

# InCognito

For your monthly study-related needs and feeds.

February 2015

Suggestions, feedback or comments? Let us know at [newsletter.cognito@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.cognito@gmail.com).

## Ilva Grond goes Down-Under

Hi everyone!

On a snowy morning on the 27th of December, I left the cold weather in the Netherlands, knowing that the weather for the next 8 months would be most likely sunny and warm. About 5 movies, couple hours of sleep, and 5 meals of the always tasty airplane food later, I arrived in Australia! A friend that I knew from Canada was waiting for me at the airport to pick me up. He was my private tour guide in Sydney and took me to the Opera House, Harbor bridge and to the most beautiful beaches (which include of course the hot surfer boys parading along the shore <3). After a wild NYE, it was time to leave Sydney behind and I flew to Melbourne. This is where I'll be spending the next couple of months doing research at the Monash University. My internship is about the influence of the illusion of apparent motion on phantom pains. So far, I've been working on the start up of my experiments and hopefully in about 2 weeks I'll start collecting data. I'm staying at the Clayton campus, which is about 40 minutes traveling from the city centre. At the moment most of the students are still on a holiday break until the beginning of March, so the campus is really quiet. A good thing about the holiday season here in Melbourne, is that there are heaps of activities in the city. Every Wednesday night there is a night market at the Queen Victoria Market where they sell lovely food from all over the world, have live bands and best of all, they have really good sangria! Last weekend I went to the Australian Open, which was an amazing experience. We were able to go into the Hisense Arena and saw some good matches.

Another event during summer



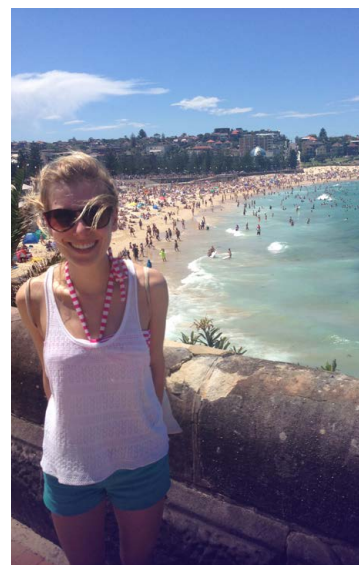
Australia Day can't be without a typical Barbie and the perfect Ozzie merchandise to celebrate it. Below: Bondi Beach! After a long walk along the beaches of Sydney (the Coogee-Bondi walk) we arrived at Bondi Beach where we got a refreshing swim.

is the celebration of Australia Day, which took place on Monday the 26th of January. People in Australia are celebrating that on January 26th 1788, the First Fleet of British Ships at Port Jackson arrived and raised the flag of Great Britain at that site by Governor Arthur Phillip. A very typical thing to do on Australia Day is to have a Barbie (a typical Australian barbecue), so we did! We barbecued at the riverside of the Yarra river, ate kangaroo meat and we were even on the live broadcast of the national television! Later we watched the Australian Open on Federation Square, walked down to the harbor to see the fireworks and ended in a pub in the city.

One of the things that I really like about Melbourne, is that a lot of bars and restaurants are hidden. You don't see a big sign where to go, but then it turns out that for example the most lovely cocktail bar is hidden behind a freezer door in a fast food restaurant! And as some of you might know, our fellow student Jan Koeleman is stay-

ing in Melbourne as well. We met near the beach and it was really nice to have a few drinks and to catch up with him. And in a couple of days, more people from our master will move to Melbourne, because Marthe and Aron are going here too!

So to make a long story short, I love Melbourne and luckily I still have a few more months here to live the Ozzie life!



## AGENDA

### Drinks @ CREA

Every Tuesday, 21:00-late

### Café Scientifique: hoezo fellatio?

5 February, 19:45, CREA

Dutch only, unfortunately.

Hoe dacht men hier vroeger over? Wat zijn de verschillen tussen mannen en vrouwen? En kunnen we nog wat leren van organismen die zich niet seksueel reproduceren? Deze en meer vragen zullen beantwoord worden door drie wetenschappers.

### Cognito Party (?)

6 February, 21:00, Vrolijkstraat 298-3.

Mary Jo will be hosting a house party. BYOB (Bring Your Own Booze).

### Duck / Rabbit Lecture

11 February, 20:30, Café de Ruimte (Buiksloterdijk 270)

A philosopher and a scientist will give their views on psychiatry. Discussion will cover the effects of Deep Brain Stimulation on OCD-patients from a phenomenological point of view. Entrance: € 5

### PhD Info Night

25 February, 19:00, Science Park Co.03

For all FNWI master students. A PhD panel will share their experiences and answer questions.

### ABC Colloquium

27 February, 16:00 - 17:00, Diamantbeurs 5.01 (Weesperplein 4)

Valentin Wyart (École Normale Supérieure, Paris) will give a talk titled "Neurobiological constraints on human decision-making: behavioral modeling and EEG evidence".

# Alumnus profile: Elin Helander

## What is your current occupation?

I'm working as a project manager for a newly started foundation called Cognitive Enhancement and as a research assistant/project manager at the department of Neuroscience at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm.

## How did you end up there?

I was very determined to obtain a PhD a few years ago, and that's why I chose this masters. However, pretty soon after I got an offer to do a PhD, I realized that there are so many other things (like public relations and management for instance) that I like too much to devote four years to being a PhD-student. I thought; where will I be in four years from now if I get a job instead? And I felt that what I will learn in four years from a job will be, maybe more, valuable to me and where I'm heading, than what I will learn in four years as a PhD-student.

So, I told my PI I had changed my mind and didn't want to do a PhD. It was a tough decision, but I just had to do it. I always follow my gut feeling. And if you ask me, it's been successful so far.

I prepared myself that he would end my contract and I would have to find a new job as soon as possible. But he asked me to stay another 6 months and finish the study I was working on. And then he asked me again to stay for another year to work with a big project of ours.

And a few months ago some investors and my PI started a non-profit foundation that aims to spread science innovations within the field of cognitive training, and I was asked to be the project manager!

It's really the job of my dreams and I'm glad I was honest with my boss and followed my gut feeling and didn't complete my PhD. I know he got disappointed in me when I changed my mind. But it's not the end if the world. People will always get disappointed at you if you decide to go with what's best for you. They just have to deal with it. And the same goes for us, we just have to deal with it that sometimes we will disappoint people.

## What do you like about it?

I just don't like my job. I love it! I communicate with both scientists and game developers on a weekly basis and I love to be in the middle of science but also the technical world and gaming industry. I still work in the lab at KI part time so I also get to be involved in pure science and data analyses. I think it's good to remember that you can still work with research although you are not doing or having a PhD.

## What do you dislike about it?

I don't know yet. Ask me again in a year.

## What of the things you've learned at the MBCS do you still use regularly?

We had to read lots of published research which I liked and felt was useful when I started working in the lab. Not only that I had read research relevant to our work here, but also that I had learned to go through articles fast and to pick out the essentials.

## Looking back, what would you've done differently in order to end up where you are now?

Nothing! Maybe I would have cared a bit less about the assignments and grades for my masters, and enjoyed my time in Amsterdam more (I hope you're not censuring my answer here :)). I'm strongly believe that if you have fun, and know what you are passionate about, you will end up in the right place eventually and it's not the grades that will get you there, but your passion.

## Why did you decide not to be a researcher?

Do I have to answer that question? Is it not obvious? No, just kidding. I feel that right now there are other things I rather do. But who knows, maybe I'll change my mind in a few years and do a PhD. The path of life is not a straight line.

## What is your ultimate advice to the current students?

Have fun!!! (Yes, I needed three exclamation marks to answer this question).

## Can you write a little about why you decided not to stay in Amsterdam, what your next plans are, and whether you felt well-prepared by the masters?

That I decided to go back to Sweden, which also is my home country, was a compromise with my boyfriend (today, fiancé). It was easier for him to get a job in Stockholm. I also think Sweden is a great country when it comes to employment benefits. As far as I know you don't have a very long maternity leave in the Netherlands, and what about for the dads? It's even shorter right? Shame on you Dutch politicians. You lost two potentially tax payers there. Sweden is a great country to live in, although we get very dark winters so you easily get depressed and suicidal. But if you survive a Swedish winter, you will survive pretty much anything. Survival of the fittest I've heard it is called.

Did you know btw that we have something called light rooms in Swe-



**Elin Helander**

Graduated: August 2013

Track: Cognitive Science

den? It's a room where everything, I mean everything, is white. You even have to change cloths into white to get in there. And the room has special lamps that will resemble sun light. People go there and sit for 20 min or so in the winters so they won't get depressed. It's called light therapy. You can find these rooms at work places and universities. KI has one for instance. This is very useful for, not so fit people (like me), to still survive the Swedish winters. No, it's not cheating.

I felt well prepared for the masters, although it took me a course or two to get into the way it worked with exams and assignment. I remember I study really hard for one exam. But to realize that all the questions that got asked were pretty superficial. And I had focused on what I thought was the most important parts of the material and studied it in depth - memorizing details. But then I got questions like what the disadvantages were with EEG equipment run on battery. And I could have done so much better on that exam just by going through the power point slides from the teachers, and skipped reading all the articles for that course.

My next plan is to learn more about board work. I'm travelling to London next week to present at a board meeting and I want to learn more about strategic questions, management, and public relations, etcetera.

I've also started my own company ([www.elinhelander.se](http://www.elinhelander.se)) where I offer talks to companies where I "translate" research in psychology and neuroscience into understandable and useful strategies that will help them understand and change their behaviour. I have wanted to have my own company for a very long time, where I get to make all the decisions, and can decide over my own schedule. It is also a challenge to make it all work and find customers. And that's a challenge I like. It really takes a good self confidence. And for the days I feel my confidence isn't on top, I just have to pretend it is.

## BIRTHDAYS

**Lizz Fellingner**  
2 February

**Josien Visser**  
9 February

**Marthe Smedinga**  
13 February

**Mirjam Heinemans**  
14 February

**Michael Giffin**  
15 February

**Kyra Lubbers**  
**Anne Westerink**  
20 February

**Scott Elliott**  
23 February

**David López**  
27 February

## HOROSCOPE



### Pisces

19 February – 20 March

As a Pisces, you are extremely empathetic and easily absorb the things around you, sometimes being overly sensitive with your emotions. This month, as you are working hard on your internship, you will become so well-acquainted with your experiment that your friends and family will begin to worry as you stumble home from the lab, late at night, with dark bags under your eyes, saying things like "I'm so hungry I could eat a cluster sample" and getting into fights about Type I errors. When your family and friends gather together as a group to confront you about your problem, you will be too emotionally oversensitive to take it. In a dramatic outburst, you will claim that your experiment is the only one who understands you, and you will retreat into a destructive, all-consuming relationship with your experiment. Your only relief will come weekly during STICS, where you can discuss your problems openly with your fellow students suffering from a similar condition.

Lucky weapon: glitter bomb  
Lucky animal: grumpy cat  
Lucky chord: C flat major



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT: CHICKEN IN THE HAT

Dutch recipe by Sven van der Burg

Here is one of my favorites: Chicken in the hat (Kip in de hoed in Dutch). The title says it all; it is chicken in a hat of puff pastry! Since the Dutch don't really have their own cuisine they just combine a lot of different cuisines in one meal, of which this one is a good example. It combines the flavor of ginger, curry and Dutch cheese in one dish. It actually is one of the best-rated recipes on the Albert Heijn recipe website (4 stars rated by 2158 people). The idea of this website is that they want you to buy things that are expensive in AH supermarkets. I substitute these ingredients for normal ones that are not expensive and buy everything in the local Turkish supermarket or Dirk, Vomar, or Lidl. Because, \*\*\*\* you Albert Heijn!

The following ingredients will get you a dish for 4 people in 75 minutes (of which 40 minutes is oven-time).

### Ingredients

350 g cherries in a jar (fresh is better)

400 g chicken fillet

Fresh ginger (about 1.5 cm) or ginger powder

50 g butter

2 cloves of garlic (finely chopped)

Some curry (kerrie, the tasty yellow powder to be found in tokos!)

Some sambal

200 ml crème fraîche

100 slices of puff pastry

2 tablespoons of bread-crumbs (paneermeel)

100 g of grated Dutch cheese

2 tablespoons of milk

Rice for 4 people

Springform pan

### Procedure

First the rice: Put it in a saucepan and fill with water covering the rice with about a fingertip to



Photo by Clarissa Filius, on smulweb.nl

spare. Put it on the smallest spot of your stove. When it boils, turn down the heat to the minimum. Let it simmer with a cover for about 15 minutes. Then put it away somewhere and cover it with blankets/jackets to keep it warm.

In the meantime, let the cherries leak in a sieve. Cut the chicken and ginger. Fry the chicken on high heat with the garlic and ginger just until its brown. Add the curry, cherries, sambal and crème fraîche and let it softly boil for about 2 minutes.

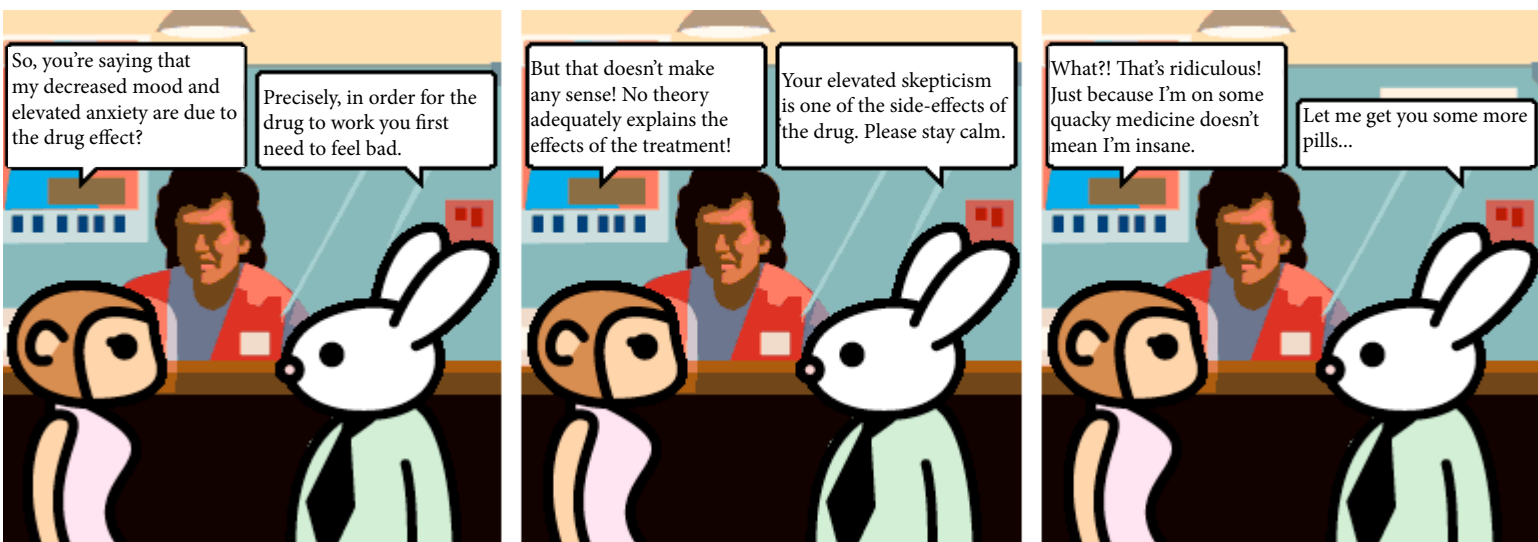
Cover the bottom of the springform pan with baking paper. Grease the sides of the springform. Cover the bottom and a bit of the sides

with puff pastry and make a lot of holes in it with a fork. Sprinkle the bread-crumbs over it. Scoop the chicken/cherry mixture over the puff pastry and sprinkle with the cheese. Try to fold the sides of the puff pastry over the chicken/cherry mixture and cover it with more puff pastry. If all is well, the chicken/cherry mixture should now be in a hat of puff pastry. Brush the top with milk. Put it in a preheated oven (about 200°C) for 30-40 minutes until it looks ready to eat. Serve with the rice.

Eet smakelijk!

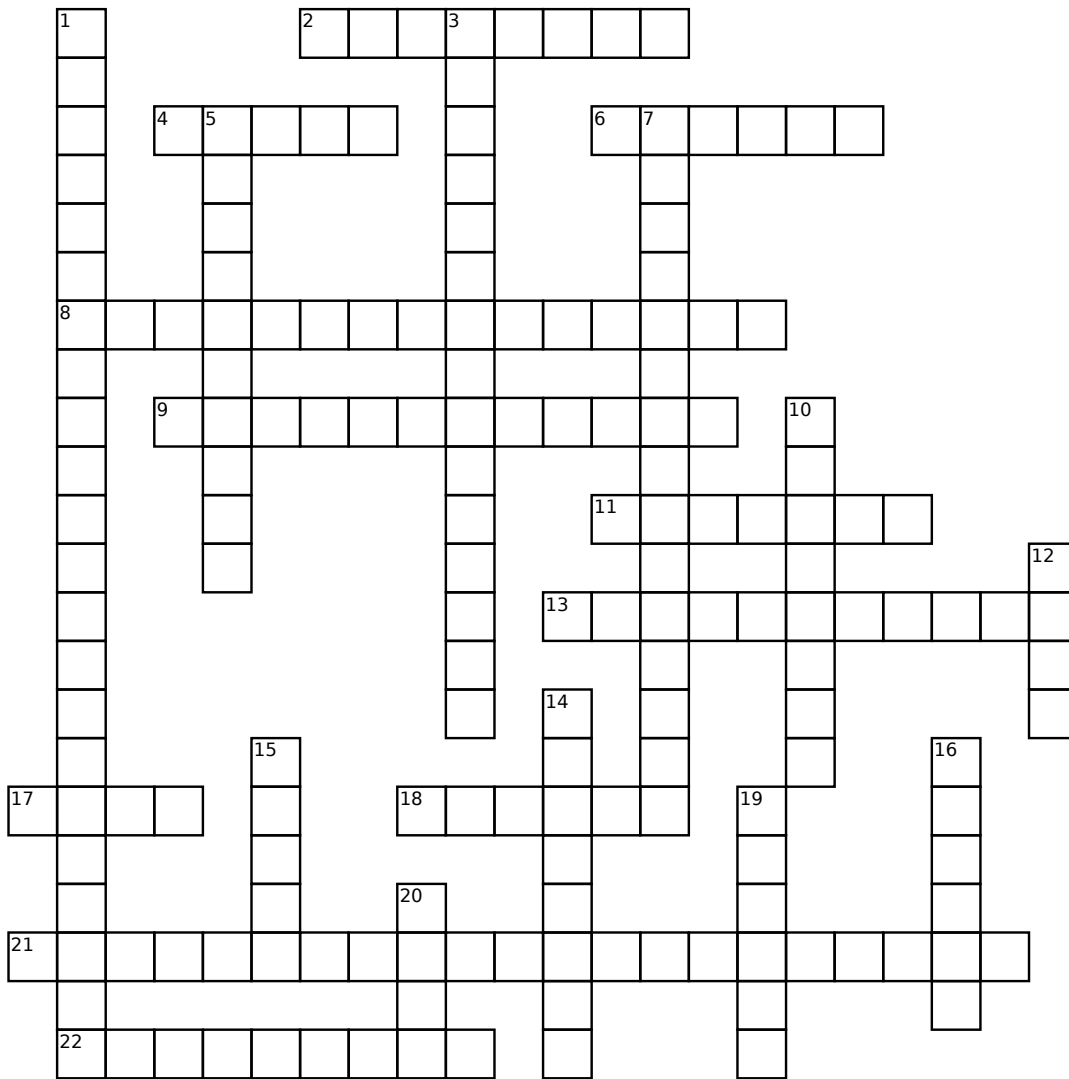
## COMIC: WELCOME TO FLUFFY CLINIC

By Marco Heuvelman



# Words inCognito: cryptic crossword

A cryptic crossword is somewhat like a normal crossword puzzle, except all clues are riddles in themselves. An example of a typical cryptic crossword clue is "Disguised as a newsletter," which would be 'in cognito', the title of this newsletter and a synonym for 'disguised'. Good luck on this MBCS-themed brain teaser!



Being Amsterdam's biggest comedy show, Boom Chicago creates smart and funny comedy shows at their theater on the Rozengracht in Amsterdam. Over the last 20 years, more than a million people have seen them live and millions more enjoyed their Comedy Central TV show and viral videos.

But besides comedy shows, Boom Chicago also offers Improv Classes: "Our workshops will unleash your inner creativity in a fun and safe environment. With a mix of instruction and performing, you will be surprised how much you can laugh in one afternoon. You don't need any acting experience. This class teaches the basic principles of improv comedy and how we do the scenes you have seen in our shows. You will learn to understand the mind of a professional improviser and how to use our 'yes and' philosophy in everyday life. You will feel a boost in your general confidence."

The classes take place every Saturday from 15:00 to 17:30 at Rozengracht 117, Amsterdam and can be reserved by calling 0900-266 624 or sending an email to [hello@boomchicago.nl](mailto:hello@boomchicago.nl).

Congratulations to Maxime Kraus! It may have taken some hours and sweat, blood and tears, but you managed to correctly solve last month's cryptic crossword puzzle! In addition to this honorable mention, you will also receive the two cinema tickets that were promised!

But this month, by sending in the solution of the cryptic crossword puzzle to [newsletter.cognito@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.cognito@gmail.com), you will get a shot at winning free participation for a Boom Chicago Improv Class & entrance for the following night show! Those can be used on a Saturday of your own choice.

Let this be a motivation for you all to again put in all this effort to finish the challenging puzzle!

**Across**

- 2. Driving a scooter before you can handle stronger vehicles (8)
- 4. Return my participants for the

working memory task to me! (5)

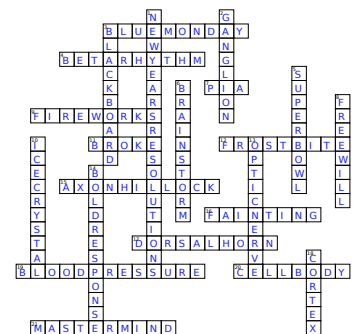
- 6. The letter is significantly worth more than the other ones (1,5)
- 8. Sia wrote an ode to these romantic ones that have particular morphology (10,4)
- 9. Working yourself through neuroscientific papers is ethically debated (5,7)
- 11. Taking pictures of your cat or dog (3,4)
- 13. A fight about the UvA's exam buildings (6,2,3)
- 17. It bothers me you believe in dualism (4)
- 18. Though these men are golden, they live in trash cans (6)
- 21. The impulse comes without restrictive terms (13,8)
- 22. We vote on which courses to take (9)

**Down**

- 1. To keep up the appearance of being smart (10,12)

- 3. Being taught how to work with the apparatus (7,8)
- 5. Where you have to use your head (5,5)
- 7. The vaccinations are much discussed on the internet (5,10)
- 10. We have all already left behind being single (8)
- 12. Rather be a STiCS teacher than a mailman (4)
- 14. We'll just jump over this period (4,4)
- 15. Bringing your passport when drinking tea, guarantees a successful love life (5)
- 16. A memorial for people who died from Alzheimer's disease (6)
- 19. A prophecy that tells you will be able to see again (6)
- 20. I have to publish before I die! (4)

**January's answers:**



Across: 3. Blue Monday, 4. Beta rhythm, 7. Pia, 9. Fireworks, 11. Broke, 12. Frostbite, 15. Axon hillock, 16. Fainting, 17. Dorsal horn, 19. Blood pressure, 20. Cell body, 21. Mastermind. Down: 1. New year's resolutions, 2. Ganglion, 3. Blackboard, 5. Superbowl, 6. Free will, 8. Brainstorm, 10. Ice crystal, 13. Optic nerve, 14. BOLD response, 18. Cortex