Nominations FSS Research award 2020

Loes Aldering (Political Science & Public Administration) – Throughout my academic career, I have been examining topics related to political representation, inequality, political news coverage, gender and politics, and electoral behavior. For instance, I have studied how politicians are discussed in the media in terms of their leadership traits and how these media representations of politicians affect voters in their candidate evaluations and electoral preferences (i.e., mediated leader effects). Moreover, I'm highly interested in gender differentiated media coverage of politicians and political gender stereotypes. I have recently been awarded a Veni-grant to study to what extent gender stereotypes are applied in the visual media coverage of politicians and to what extent the gender stereotypical portrayal of politicians in textual and visual media coverage affects citizens in their information processing and political attitudes. In my research, I combine manual/automated content analysis, panel data analysis, various types of experimental methods and meta-analysis. **Watch Loes Aaldering's VUM1nute on youtube.**

Tijs van den Broek (Organization Sciences) – Societal issues are increasingly discussed online, influencing citizens' attitudes and (collective) behavior. These online discussions and how organizations participate in them fascinate me. Social media has increased the diversity, dynamics and complexity of citizen-to-citizen and citizen-to-organization interaction, calling for new theories and approaches. My research contributes to organization theory on how organizations can effectively interact online with citizens. Specifically, my work offers insights on both behavioral and structural boundary conditions of large-scale online discussions and mobilization. Furthermore, I aim to contribute to more deliberative online discussions on societal issues and inform organizations how they can mediate. Methodologically, I advocate a critical realist perspective on research and employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to better grasp the online and offline interactions between citizens and organizations. Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration with computer scientists allows me to develop computational methods to keep abreast with the increasing amount of digital data. **Watch Tijs van den Broek's VUM1nute on youtube.**

Eva van Roekel (Social and Cultural Antrhopology) – Eva van Roekel is an up-and-coming talent in cultural anthropology in the Netherlands with a promising track record of studying, writing and filming about contemporary violence and justice in Latin America. Since the beginning of her academic career, she innovatively combines anthropology, social philosophy and the arts, while engaging with urgent societal problems always from the bottom-up.   She did long-term fieldwork in Argentina with victims and perpetrators involved in the trials for crimes against humanity committed during the military dictatorship. Her monograph Phenomenal Justice (2020) already received various awards for outstanding research on human rights and accountability that really shifts our understanding of trauma and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. In 2021, she starts the distinguished ISRF Political Economy Fellowship on the role of gold in the current humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. She will empirically examine the contentious relationship between social and environmental justice amid growing ecological destruction and the correlated rising violent crimes concerning extractivism and smuggle in the Northern Amazon. **Watch Eva van Roekel's VUM1nute on youtube.**

Mariken van der Velden (winner) (Communication Science) – Voters allegedly punish politicians for making compromises in government. Yet, virtually nothing is known about the consequences of compromises for politicians and voters. This lack of understanding is highly

problematic, because societies face increasing political polarization and fragmentation. These trends make compromises increasingly necessary, but also hotly contested. To reconcile this tension, I theorize that political compromises force politicians to strategically communicate their decisions in order to mitigate electoral costs. Comparing the Dutch, German and Spanish case, I test my argument at three levels: (1) employing advanced computational text approaches coupled with case-oriented approaches to identify how politicians communicate compromises; (2) experimentally investigating voters' willingness to accept compromises using Virtual Reality techniques; and (3) bridging the two by utilizing regression and experimental techniques to study the real-world effects of compromises. My research advances our understanding of voters' critical attitudes towards democratic processes, such as coalition government formation – referred to as 'cartel politics' by populists. **Watch Mariken van der Velden's VUM1nute on youtube.**

Arjen de Wit (Sociology) – Arjen de Wit studies nonprofit organizations, volunteering and student involvement. The Dutch Charity Lotteries give part of their income to charities, largely without restrictions. Mixed-methods research shows how grantee organizations use this income for financial stability, sustainable HR policies and innovations. Arjen's dissertation (2018) questions the expectation that people give more to charities when the government cuts on spending. Whether donors 'fill the gaps' depends on their knowledge of government policies and the type of organization to which they donate. In addition to revenues, many charities depend on volunteers. Longitudinal analyses show that volunteers are - and remain - healthier. As a productive and meaningful activity, volunteering can protect against deteriorating health, especially among the elderly and the weak. Furthermore, Arjen participates in the development of the A Broader Mind Longitudinal Survey, which examines the personal, social, professional and civic development of VU students. **Watch Arjen de Wit's VUM1nute on youtube.**