

Mariska Kret

Full Professor
Amsterdam

Summary

Summary of research

My PhD focused on the perception of emotional body language and innovated the field of affective neuroscience that was characterized by an almost exclusive focus on facial expressions. I showed that the brain processes body movements similarly as facial expressions but initiate clearer action patterns. I argued that body language is evolutionary seen much older than facial expressions and inspired by Darwins work on emotions and by contemporary primatologists, I experimentally tested this statement in a group of chimpanzees at the Kyoto University Primate Research Institute. With use of the emotional dot probe paradigm presented on a touch-screen, I showed that chimpanzees process chimpanzee body language similarly as humans do. Thanks to the interactions with these beautiful animals, I developed an interest in the use of eye-signals. Humans are the only species on earth with much visible eye-white that evolved for communicative purposes. Despite this difference with the chimpanzee, I have shown that humans, as well as chimpanzees synchronize their pupil-size with their own species. My Postdoctoral appointment at the University of Amsterdam enables me to connect these earlier insights to social psychological work on social decision making and intergroup differences. It resulted in (co) authored publications on the substantial role of oxytocin in social approach and withdrawal tendencies. My VENI project (starting in January 2015) builds on these three lines of work – emotion recognition and mimicry, pupil-synchronization, and oxytocin-motivated social decision making.

www.mariskakret.com

Experience

Cognition Behavior Evolution Network (CBEN)

Founder and committee member

April 2015 - Present (7 years 3 months)

Top Skills

Cognitive Neuroscience

Statistics

fMRI

Publications

Oxytocin conditions intergroup relations through up-regulated in-group empathy, cooperation, conformity, and defense.

Spiegelen van pupil-grootte geeft vertrouwen

Islamic Headdress Influences How Emotion is Recognized from the Eyes.

Context, gender and personality factors, influencing the perception of facial and bodily expressions of emotion

Emotion perception and health.

The Cognition, Behavior & Evolution Network (CBEN) unites scholars working in the fields of evolutionary psychology, behavioral ecology, human biology, primatology, and cultural evolution.

The aim of CBEN is to facilitate research and education in relation to the evolution of cognition and behavior. Its basis is in The Netherlands and Belgium but we invite scholars from other countries to join us.

Brill

Editor-in-Chief at Behaviour

2019 - Present (3 years)

Initiated a special section in the journal for anecdotes of animal behavior https://brill.com/fileasset/downloads_products/BEH_Call_for_Papers_Anecdotes.pdf

Leiden University

6 years 11 months

Full Professor

October 2021 - Present (9 months)

Associate Professor

April 2020 - September 2021 (1 year 6 months)

Assistant Professor

August 2015 - March 2020 (4 years 8 months)

Nederlandse Vereniging voor Gedragsbiologie

Committee member (conference organizer)

November 2015 - January 2019 (3 years 3 months)

<http://www.gedragsbiologie.nl/>

Nederlandse Vereniging voor Psychonomie

Committee member (treasurer)

January 2012 - January 2016 (4 years 1 month)

<http://psychonomie.nl>

University of Amsterdam

Post doctoral researcher

August 2011 - July 2015 (4 years)

Caltech University
Visiting researcher
2015 - 2015 (less than a year)

Kyoto University Primate Research Institute
Postdoctoral Researcher
February 2011 - August 2011 (7 months)
Inuyama, Aichi, Japan

Universiteit van Tilburg
PhD student
2007 - 2011 (4 years)

Education

Leiden University
PhD, Psychology · (2001 - 2006)