

VSR-VWR Workshop

New Perspectives on Active Learning and Teaching in Legal Education

Date: Friday 3 November 2017, 10.30-17.00 hrs (followed by drinks)

Venue: School of Law, [Janskerkhof 2-3](#), Utrecht University, the Netherlands

To register: Rechten.SBRSecretariaat@uu.nl (ovv Studiemiddag VSR-VWR)

Invitation to attend

The Netherlands Socio-Legal Studies Association ([VSR](#)) and the Netherlands Association for Philosophy of Law ([VWR](#)) are organizing a one-day workshop on new perspectives on active learning and teaching in legal education. In the Netherlands, we see a rise in university colleges in which a variety of 'legal' courses are taught in a broad bachelor curriculum, most of the time under headings like 'law, society, and justice'. Also, traditional disciplinary courses in sociology of law, and jurisprudence, seem increasingly in need to compete with courses such as 'perspectives on law' and 'law and human behaviour'. Given these developments, we want to address the question how best to teach these type of courses, exploring active ways of learning and teaching, introducing the use of, for example, visuals, drama, role play and poetry, observation techniques and ICT (blended learning). We seek to promote these active ways of teaching and learning and to exchange best practices, with an aim to strengthen the academic nature of legal education, in particular in the field of the sociology of law and legal theory.

The workshop kicks off with a plenary session, by [Maksymillian Del Mar](#) who will talk on image and imagination in legal education. Subsequent to the plenary session we will have two rounds of parallel sessions during which best practices are presented and exchanged. As we intend to reach out to the broader community of legal scholars, including those teaching at the different university colleges, we expect most sessions to be in English.

We invite you to *attend* this one day workshop, and even better, to *contribute* to it so that it will be a success! The idea is to eventually collect contributions with an aim to publish a special issue on the theme in the journal [Law & Method](#).

Please send an email if you seek to attend to: Rechten.SBRSecretariaat@uu.nl (ovv Studiemiddag VSR-VWR)

We hope to meet you on November 3rd.

Bart van Klink – Bald de Vries – Hedwig van Rossum – Wibo van Rossum
For any questions, email Bald de Vries – u.devries@uu.nl

Programme

10.30-11.00	WELCOME, COFFEE AND TEA
11.00-12.30	Keynote , Maksymilian del Mar “Educating the Legal Imagination”, followed by discussion
12.30 – 13.30	LUNCH
13.30 – 14.45	Workshops - round 1 (parallel workshops) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshop 1: Seeing Injustice: Mirror-Prison Experience (Losing-Finding Oneself) (English)• Workshop 2: Mindmap als sleutel tot activerend onderwijs (Dutch)• Workshop 3: Active Learning: making more out of Learning Environments (English)• Workshop 4: Teaching sociology of law: the art of participant observation (Dutch)
14.45 – 15.15	COFFEE AND TEA
15.15 – 16.30	Workshops – round 2 (parallel workshops) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshop 1: ‘Exploring playfulness as a tool for learning in legal theoretical courses’ (Dutch)• Workshop 2: Active Learning: making more out of Learning Environments (English)• Workshop 3: “Understanding philosophy through poetry” (English)• Workshop 4: Teaching sociology of law: the art of participant observation (Dutch)
16.30 – 17.00	Plenary evaluation; reflecting upon the workshops from a pedagogic perspective.
17.00	DRINKS

The key-note and workshops

The key-note – Maksymilian del Mar

Legal discourse contains a variety of artefacts, i.e. fabrications that capture our attention, signal their own artifice, and, invite us to imagine. These artefacts include legal fictions, metaphors, hypothetical narratives and perspectival devices. To imagine, in turn, is to combine two mental processes: first, a temporary suspension of certain epistemic commitments; and second, active participation along a spectrum of affective, sensory and kinetic involvement. Both of these elements are internally variable, i.e. 1) we may suspend our epistemic commitments in different ways, from treating something as true that we know is false, to hypothesising something plausible; and 2) from merely supposing (which is an affectively-sensorially-kinetically-thin process) to constructing and enacting an imaginary perspective (which is an affectively-sensorially-and-kinetically-rich one). These artefacts and their related processes of imagination are crucial to legal thought at many levels, including the level of the individual reasoner, the level of interaction in courtrooms and other contexts of legal thought, and the level of the legal community over time. If imagination plays such a crucial role in legal thought, then it is equally crucial that we educate it in law schools. Having presented the basic model, this presentation will go on to offer some resources on how to develop the variety of abilities exercised in imagining.

Maksymilian Del Mar is Reader in Legal Theory and Director of the Centre for Law and Society in a Global Context at the Department of Law, Queen Mary University of London. He has been President of the UK IVR (the UK Branch of the Association of Legal and Social Philosophy) since 2011. He is presently completing two books: *Artefacts of the Legal Mind: The Role and Value of the Imagination in Legal Thought* (for Hart / Bloomsbury) and *Neil MacCormick* (for Stanford University Press). At Queen Mary, he teaches on the undergraduate Jurisprudence module, and has developed two advanced master courses: Imagination and Legal Cognition; and Visual Cognition and Legal Thought.

The workshops

- [Seeing Injustice: Mirror-Prison Experience \(Losing-Finding Oneself\) \(English\)](#)

Moderator: Gülriz Uygur (School of Law, Ankara University)

In legal practice, it is paramount to see injustice in order to reach legal decisions. However, under the shadow of prejudices, seeing injustice is not easy. For this reason, legal education should include the ethical education of moral virtues. My experiential class is part of a prison clinic course with 20 students taking it. In the clinical course, my aim is to make students meet the groups against whom they have strong prejudices. One of these groups is prisoners. I claim that ethical awareness occurs in the space where we meet and get into contact with the particular. This space is one that reflects our ethical personality. And it is in that space that attention to the particular begins. However, for ethical awareness, students need experience. I try to specify a particular sort of experience in which students begin by losing themselves to find themselves. This entails an awareness of how one's actions get absorbed by prejudices. In this experience, starting from the chains of prejudices, we try to move to the particular's place.

- **Mindmap als sleutel tot activerend onderwijs (Dutch)**

Moderator: Renetta Bos (Lecturer School of Law, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

Het is vaak lastig om tijdens een werkgroep alle studenten aan het woord te krijgen en ervoor te zorgen dat alle studenten de stof begrijpen. In de praktijk zijn vaak een enkeling of een paar studenten veel aan het woord en zien veel studenten niet in dat de stof die zij bestuderen overeenkomt met facetten uit hun dagelijks leven. Door studenten te activeren kan dit probleem worden tegengegaan. Het gebruik van een mindmap is hiervoor zeer geschikt. Tijdens deze workshop zal ik mijn aanpak bij werkgroepen in de praktijk brengen. Daarnaast zal ik een uiteenzetting geven over de inspiratiebron van deze aanpak, namelijk het probleemgestuurd onderwijs zoals dat wordt gehanteerd bij de faculteit Rechtsgeleerdheid van de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam. Tevens deel ik mijn ervaringen over het toepassen van deze activerende werkvorm tijdens de 'klassieke' werkgroepen die ik het afgelopen jaar bij de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam heb gegeven.

- **Active Learning and Instruction in Legal Education: making more out of Learning Environments (English)**

Moderator: Antionette Muntjewerff (Associate professor, School of Law, University of Amsterdam)

Since the 80^{ties} technologies were introduced in legal education. With the growth of the Internet Law Faculties moved their education into the web environment. Where electronic learning environments seem to fail to deliver actual support for learning, their current success is to be found in the way they improve communication between teacher and student involving the distribution of information and of course materials. However, to support active learning these environments should be turned into instructional environments presenting instructional materials. The HYPATIA project by Muntjewerff is concerned with developing e-content for legal higher education (see for details and publications: www.antoINETMuntjewerff.nl). In this workshop, we will explore both a methodology for developing tools for legal education for active learning, as well as discuss a program for developing online applications for active learning of the law.

- **'Exploring playfulness as a tool for learning in legal theoretical courses' (Dutch)**

Hedwig van Rossum (Lecturer/researcher, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

If you want to engage your students during your class, you could consider activating your students through playful learning activities during your lecture or lesson. Every lecturer can do this: it really does not have to be as difficult as you might think! While 'academic' is not always associated with playfulness, a large part of academic work is the result of being explorative and playful. Furthermore, in daily life, playfulness has proven to be an effective way to learn. So why not use that to your advantage while teaching? During this workshop, you will explore the possibilities of playfulness as a tool for learning in legal philosophical courses, such as incorporating games and role playing, and you will be challenged to design a playful learning activity for your own class.

- **"Understanding philosophy through poetry" (English)**

Moderator: Bald de Vries (Associate professor Legal Theory and Education, School of Law, Utrecht University)

This workshop explores the ways we can use imagination to gain a better understanding of core texts in jurisprudence and political philosophy, using poetry as a device. In doing so the workshop draws on

the work of James Boyd White and the poet Shelley. The workshop will have a creative element to experience the use of imagination.

- **Teaching sociology of law: the art of participant observation (in Dutch)**

Moderator: Marc Simon Thomas (Assistant professor, School of Law, Utrecht University)

Rechtssociologie onderwijzen betekent ook studenten bekend maken met kwalitatieve methoden van onderzoek. Het afnemen van interviews of het doen van observaties zijn voor de hand liggende voorbeelden van dergelijke methoden. Vanuit mijn antropologische achtergrond vind ik de methode van participerende observatie daar een hele waardevolle aanvulling op. Het is echter niet gemakkelijk om tegelijkertijd mee te doen aan een activiteit (te participeren), goed op te letten wat er gebeurt (te observeren) en daar ook nog eens aantekeningen van te maken. Tijdens deze workshop wil ik de deelnemers deze moeilijkheid laten ervaren en zal ik mijn ervaringen met het onderwijs daarin delen. Daarnaast zal ik uitleggen waarom participerende observatie volgens mij zowel een middel is om data te verzamelen als om te analyseren. Tenslotte zouden we van gedachten kunnen wisselen in welke situaties participerende observatie voor studenten nuttig zou kunnen zijn.