dogs return your love; they don't discriminate. It doesn't matter how old or broken you are, they remain loyal. Spanish water dogs are active by nature – they are real working dogs. That's why we used to take Ticho along on cycling trips. We even had one of those carts attached to the bicycle, so he could sit in it when he got tired. We don't do that anymore, but Ticho and I still go for a run every morning. Fifteen minutes towards the monastery gardens, and then back home. When he was younger, Ticho always ran ahead, exploring. Now he's thirteen – quite old for a dog. I run slower on purpose, and I wait for him at every corner. Sportive and social, this is what we have in common. Ticho is gentle and friendly. I try to be too. As a geriatrician, it's important. You have to show real interest, take your time, and listen to people's concerns."

Marcel Olde Rikkert (56) is Professor of Geriatrics. Ticho is a Spanish water dog.



'TICHO IS GENTLE
AND FRIENDLY,
I TRY TO BE TOO'



ANIMAL TESTING 'CRUEL, BUT UNAVOIDABLE'

Without animal testing, no new drugs. And yet animal testing is constantly under attack. How do researchers at the Nijmegen animal lab cope with it? 'Some things you simply have to test on animals first.'

Text: Stan van Pelt / Illustration: Roel Venderbosch

First some figures: in 2017, the Animal Research Facility opposite Radboud university medical center was home to 9352 mice and almost 3000 rats. Approximately 3% of the 450,000 animal experiments conducted in the Netherlands every year take place on the Nijmegen Campus. This amounts to no less than 13,000 experiments.

Public opinion

Animal rights activists fought for years to ban Nijmegen's brain research on monkeys. And they were successful. At the end of 2016, the then Executive Board decided to discontinue experiments with monkeys for the time being, and the last two rhesus monkeys went sent into retirement.

It wasn't so much that the animal lab succumbed under the weight of public opinion, says Director and Radboudumc Professor Otto Boerman. "We were already discussing amongst ourselves the future of monkey research," he says in his office on the Geert Grooteplein. "The Donders Institute, which was responsible for performing the experiments, also wanted to stop. When researchers approach us now because they want to do research on monkeys, we refer them to Amsterdam. They've got much better facilities there."

Calling an end to research on monkeys is one of the ways in which the animal lab hopes

to embody its foundational principles: reduce, refine and replace, the three 'Rs'. Boerman: "Our goal as animal testing researchers is the same as that of physicians: ultimately, we want to make ourselves redundant." And things are moving in the right direction, he says. Consider the production of antibodies for the treatment of conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis. "We used to have to inject cells into the abdomen of mice. This would cause a tumour in the peritoneal cavity, from which we could then tap antibodies. Since the 1990s, we've been able to cultivate these antibodies in Petri dishes. From one day to the next, we were able to end these animal experiments."

'WE EVEN PLAY BACKGROUND MUSIC'

But we can't manage without animal testing yet, says Boerman. "In the surgery department, they're testing new materials for promoting healing after abdominal wall and liver operations. These materials are still very experimental, we have to first study their effects on animals." Initially, the materials are tested on rats,

but later on we can't avoid testing them on larger animals such as pigs, says Boerman. "The forces exerted on the material in these animals are comparable to those in humans."

Window dressing

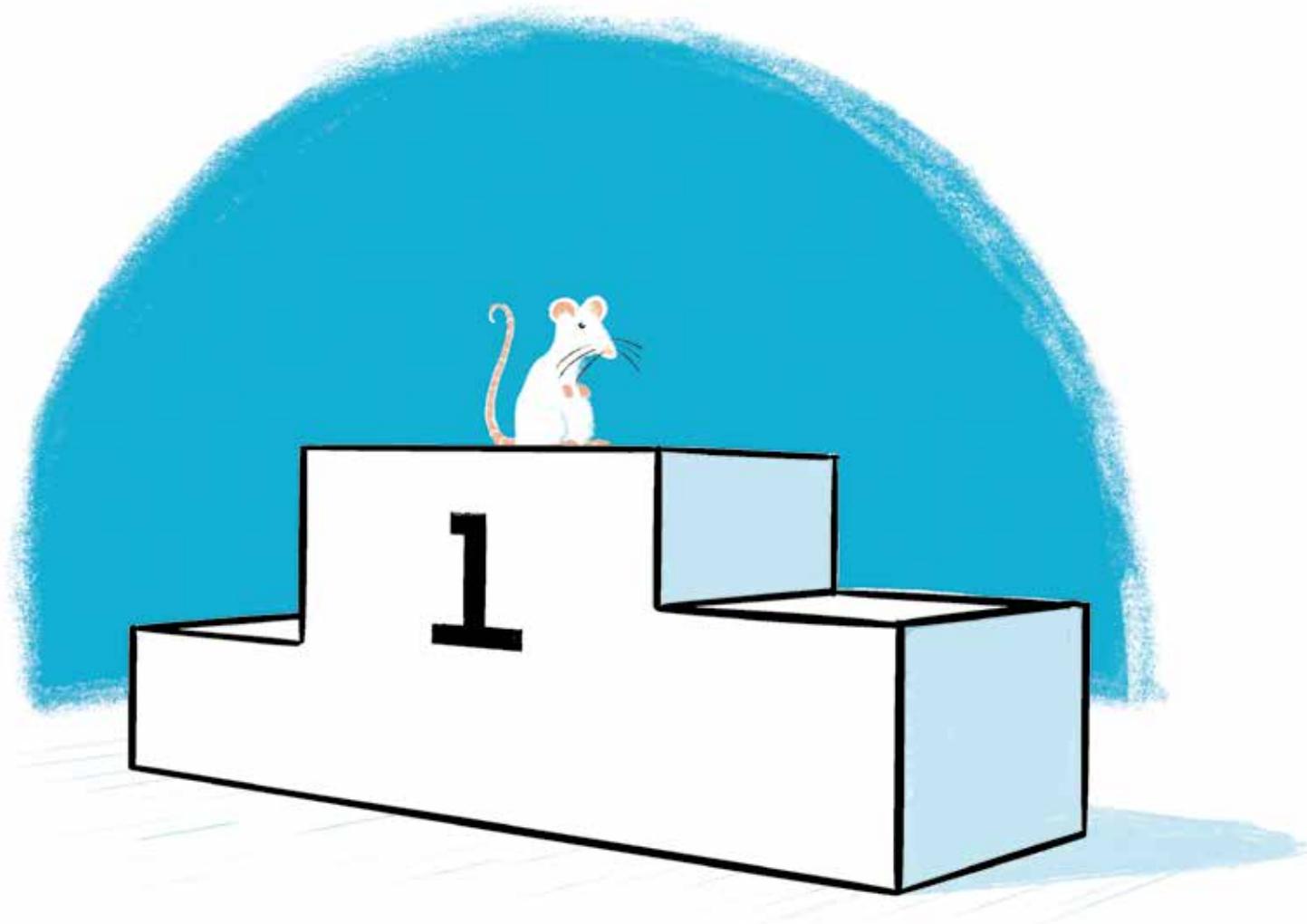
An animal lab is usually associated with images of stressed animals in small cages, but that's not the case, according to the CDL Director.

"We adjust the animals' living conditions to suit their needs. For example, mice are social animals, so we always put them together in one cage - unless they're recovering from an operation." They have a kind of igloo where they can hide, he explains, and nesting material.

"During the day, we play background music, to avoid them being frightened by every sound."

And yet, you can't avoid a certain amount of 'discomfort', as animal researchers refer to the suffering. But this is compensated for by the important medical or scientific interests involved, for example in the case of certain cancer therapies. As a researcher, you have to be able to clearly demonstrate that such interests are really at play. In the 1960s, you only had to place a call, and the very next day you'd have sixty rats ready for your experiment. Now you have to justify in detail your need for animal testing to the CCD, the Central Animal Testing Committee in The Hague. What's your research question? Can you provide statistical evidence that the experiment can't be per-





'RESEARCHERS ARE **HIGHLY CRITICAL** ABOUT THEIR OWN APPLICATIONS'

formed using fewer animals? Researchers are also required to carry out a much more thorough literature survey to check that their experiments haven't already been performed in the past, and that they're using the most suitable animals for their research question.

Experiments

In practice, this assessment procedure is nothing but a bit of window dressing, say animal rights' movements like Animal Rights. The CCD approves 97% of applications, as apparent from the Committee's annual reports. Boerman doesn't agree with the criticism. "The percentage is so high precisely because researchers are highly critical about their own applications. Our animal welfare committee also helps them with their application."

And yet, four out of five drugs tested on animals subsequently fail to work in follow-up experiments on human patients. This was the conclusion of a study conducted last year by Radboudumc, UMC Utrecht and the Netherlands Heart Institute. This is partially due to the

fact that negative results – animal experiments that show no active effect – are often not published in scientific journals. Researchers elsewhere don't know that a given experiment didn't work, and they waste time and lab animals repeating it. If you don't take these failures into account, it leads to distorted results in cases where a positive effect is found. With the risk of disappointments in follow-up experiments with humans.

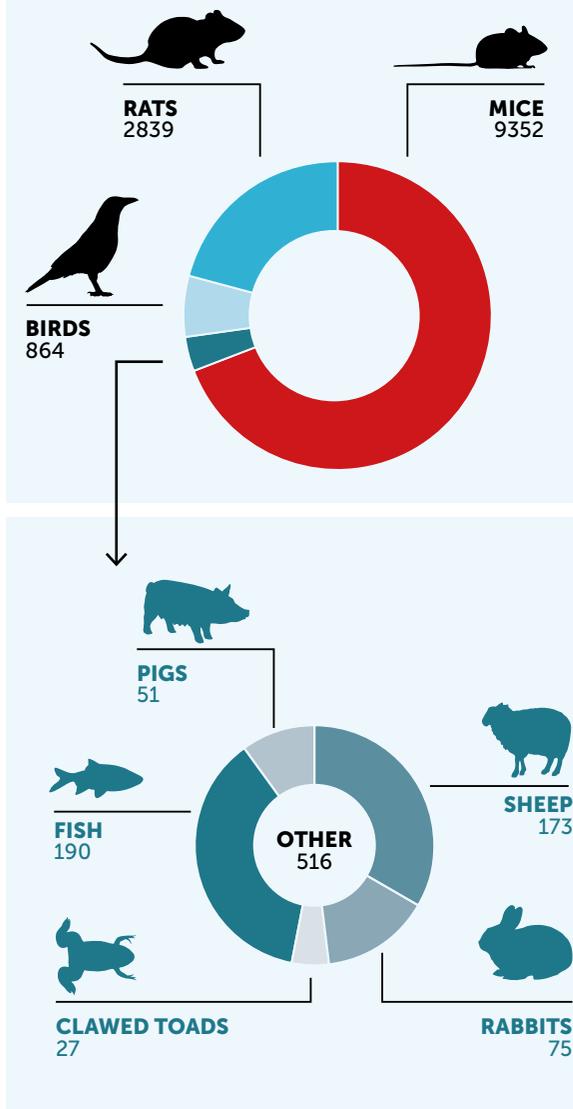
This is indeed a problem, recognises Boerman. "Which is why we encourage researchers to make their plans known beforehand. Recently it has become possible to do so by registering your intended experiment on preclinicaltrials.eu. This allows researchers to check worldwide whether their proposed experiment hasn't already been performed elsewhere." But registration is not compulsory, and some researchers don't register. "They prefer not to reveal their ideas, out of fear that competing groups will steal them. I can understand that."

With the risk of unnecessary animal testing? Yes, says Boerman. "It's how science works, for better or for worse."

ANIMAL TESTING IN NIJMEGEN (2017)

TOTAL: 13,571

Only vertebrates are included
(therefore excluding mosquitoes, fruit flies, etc.)



Source: CDL Annual Report 2016-2017

You have to take competition between research groups into account. Don't forget this same competition also acts as a driving force behind innovation."

He expects animal testing will always be necessary. A view shared by many Radboud University researchers. Even if you manage to create a fish gill in a lab – which is already possible, by the way – it will not help you map the functioning of gills. Once you remove the gill from the fish – a living organism where blood vessels, hormones, and many other factors constantly interact – you will never fully understand how it works. After all, animals – including humans – are always so much more than the sum of their parts. *

Not so easy to replace a monkey

Christmas 2016, Radboud University handed over its two last rhesus monkeys to the AAP foundation. The Animal Research Facility paid the AAP foundation € 100,000 for taking the two rhesus monkeys, as apparent from the financial annual figures of Radboud university medical center.

Professor of Biophysics John van Opstal is one of Nijmegen's former monkey researchers who now work solely with human test subjects. Unfortunately, people can never quite replace monkeys, he informs us in his e-mail. "There are no alternatives for the kind of monkey experiments we were doing for many years. The questions we investigate in human subjects will always differ from the questions we might have answered with good-quality monkey experiments."

Personally, Englitz mainly uses mice, as he explains in his office at the Science Faculty. He investigates how the brain suppresses background noise when we listen to someone, for example at a party. "This is something we can easily study in mice. With the insights gained we may soon be able to improve hearing aids. We measure brain activity in great detail, with hundreds of electrodes at the same time, and influence it by genetically modifying the mice. This is much harder to do with monkeys." There's no alternative to his research that would use only human test subjects, he says. "I have to measure the activity of individual neurons, which can only be done by implanting electrodes." Englitz hates it when he has to kill animals, he emphasises. "You get attached to them. They have been valuable to you, sometimes for months on end, and yet you have to be cruel to them. But it's unavoidable; we have to kill them to be able to make sound scientific claims. We have to know precisely where the electrodes were, and whether the genetic modifications were successful."

Six weeks ago, the Director of the Nijmegen Animal Research Facility, Otto Boerman, visited the AAP foundation to check on his two retired lab animals. They're doing well, he says. "They live in a shelter in Lelystad, where a special enclosure has been created for them. They've got climbing frames and can play together."

'YOU BECOME ATTACHED TO THEM'

Berhard Englitz, Neuroscientist at the Donders Institute, agrees.

"For example, in Amsterdam we investigate visual prostheses for the blind," he explains. These are electrodes that send direct visual information to the brain. "Cutting edge techniques like these can only be tested on monkeys, because their brain most closely resembles the human brain." It's now rather unlikely that this kind of innovation will come from Nijmegen, he says.

"Onze maatschappij is ingewikkelder geworden. Dat maakt mensen kwetsbaarder."



Dianne Ackermans, ANIOS en Dorien Wouters, verzekeringsarts en opleider

We zitten aan tafel bij verzekeringsarts en opleider Dorien Wouters en ANIOS Dianne Ackermans. Waar de één een jarenlange en rijke ervaring heeft, staat de ander aan het begin. Wat hen bindt, is de liefde voor het vak.

Dorien: "In 2001 vroeg een kennis mij: 'Zou de GGD niks voor jou zijn?' Sociale geneeskunde dus... Ik had er geen duidelijk beeld bij, maar was wél geïnteresseerd en ging aan de slag. Al snel ontdekte ik dat dit vak me lag, ik beleefde er plezier aan. Je krijgt te maken met verschillende aandoeningen en klachten, maar je moet vooral oog hebben voor de hele mens, luisteren naar zijn verhaal. Uitpluizen. Wat speelt er? Hoe is de thuissituatie? Je bent op medisch én op sociaal vlak bezig. Bij GGD waren er geen opleidingsmogelijkheden, maar bij UWV deed zich een mooie kans voor. Die heb ik meteen gepakt. Nog elke dag werk ik met veel plezier."

Empathie

"Waar ik in het begin van mijn carrière nog iets ongeduldigs in mijn aard had, is dat in de loop van de jaren veranderd. Enerzijds omdat ik zelf wat ouder ben geworden en meer van het leven heb gezien - en daardoor meer empathie heb -, anderzijds is onze maatschappij complexer geworden. Een vast dienstverband? Niet meer vanzelfsprekend. Wetten? Ze worden steeds ingewikkelder. Daarnaast wordt er steeds meer van mensen verwacht dat ze zaken zelf regelen en dan kan het wel eens scheef lopen. Het maakt mensen kwetsbaarder. Met alle gevolgen van dien."

Tijd en aandacht

"Soms hebben mensen zó veel problemen... Vaak speelt er ook een sociale problematiek, die grote invloed heeft op iemands medische situatie. Meer dan de helft van onze cliënten heeft psychische klachten. Iedereen verdient een respectvolle behandeling en een goed gesprek. Mensen zijn soms tijdelijk, soms voor langere tijd, van ons afhankelijk en daarom is een weloverwogen beoordeling van groot belang. Tijd en aandacht, dat zijn de belangrijkste ingrediënten tijdens een gesprek en daar zijn mensen dankbaar voor."

Menselijke kant

Dianne: "Tijdens mijn co-schappen ontdekte ik dat ik erg geïnteresseerd was in de mens achter de patiënt, dat ik behoefte had aan de menselijke kant van de geneeskunde. In het ziekenhuis bijvoorbeeld, was er voor mijn gevoel te weinig tijd voor de patiënt. De verpleegkundigen deden naar mijn idee het mooiste werk. Zij hadden het intensieve contact met de patiënt. En precies dát vind ik hier!"

Mens en werk

"De relatie van de mens met werk vind ik boeiend. Tijdens je studie leer je alles over het stellen van diagnoses en het regelen van behandelingen, maar daarna zijn mensen ook nog ziek. Ik vind die impact van een ziekte op het leven van patiënten zeer interessant. Tegelijkertijd willen mensen over het algemeen graag bijdragen aan de maatschappij, dus werk is erg belangrijk voor een mens. Aan dat proces wil ik graag mijn steentje bijdragen."

Duwtje

"Dat begint bij de communicatie tijdens het spreekuur. Het is belangrijk dat je mensen op hun gemak stelt, zodat ze hun verhaal durven te vertellen. Zijn mensen een tijdje uit de running, dan zie je ook wel de angst om weer aan de slag te gaan. Samen met het team werken we aan iemands terugkeer in het arbeidsproces. Wij zijn er om hen te beschermen - daarom stellen we weloverwogen een belastbaarheidsprofiel op - maar ook om hen het vertrouwen en het zelfvertrouwen te geven. Een veilig duwtje in de juiste richting."

Je doet het samen

Kijken we naar de samenwerking tussen de twee, dan levert dat alleen maar meerwaarde op.

Voor Dorien en Dianne. Dorien: "Ik vind het leuk om mijn enthousiasme voor het vak over te brengen. Daarnaast leer ik ook van Dianne en kom ik weer in aanraking met de opleiding. Hoe wordt er tegen zaken aan gekeken, welke onderwerpen komen aan bod?" Dianne: "Je draait zelfstandig je spreekuren, maar natuurlijk heb je ook wel eens twijfels of vragen. Ik kan altijd op Dorien terugvallen. Hoe fijn is het dat je niet bang hoeft te zijn je onzekerheid te tonen...?"

"Juist samenwerken met het team arbeidsdeskundigen en reïntegratiebegeleiders is fijn. Openstaan voor elkaars kijk en deskundigheid, dat maakt het interessant", besluiten de twee.



Ook interesse in een carrière bij UWV?
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HUNTING CONSISTS MOSTLY OF WAITING

In everyday life, Odette Zonnenberg works as a nurse in intensive care. As a hobby, she hunts roe deer and wild boar. 'It all comes from my passion for people, animals and nature.'

Text: Laura Klompenhouwer en Mathijs Noij
Photography: Anoeska van Slegtenhorst / Getty Images





On the terrace of the Berg en Dal pancake restaurant De Duivelsberg, Odette Zonnenberg takes her phone out of her trouser pocket. She runs her fingers over the screen, taps Play and

shows me the video. In the dark, I see a group of wild boars rooting around. The black and white footage is taken with a thermographic camera. The visor aims at one of the boars, and seconds later the animal falls to the ground, writhing.

And no, Zonnenberg, who works as a nurse at Radboud university medical center, doesn't show these kinds of videos to her colleagues. "Not everyone appreciates it. I know by now which of my colleagues not to approach."

Odette Zonnenberg is a hunter, and the Duivelsberg nature reserve is her hunting ground. The nature reserve, right next to the German border, looks rather un-Dutch, with its wooded hills, its streams, and its wide vistas. Walkers share it with foxes, salamanders, owls, predatory birds, deer and wild boars. And with hunters who, like the animals, prefer to remain out of sight. Zonnenberg usually avoids leaving her car on the busy car park outside the pancake restaurant. "I'm all too aware of the fact that I walk around carrying a big gun."

Waiting

She left this gun at home this afternoon. She is, however, wearing her dark green hunting gear, which helps her be less visible among the trees, especially at dusk. From the pancake restaurant, it's only a five-minute walk to a place in the woods, out of view of the walkers on the paths. There's a seat in one of the trees, a few metres above the ground, which can be reached by a ladder. This is where Zonnenberg sits hunting, immobile and silent, her gun at the ready.

If you think hunting deer and wild boar is a vigorous activity, you couldn't be more wrong. Hunting big game consists mostly of waiting until a deer or boar makes its appearance. Even then, you can't just shoot it and go home. You first have to observe your prey carefully. Zonnenberg: "Is it male or female? With wild boar, we prefer to shoot the males first. Does it have a litter? Is it pregnant?"

Even after checking all the boxes, she can't just go ahead and pull the trigger. First the animal has to stand in the right position. A deadly shoulder blade shot, where the bullet passes straight through the heart, can only be fired from the side.

"When I was aiming to shoot my first deer, I felt really shaky. It's normal; we call it 'buck fever'. When you're inexperienced, you hear an approaching deer in every trembling leaf. In my case, it turned out to be two squirrels. I don't have the shakes anymore. But I'm still always careful to make a deliberate decision: is this the one? I always hunt with passion and feeling. Not with the attitude of 'let's go shoot some rounds!'."

"When I hit an animal, I pray it stays down. What you want is a single shot that kills the animal quickly." Responsible hunting – hunting with respect for the wild animal and in accordance with the relevant codes of conduct – always has the highest priority, says Odette. But humans are fallible. "No hunter can say: I've never missed my mark." Once you've delivered a lethal shot, you still have work to do. Even after a perfect shoulder blade shot, a deer can still walk up to eighty metres before it falls down. This is where Zonnenberg's scent hounds Dieke and Otto come in useful: they're trained to locate wounded game.

Once found, the roe deer or boar is eviscerated on the spot: using a knife, Zonnenberg slices the abdomen open to remove the entrails. These are left behind in the woods, for the scavengers. Only then does she take the carcass to her car.

Counting roe deer

And this too is easier said than done. "You can't just drive around the country with a roe deer on the backseat," says Zonnenberg. To hunt, you need a permit, and a hunting licence, which you only get once you've completed a theory and practical training programme. You then have to apply for a permit to be active in a specific area. Some hunters have to wait for this for years. Zonnenberg was invited to join a wildlife management unit. "I'm in a luxurious position."



'IF YOU THINK PEOPLE SHOOT ANIMALS FOR PLEASURE, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT NATURE MANAGEMENT IS ALL ABOUT'

Hunting is not only a privilege, it's also a responsibility, says Zonnenberg. "Lots of people think hunters just kill animals for fun, but they don't understand the story behind nature and population management." Take the wild boars in the area around Duivelsberg. The owner, Staatsbosbeheer, specifically relies on hunters to keep the population as small as possible. Boars dig up the soil, causing damage to farm land, and there's the risk of them spreading African Swine Fever.



Another task that wildlife management units such as Zonnenberg's contribute to is the national roe deer count that takes place around March. These tallies are used to estimate the actual number of roe deer. This figure, in turn, is used to determine how many roe deer hunters can shoot.

"With roe deer, hunters distinguish between males and females," says Zonnenberg. "The period for shooting females is nearing its end now, because the females are pregnant. This is a time for hunters to act responsibly: you leave the females alone, so they can give birth to their young. 1 April marks the start of the roebuck shooting period, when we're allowed to shoot males."

Not that roe deer cause so much damage that their population must be 'controlled'. But in large numbers, they do represent an increased risk for road safety. In the Netherlands, there are thousands of accidents every year involving collisions with deer, roe deer and other wildlife.

According to Zonnenberg, incidents like the fuss about the Oostvaardersplassen, where 1800 deer had to be shot last winter, prove the real need for wildlife management. "I really take issue with what happened there. There was no population control and no consistent policy. Things should never have got that far: so many animals on such a small piece of land, with far too little food."

In short, "by managing nature you also ensure the animals' survival," says Zonnenberg. All of which is not to deny the experience, even the pleasure of hunting: the excitement, being outdoors, working with animals, the traditions. And: "What could be more delicious than a roasted piece of meat you shot yourself?"

Piece of meat

In her work as a nurse at Radboud university medical center, Zonnenberg cares for heart patients in intensive care. She often ponders the contrast between her work and her passion for hunting. "My patients are people whose heart, the engine that drives their body, is in need of repair. And I'm there to help them recover afterwards. At other times, I kill animals by shooting them through the heart." She understands that some people might see this as contradictory. "But it all comes from my passion for people, animals and nature."

Zonnenberg is not afraid of death, which is so clearly present on the IC ward. "It might sound strange, but I find death beautiful. I've seen so many people die that I know now there's nothing scary about it. It's a beautiful thing to be able to assist someone at the end of their life, or to assist their next of kin." ★



'WHEN I BOUGHT THEM, THEY WERE STILL TWO MALES'

Kobie, Sjors and Sjimmi

"When I put on my shoes by the kitchen door in the morning, they go completely wild. Only if I put on my shoes, mind you! They sit outside in their pen watching me, and they know perfectly well I'm on my way to give them a treat. When I get home from work and they see me standing in the room, they jump up and down like mad in their hutch.

Sjors, the brown one, is the male.

Sjimmi is a female. When I bought them, they were still two males. Dwarf rabbits, I was told. Once at the vet, I found out it wasn't true: not their being dwarf rabbits, and not Sjimmi's gender. So I had to have Sjors castrated. 'You buy rabbits for €20,' said my brother, 'and end up

spending hundreds.' He advised me to buy a new rabbit; it would be cheaper than castration. But of course, I couldn't do that. I was already attached to them and, more importantly, they were attached to each other.

They don't have a dog's social intelligence. And yet, I do believe they understand me when I complain or when I'm happy. In the winter, they have to stay outside because of their thick winter coats, but in spring and summer, I take them in. They just hop around the room. I think it's nice and cosy.

In the evening, they join me on the couch, and we watch TV together. Sjors always sits quietly. He doesn't dare to jump down. Since I had him castrated, he's become so tame! Sjimmi isn't afraid of anything. She bullies Sjors. She sometimes even tries to mount him, which he doesn't like one bit.

Kobie van Krieken is a postdoc in Communication and Information Studies, Sjors (the male) is a brown rabbit, and Sjimmi is black. They are two years old.



HUMANS
&
ANIMALS

MALARIA RESEARCH

A CUP OF MOSQUITOES ON YOUR ARM



Slowly but surely Nijmegen researchers are working on developing a malaria vaccine. 'We should think more in terms of steps than breakthroughs,' says Robert Sauerwein, Professor of Medical Parasitology and head of the Nijmegen Malaria Facility. Four questions about the progress of their research.

Text: Ken Lambeets / Photo: Getty Images

Ever since the 1960s researchers have been working on developing a vaccine against malaria. One of these research centres is located in Nijmegen and led by Professor of Medical Parasitology Robert Sauerwein. In the tropical rooms of the Malaria Facility, 10,000 mosquitoes are bred every week. To test the vaccines, some sixty test subjects per year volunteer to be injected with the malaria parasite.

So far, worldwide, only one vaccine has been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), the institute that studies all the drugs that appear on the market. "This vaccine took over thirty years to develop, and was born of a collaboration between a large pharmaceutical company and the US Army," says Robert Sauerwein. "Unfortunately, it's not a very good

vaccine: it only protects 50% of the population, and not for very long."

1. WHY DOES IT TAKE SO LONG TO DEVELOP A VACCINE?

Every year, malaria affects more than 200 million people and kills half a million, particularly in the tropics. Since the target group of malaria research is not located in the Western world – with the exception of Westerners who travel to the tropics – there's not much funding for it. People in Africa have little money, so a vaccine can't be expensive. This prevents companies from getting involved. Add to this the fact that malaria is a complex



disease. Mosquitoes carry the parasite, which in humans behaves differently depending on whether it appears in the blood or the liver, for example. “We don’t quite understand how the immune system responds to malaria,” says Sauerwein. “Fundamental research on this topic is as yet incomplete. This means vaccine research is often a question of trial and error.”

Thirdly, the directives for drug research are becoming more and more strict. The Nijmegen lab carries out research on humans, but also on mice, and most recently pigs. According to Sauerwein, these days it’s almost as difficult to experiment on animals as on humans. In both cases, the procedures are becoming ever more complicated, with sharp trade-offs between safety, costs and yield. The danger is a crippling bureaucracy, which slows down research progress.

2. WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN MALARIA RESEARCH?

In the first stage, malaria researchers try to identify a target for the vaccine: this could be a protein, a cluster of proteins, or even the entire parasite. In pre-clinical trials – in animals or in vitro (outside the body, Eds.) – researchers must demonstrate that their vaccine works as long as there’s enough immunity. In a model system in the lab, the vaccine must be shown to be effective and safe.

Once that’s the case, you make the transition to humans. In Phase 1 trials you have to show that the product is safe. Sauerwein: “You inject the vaccine in human subjects without them suffering any adverse effects – with the exception of an immune reaction which you

INGI VEUGEN (21): ‘BLUE BLOOD VESSELS’

From September to November 2018, 21-year old Ingi Veugen, student in Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies, volunteered to take part in the malaria study. “An interesting excursion into the medical world,” says Veugen.

During the first two weeks of the study Veugen had blood samples taken twice a day: in the morning before she went to class, and again in the evening. “Sometimes they would collect one vial, other times ten. At some point, my blood vessels were all blue” (*she laughs*).

This was always followed by an interview with the doctor. “Among other things, I was asked to score how I felt on a scale of 1 to 5.” At a later stage in the study, Veugen was required to allow a coffee cup full of mosquitoes have their way with the inside of her arm. “The first time, it was really scary. Luckily, there were four of us doing it at the same time. Afterwards, we were given a cream to take home to stop the itching.” Veugen knew she might develop flu-like symptoms and a fever, but she suffered more from the effects of the drug than from the malaria itself. “I only had a temperature for one night; a friend of mine was in bed all week.”

Veugen sees the financial reward given to the study participants as a nice bonus. “To be honest, I probably wouldn’t have signed up without it.”



PHOTO: RABBOUDJMC

Blood of participants in malaria research

can measure by taking a blood sample. By infecting test subjects with malaria you can show that the vaccine doesn't only work in the lab, but also in real people."

Once this works, the vaccine is tested in Africa, first on dozens of test subjects, and then, in Phase 2 in trials, on hundreds. "This is best done during the malaria season: how many cases of malaria occur in a group you vaccinated versus a group you didn't vaccinate? Are there any significant differences?"

In Phase 3 trials the vaccine is tested on thousands of subjects in various countries and under different conditions. "These are large-scale, expensive studies, so you have to be sure your vaccine really works."

If the vaccine survives this test, you contact the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and ask them to approve it. So far, worldwide, this has only happened once, but there are various projects in the pipeline.

3. WHAT ROLE DOES NIJMEGEN HAVE IN MALARIA RESEARCH?

The Nijmegen Malaria Facility, which employs around thirty researchers, is mostly known for its translational research: translating fundamental research to a product, bringing it to the field, and processing any findings in the vaccine. "We work from molecule to man to population," says Sauerwein. "These three

elements feed one another. This allows us to take steps to speed up the development of new resources."

At the moment, the three vaccines of the Nijmegen lab are all in the clinical trial phase. "In our lab we use highly controlled conditions to check whether our vaccines are effective and safe. We are now ready to move on to Phase 1 trials. TropiQ, a spin-off of the Novio Tech Campus hospital, has also developed a drug that's entering the clinical trial phase. Whereas a vaccine prevents infection, this drug cures people who are already infected with malaria. We hope to be able to test the vaccines and the drug in Africa soon."

4. WILL NIJMEGEN RESEARCHERS EVER DEVELOP A VACCINE AGAINST MALARIA?

"Of course we can dream," says Sauerwein, "but there's no such thing as the perfect vaccine - at best you can have a good vaccine. The media are always asking whether we've finally made a breakthrough, but a vaccine is developed in small steps. There's a dot on the horizon, though, that you have to keep moving towards. And once we have a vaccine, we'll have new problems to solve, such as increasing resistance. There's no one size fits all forever solution." *

BRAM SLURINK (19): 'I NOW UNDERSTAND BETTER HOW MALARIA WORKS'

In the same round, Medical student Bram Slurink (19) also allowed himself to be bitten by malaria mosquitoes.

"I saw on Facebook that they were looking for test subjects," says Slurink. "I think it's important that there are enough test subjects for this kind of research, so I signed up. And as a student, it's an easy way to make some money."

Slurink didn't suffer much from the mosquito bites. "They just itched a little. After being infected with malaria, I was slightly ill for two days, but not so that I had to stay in bed. I got heart palpitations when walking up the stairs and I was very tired. I didn't really have a fever."

Slurink enjoyed the contact with the doctors. "I talked to them about the study. I now have a better understanding of how malaria works."

According to Slurink, a lot of people think the financial reward is based on the risks involved. "But that's not the case: it's about the time you devote to the study. Since I live close to the hospital, I didn't get that much money."

Nevertheless, a lot of people advised Slurink not to take part in the study. "And that while these kinds of studies are completely risk-free. The worst thing that could have happened was me lying in bed sick for a few days. It's a risk I was prepared to take."

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY STUDENT COUNCIL AND THE WORKS COUNCIL

www.radboudnet.nl/medezeggenschap
www.numedezeggenschap.nl

POINT TAKEN!

2019 Elections

This Spring, elections are being held once again for students and staff members! See below for the timeline of both elections.

TIMELINE FOR USC, FSCS AND PROGRAMME COMMITTEES:

- **From 11 March to 13 March:** All students are informed via their student e-mail account about their listing in the electoral register.
- **18 April and from 23 April to 26 April:** Candidate nominations
- **Monday 3 to Thursday 6 June:** Elections
- **7 June 4 p.m.:** Results announced at the Cultuurcafé

TIMELINE FOR WORKS COUNCIL AND REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS:

- **25 March to 2 April:** All staff members are informed by e-mail about their listing in the electoral register.
- **6 May to 10 May:** Candidate nominations
- **12 June to 21 June:** Elections
- **25 June 4 p.m.:** Results announced at the Cultuurcafé

For information about the elections, please contact the Bureau Verkiezingen (Electoral Office), Berchmanianum (Houtlaan 4), Room 01.301, Telephone (36)12745 / 11239. See also www.ru.nl/verkiezingen

USR

Dear Vox reader,

Here is a new update from the University Student Council! In the last official cycle, there weren't that many policy documents to discuss, but we were still quite busy. For example, we used our time with the Executive Board to ask questions about various topics.

We asked the Board about the incidental board work grants that will unfortunately no longer be issued this year, since the fund has reached its limit. As USC, we think this is a great pity, as it will make it more difficult for new initiatives and projects on Campus to thrive. We're now talking to Student Life and the Executive Board to try to get the best deal possible for students. We also raised the issue of the mocking remarks some Professors made during lectures, in particular about the Christian faith. *Vox* and *ANS* both devoted articles to the topic, so make sure you read these if you want to find out more about it.

We also asked the Board about the rules regarding access to examinations. Many faculties want students who take an exam to show a valid ID, rather than just a student ID. In addition, students are allowed to enter the examination hall until 15 minutes after the start of the exam, and not a minute later. Since the rules differ quite a lot from faculty to faculty, it's a good idea to check what rules apply to your own study programme, and whether there have been any recent changes.

We were also given a preview of the new strategic plan, and asked for our feedback. The strategic plan contains the University's plans and ambitions for the next five years. Unfortunately, we're not allowed to say much about the content, as this is still confidential.

Outside the official meetings, we're also keeping busy. Students feeling lonely is an issue that's high on our agenda. We're launching a number of initiatives to address this problem. We're also investigating how best to help and support associations in becoming more international. And we're looking for solutions for students who have two examinations scheduled at the same time. Together with Student Life, we hope to find a solution to this problem soon. And this is just a small selection from our working groups.

If you want to know more about the University Student Council, visit our website or e-mail us at usr@ru.nl. Better still, drop in sometime – you will find us in the USC room in TvA1 (turn right at the entrance, and continue to the end of the corridor).

OR

Vision on ICT

The future is uncertain, and a lot of things are changing at a fast pace. It's a cliché, but it's true. Here's another cliché: when you know where you're going, it's easier to get there. ICT is one of those areas where everything seems to be changing, and really quickly too. ICT is an important part of the infrastructure underlying all the work we do. Last year's transition to Brightspace has made it clear that a change in ICT impacts everyone, and is not always going to be easy. Considering the fast pace of ICT changes and how high the stakes, it's a pity that Radboud University doesn't seem to know in which direction to proceed. The University's latest vision document on computerisation dates from 2013. So high time for an update. The first thing we need is an explicit vision on how digital Radboud University should be. Once you can imagine the future, you can build towards it and distil concrete measures from your vision. Here's an example: we could make it our goal to prioritise user friendliness and flexibility in new systems. This would make it much easier to submit expenses claims in the future. How a system works therefore follows from the objectives it serves. It goes without saying that the implementation of ICT systems can be a complex and difficult matter. But the objectives must be crystal clear. In the absence of a vision, you are simply overtaken by events. And this in turn leads to a situation where people have to work hard to make sure the ICT system works, instead of having a system that supports the people using it. So where does Radboud University stand now? We're busy working on all kinds of ICT systems with a fantastic team of committed people. And we will continue to do so, because we can't imagine a future without it. But we're still waiting for a vision and a good plan, as we continue to be overtaken by the ever-faster waves of change.



HEY, LOOK, THERE'S A RAT ON MY DESK

Sanne van Hout's rats were saved from being devoured by a snake; Daniël van Dijk's turtles were supposed to end up as soup. Instead, they all got a second life in a student house.

Text: Bregje van de Weijer / **Photography:** Julie de Bruin



Sanne van Hout (24) – Master’s student in Psychology – has two rats

“They’re called Roewie and Raafje. I’ve had them for a year now. When I first got them, they were still very little. My sister has kept rats for a long time, which is what inspired me to get them. They’re active animals, more so than guinea pigs or rabbits, and they need lots of exercise. I let them run around for an hour every day. I feel guilty if I go away for the day. It’s quite a responsibility.

At home we used to have dogs and cats, and I was always very fond of rodents too. I really missed having animals around. Rats are really fun because they are so active and tame. They come to you, and climb on your shoulder. Very different from wild rats. People are sometimes surprised at first, but then

they see how much fun they are. My housemates were very enthusiastic in the beginning. They kept dropping by my room for a look. Now they don’t take so much notice anymore.

It’s up to you how you take care of them. I’ve chosen a more expensive floor covering for their cage because it’s better for their lungs. I’ve also bought them lots of rat toys lately. As a result, they’re costing me around € 20 per month. But you could make it cheaper. Rats are always gnawing on things, which is tough on my plants, so I have to get new ones on a regular basis. They’ve also been known to chew through my Wi-Fi cable. You just have to be careful.”

‘I FEEL GUILTY IF I GO AWAY FOR THE DAY’



5 TIPS FOR KEEPING A PET

1

CHOOSE A PET THAT SUITS YOUR SITUATION

The first step in acquiring a pet is deciding what kind of animal you want. A dog is fun, but not always practical if you live in a student house. Things you should consider include the costs of caring for your pet, how much space it requires, and whether it can be left alone for a short or longer time. Easy-to-keep pets include small rodents and fish. Some animals, like rabbits, have to be kept in pairs.

2

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Before you buy a pet, but also afterwards, it's important to understand your pet's needs. In terms of food, but also if it gets sick. So do some research. Or do what Sanne van Hout did: "There are lots of videos on YouTube on how to keep pets."

3

DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR HOUSEMATES AND LANDLORD

Let your housemates know you're expecting a new addition to your household, but most importantly, don't forget to tell your landlord. Your rental contract probably contains some clause about whether pets are allowed. Daniel van Dijk: "I first discussed it with my

housemates, and then we had a long talk with the landlord. An aquarium is too big to be moved around, so my housemates and I share responsibility for the turtles. If they get sick, we also share the costs."

4

FIND OUT WHERE TO PURCHASE YOUR PET

You can of course always buy a pet at the pet store, but there are other options. For example, you could save money and adopt an animal from an animal rescue centre. Or buy it via Marktplaats, like Van Hout did. "Pet stores often overbreed animals, which promotes diseases. That's why I bought mine via Marktplaats, from a woman who rescues rats that would otherwise be fed to snakes."

5

KEEP THE FUTURE IN MIND

Even though you probably don't want to think about it, it's a good idea to consider how long your pet is likely to live. What will you do with your pet if you move? Or when you go on holiday?

Van Hout: "I'm looking for an apartment at the moment, and some ads specify that no pets are allowed. This makes it harder to find somewhere."

'IT'S
CERTAINLY
WORTH THE
€ 12
A MONTH'

Daniël van Dijk (26) – Master's student in International Law – has four turtles

"Our turtles are over thirty years old. We got them from our former neighbour across the street, who's a biologist, with a house full of exotic animals. He rescued these turtles back in the 1980s when he was travelling through Japan. In a restaurant, he was offered turtle soup, but he couldn't face it, so he bought the whole lot and brought them back to the Netherlands. We've only had them for a couple of months.

Turtles live for fifty years on average, and the oldest known turtle lived to be 188. They're quite lazy animals: they love the sunshine – or lamps in our case – and

they just swim or laze around on a piece of wood. For many turtle species, gender is determined in the egg, based on water temperature. In warm water, the turtle is more likely to be a female, in cold water, a male. Isn't that funny? For the rest, red-eared sliders are a protected species, so you can't sell them.

The aquarium stands in the common room of our house, and we're all responsible for the animals. If I ever leave, I'll hand them over to new housemates. They cost me around € 12 a month, but it's definitely worth it: they create such a nice atmosphere in the house.

I like to sit in front of the aquarium, and when I have to study, I get real inspiration from seeing the turtles quietly going about their business."





COLUMN

Lucy's law

Lucienne van der Geld is a lecturer of notarial law and director of Network Notarissen.

Animal rights

Wherever animals and the law meet, interesting things happen. Not only when Johnny Depp and Amber Heart get divorced and fight over 'custody' of their dogs, or when Karl Lagerfeld dies and everyone wonders about the fate of his cat Choupette.

Combine the two concepts, and you get 'animal rights': the rights of animals to be protected against human actions. Animal rights are not very extensive in the Netherlands. The Dutch Civil Code states that animals shouldn't be treated as 'objects'. But this is mostly meant symbolically, because when it comes down to it, animals are very much treated like objects. In Germany, animals have for some time now been included in the Constitution. Should the Netherlands follow suit and include animal rights in our Constitution?

You'll probably not be surprised to hear that the Party for the Animals (Pvd) is all for it. As is PVV member Dion Graus (the spiritual father of the animal cops). And GroenLinks has been calling for more attention for animal rights in the Constitution for years. But what has this led to so far? More symbolic politics?

Mahatma Gandhi once said you can tell how civilised a nation is by the degree of respect with which it treats its animals. And I find myself wondering whether respect is something you should impose on people through a constitutional article. I believe the intrinsic motivation of people wanting to do something is much stronger than when they are forced to do it.

I am writing this column immediately after the Forum for Democracy's great electoral victory in the Dutch Provincial elections. The way some people have reacted to the FvD's victory has little to do with civilisation or respect (for democracy, for example). Maybe by including animal rights in the Constitution we could draw attention to all the other articles in the Constitution. A much needed reminder, in my opinion. I'd definitely vote for that!



Roy and Rinus

"Rinus is already waiting when I enter my office in the Huygens building on a Monday morning. I open his cage, and he flutters out and flies round the room. He knows I first need a cup of coffee to get started; then the fun can start. I take out my sandwich, and give Rinus a bite. We have our breakfast together. He likes cheese best.

He's quite social. Sometimes he puts his head on my keyboard, which means he wants me to stroke his neck. He also sometimes spits out feed on my desk. It's his way of sharing.

Rinus has lived in my office for fifteen years now. He's the second parrot in our department. The first one was called Pummel. When we ate cake, he used to walk over the table and help himself to a piece. A beautiful creature. When Pummel died fifteen years ago, we looked for a replacement and found Rinus via the Internet.

Rinus was in poor shape when we bought him, but he quickly recovered. My colleague, Leon, buys the best quality feed at the vet's and together we make sure Rinus doesn't get lonely. During holidays we take turns coming into the office for a few hours.

Rinus gets a shower every week. He loves it! He really prepares for it: spreading his wings and sticking out his bottom. When I spray him, you can see how much he enjoys the water. In the rain forest, parrots also get a rain shower every day.

Since we moved to the new building, Rinus is no longer allowed to live in the coffee room, but only here in my office. He usually just flies around. Sometimes he gets mischievous and suddenly flies out of the room, into the study rooms. One time, I came in after the weekend and found bird poo all over the corridor."

Roy Peters (43) is a bio-analyst at the department of Aquatic Ecology & Environmental Biology. Rinus (15) is a blue-headed parrot.

HUMANS
&
ANIMALS

'SOMETIMES HE
PUTS HIS HEAD
ON MY
KEYBOARD'



Going out of your way for a Porno Sandwich

With the festival season in sight, food truck owners are getting their vans out of storage and their aprons waxed. So too the men of BBQ-Brandtweer, located at the Honig Complex. 'People go out of their way for our Porno Sandwich with pulled pork.'

Text: Jozien Wijkhuijs / Photo: Erik van 't Hullenaar

Lucas Smid (40) and Marciano Boersma (41) own four fire trucks. They bought the fourth after landing the job of catering for the thirtieth anniversary of the Landrover Club. "1800 people attended," says Smid. "It was our biggest event to date."

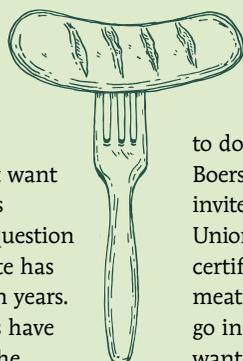
Seven years ago they started out with a single truck, with just a small barbecue inside. They catered for small parties, and nicknamed the truck Franz. "We give names to all our stuff: makes it easier to talk about it."



When the space of the former company fire brigade at the Honig site became available, the men acquired additional kitchen and storage space. The company grew steadily and BBQ-Brandtweer became a well-known

phenomenon in Nijmegen and far beyond. All their equipment is stored at the Honig, from large barbecues and work clothing to fireman's helmets.

These days Smid and Boersma also rent a fire station in Lent, where they keep three of the four fire trucks.



Sticker

“Basically, most people just want meat; it’s that simple,” says Boersma in answer to the question of whether the public’s taste has changed over the past seven years. “We do see that side dishes have become more important. The vegetable dishes accompanying the meat would often run out by the time the vegetarians came to grab some food. So we started serving more vegetables.” Smid adds: “These days there’s more variety in dietary preferences. But it’s also happens that people who were planning to order a vegetarian dish decide to try a piece of meat once they hear our story.”

The story in question concerns the fact that BBQ-Brandtweer went in search of the very best meat available, by their own standards. “If you have to exterminate an entire herd, as we sometimes do, you want

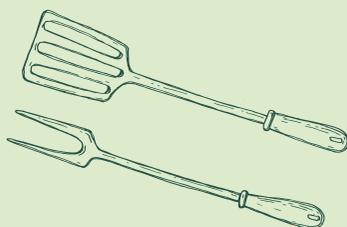
to do so with a clear conscience,” explains Boersma. “In the early days we were invited to cater for an event at Control Union, a company that issues sustainability certificates. They wanted us to use their meat.” This inspired Boersma and Smid to go in search of their own standards. “We wanted Dutch meat, from animals born in the Netherlands, fed Dutch feed, and slaughtered in the Netherlands,” says Boersma. “As few food kilometres as possible, and no Brazilian forests being cut down to produce soya feed. If the meat in question didn’t have an ‘organic’ sticker, too bad! It was good enough for us.”

Unfortunately consumers don’t look further than that sticker, they say. “Animals get flown in from South America, where there’s very little quality control. The meat ends up at Albert Heijn with an ‘organic’ sticker on it, but it’s neither sustainable nor tasty.”

Water melon

Incidentally, the Brandtweer men have no objections to creating vegan menus. “There’s so much that grows on trees and bushes that tastes really good on a barbecue,” says Boersma. “Take jackfruit and mushrooms: they’re just as tasty as meat. We plan to try smoking water melon soon, kind of like a ham.”

But their main product is still meat, especially at events like the Kaaij. “During the Four Days Marches, people go out of their way for our Porno Sandwich with pulled pork,” says Smid. “At the Kaaij we don’t sell vegetarian options, because there are enough other food trucks that do. And to be really honest, this only makes the queues at our truck longer.” *



HALAL MEAT

Eric Huisman, from food truck Bries Saucies, agrees festival audiences tend to prefer meat. “The crowd tends to be fairly conservative. Festival visitors want French fries, pizza, hamburgers and satay. The vegetarian cooks at these kinds of events tend to sell less, although some of them are real magicians.”

Huisman does always include vegetarian options, and halal meat. “People tend to really appreciate it, even though it depends on the location: in Nijmegen, people are more likely to order a vegetarian sausage than in, say, Putten. In Putten, after a few beers they buy three hamburgers, and gobble them up one after the other.” Yet he does think things are slowly changing. “I believe pork will be the first to go. With all the bad publicity, people don’t want it anymore.”

TIPS

Of course you can scour all the broad-sheets and websites for information or subscribe to some spam-like newsletter to find out what’s happening in Nijmegen in the field of arts & culture the next few weeks. But it may be easier to just trust Vox.

LISTEN!

TED VAN AANHOLT (23) IS A PHILOSOPHY MASTER’S STUDENT, REVIEWER FOR *3VOOR12 GELDERLAND*, AND CONCERT PHOTOGRAPHER.

JOEP BEVING



Thursday 25 April, De Vereeniging

Joep Beving is one of the leaders of a new movement in popular classical and minimalist music. Although he gained popularity with his ‘focus music’ playlists on Spotify, his compositions clearly deserve to be listened to with full attention. 9 p.m., € 30.50

SHORTPARIS

Wednesday 1 May, Merleyn

Forget about any pop music conventions if you’re planning to go see Shortparis. This experimental, theatrical band from Siberia does away with all the rules. One thing is sure: this concert’s going to be a unique experience! 10 p.m., € 13

TALOS

Tuesday 28 May, Merleyn

When you hear Talos' single *The Light Upon Us*, you simply can't imagine why this Irish electro-folk musician hasn't broken through onto the international scene yet. His emotional and upbeat songs are certainly worth listening to. 8.45 p.m., € 12

WATCH!

SIMON SPIJKERMAN (20) IS MEMBER OF *CULTUUR OP DE CAMPUS* LITERATURE COMMITTEE AND STUDIES POLITICAL SCIENCE.

THE BREAKFAST CLUB & BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

Wednesday 17 April, Theaterzaal C

On one and the same day, *Cultuur op de Campus* screens both *The Breakfast Club* (1985) and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). In the morning and in the evening respectively, you can watch these true classics while enjoying a tasty breakfast. And this for the price of an IKEA meal. Wow! 10.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m., € 3

KOM HIER DAT IK U KUS



Wednesday 15 May, Stadsschouwburg

Kom hier dat ik u kus ('Come here so I can kiss you') is a theatre adaptation of the novel by the same name by Griet op de Beeck. Following the success of her previous play, based on her debut novel *Vele hemels boven de zevende* ('Many heavens above the seventh'), Op de Beeck now brings to the stage the confronting story of Mona and the relationships in her family.

HET LEVEN AN SICH

Tuesday 28 May, Stadsschouwburg

De Partizanen (comedians Thomas Gast and Merijn Scholten) reflect on the trends, hypes and social norms of our times. This promises to be a somewhat confrontational but very funny evening filled with sketches, dialogues, and music. 8 p.m., € 12

GO!

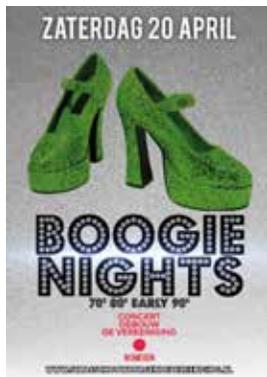
THIJS VAN BEUSEKOM (25) IS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *NIJMEGEN CULTUURSTAD* AND WRITES FOR *VOX*.

PIÑA X WAALHALLA

Saturday 13 April, Waalhalla

Piña is a party with the hottest Latin music, a tropical atmosphere and lots of caliente sounds. Think reggaeton, Latin hits, merengue, bachata, Dembow, salsa and dancehall. 11 p.m., € 15

BOOGIE NIGHTS



Saturday 20 April, De Vereeniging

Disco balls, a lit-up dance floor, and dance hits from the '70s, '80s and '90s. Not to mention images from those days displayed on a mega screen. Boogie Nights travels throughout the country and is now coming to Nijmegen. Disco dancing for the advanced. 10 p.m., € 10

COR

Friday 3 May, De Plak

KoningsCollectief joins forces with *NoNonsense*, a party syndicate from Rotterdam. House, tech house, and techno for fans and detractors. Music to raise the temperature of your Spring Fever. 11 p.m., Free entrance.

AGENDA

MESSAGES FOR VOX CAMPUS CAN BE SENT TO: REDACTIE@VOX.RU.NL

GENERAL

www.ru.nl/studentenkerk

16 APRIL, 8 p.m.: How down are you allowed to be? (Part 2). How down do you allow yourself to be? And does feeling down also offer opportunities? You can discover many opportunities like this by looking at artists, says Student Chaplain John Hacking. Free soup is served before the lecture. Location: Student Chaplaincy.

6 TO 10 MAY: Green Week. Immerse yourself in five days' worth of sustainable activities and initiatives. Join us for some great food, movies, music, workshops and art. Location: Garden of the Student Chaplaincy.

24 TO 26 MAY: Abbey weekend. Do you need some quality time for yourself? Come to the Abbey and enjoy a weekend of peace and quiet, together with fellow students and staff members. Costs: € 50. Location: Lilbosch Abbey, near Echt.

Career event

16 AND 17 APRIL: The Way UP. Discover what the corporate sector has to offer. Join us for a two-day training programme offered by UniPartners Nijmegen and take a look behind the scenes of Nijmegen companies such as Oersoep brewery and pop podium Doornroosje. Location: Elinor Ostrom building.

Radboud Reflects

www.ru.nl/radboudreflects

16 APRIL, 8.00 p.m.: Who Owns African Art? Lecture by curator and anthropologist Bambi Ceuppens and Senegalese philosopher Bado Ndoye. Should we return unlawfully obtained African art to African countries? Join the debate on returning African art. Location: LUX.

18 APRIL, 7.30 p.m.: A plea for the moderate person. Lecture by the new Thinker Laureate Daan Roovers. She believes we spend too much time expressing our opinions, and too little time forming them. Come and discover why the moderate voice is so crucial to public debate. Location: Lecture Hall Complex.

25 APRIL, 7.30 p.m.: The sense and nonsense of paying tax. Lectures by legal expert Gerard Meussen, political science expert Indra Römgens and philosopher Bruno Verbeek. "Taxes, taxes, taxes! All the rest is bullshit in my opinion." These words by historian Rutger Bregman went round the world. But why? Join us and find out everything there is to know about taxes and tax evasion. Location: Lecture Hall Complex.

14 MAY, 7.30 p.m.: Ayahuasca. A miracle substance? Lectures by philosophers Govert Derix and Pieter Lemmens, and psychologist

STAFF

www.ru.nl/pv

9 MAY, 9.00 a.m.: Excursion to Hattem. Join the Radboud Seniors on an excursion to Hattem and discover the history of this Hanseatic city - its merchant houses, city wall and gate. Departure point: De Schakel.

12 MAY, 9.00 a.m.: Excursion to Keukenhof. Join PV Radboud and discover the world's largest flower garden. For € 35 you get access to Keukenhof and a return ticket from Nijmegen. Departure point: To be announced.

14 MAY, 7.30 p.m.: Bob Ross Painting Workshop. No experience of painting whatsoever, yet you've always dreamed of producing a masterpiece à la Bob Ross? Under professional guidance you can create a painting in less than two hours.

Location: Villa Oud-Heyendael.

CULTUUR OP DE CAMPUS

www.ru.nl/cultuuropdecampus

15 APRIL, 8.00 p.m.: Freedom Lecture by Natascha van Weezel. In preparation for 5 May, author and documentary maker Natascha van Weezel, known for *Natascha's beloofde Land* (Natascha's Promised Land, VPRO) presents her vision on freedom.

Location: Theaterzaal C.

18 APRIL, 9.30 p.m.: Radboud by Night: Skylounge 'n Listen. Are you curious about what the campus looks like at night? Come and enjoy the view, make yourself comfortable and listen to the read-aloud sessions of your favourite books. Location: Skylounge (Erasmus building).

23 APRIL, Kaf & Koren Finals. Which act will claim the title of best Nijmegen band this year? Come and listen to our finalists and discover who will go home with the title and prize. Location: Merleyn.



18 April: Lecture from Daan Roovers

Kim van Oorsouw. Why is the South American hallucinogenic drink so popular? Discover the background and effects of ayahuasca in the West. Location: Lecture Hall Complex.

21 MAY, 8.00 p.m.: The War in Yemen. Lecture by anthropologist Moosa Elayah and political science expert Jutta Joachim. News of the civil war in Yemen rarely appears in our media. What's going on? Find out more about the conflict, the strategic interests involved and the lack of international help. Location: LUX.

POEM

De wereld van morgen

*Een wereld waar thermometers dieteren
of naar buiten gaan wel veilig is
waar schaars bruikbaar water op grote schaal
verbruikt wordt om vee te voeden en
waar rampen als orkanen volkeren verdrijven
die in eigen dialect niet eens een woord voor
klimaatverandering hebben*

*dat we hier spreken over leefbaarheid van omgeving
van ware medemenslevens
betekent dat de ernst van een gedicht zoals dit
meer beslaat dan moraalbrider spelen*

*ook Nederland heeft te maken met de gevolgen
van stijgend water; onze zomers worden heter
en ik hoef met geen Groninger te delen dat aardbevingen
daar hun oorzaak vinden in aardgaswinning*

*Wat te doen? ik zeg Stem
Stem met je stem; schreeuw in het gezicht van je leiders
alles wat je niet aanstaat. Stem met je vuist,
in de lucht op straat of richting zij die het gevaar maken
Stem vooral met je geld, geef het uit
alsof je erkent dat behoud van mens, dier en plant
ook jou aangaat!*

*Stem tijdens verkiezingen alsof er meer bestaat
dan alleen jij hier op aarde.*

LEV AVITAN IS THE OFFICIAL CAMPUS POET THIS ACADEMIC YEAR. EACH MONTH HE WRITES A POEM (IN DUTCH) FOR VOX.

COLOPHON

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