



Case First Round
Amsterdam Law Trials
2025

Cecelia Smith v. Nicholas Boatman

A new cabinet has enacted a policy which will dramatically decrease the funding of universities. To make up for the missed funds, universities are now forced to raise the tuition fees. Enraged by the funding cuts and the rise in fees, a group of students and university staff has rallied together to form the *Education for less* group. This group organises protests at different universities throughout the whole country. Nicholas Boatman, who is a LLM student at the *Athenaeum Illustre University*, is the leader of the Amsterdam chapter.

On 12 December 2024 the *Athenaeum Illustre University* Chapter of the organisation organises a protest in the atrium of the law building of the university campus. No permission was given for this protest by the university nor the municipality.

On the day of the protest Cecilia Smith is sitting in the law library buried in her work. She has an exam tomorrow which is causing her a great deal of stress. Luckily, she has her emotional support dog, Fluffy, on her lap. Stroking his head soothes her and she gets back to work. Suddenly, she hears commotion coming from the atrium of the university building. Not willing to lose her spot in the library, she opens the university website. She reads about the protest and how a group of protesters – including students and university staff – has entered the building and is putting up tents and barricades, using bicycles and university art statues. She then reads an email that the dean has sent to all students, saying that the demonstration is unlawful and advising all staff and students to leave the building.

Not wanting to be barricaded in the building, like many others, Cecilia decides to pack up her stuff and make her way to her bicycle stored in the cellar. In order to get to her bicycle, Cecilia must cross through the atrium where the protest is unfolding. Meanwhile Nicholas Boatman has ordered his fellow protestors to throw up a barricade in front of the main entrance of the university building and in front of the stairs leading to the bike cellar, to stop police from entering. He has, however, not barricaded any fire exits.



When Cecilia reaches the atrium, she sees Nicholas Boatman stand on a table across the hall with a megaphone, through which he is shouting chants. Suddenly she sees him point directly at her. He stops the chants and the atrium falls silent. Through the megaphone she hears him say: ‘It is because of her party that we are in this mess!’ In shock, Cecilia realises that she is wearing her Farmers First Force (FFF) sweatshirt – FFF is one of the cabinet parties backing the funding cuts. The demonstrators are now booing her. Then Nicholas repeats through the megaphone: ‘Enemies of our cause, leave! Use the fire exits!’ and resumes the chant 'Education for less! Education for less!’

Cecilia picks up Fluffy by his harness which says “EMO DOG” and makes a run for the barricaded entrance to the bike cellar, to get to her bike. As she tries to leap over it, her dog’s leash gets caught in the barricade. This causes her to fall on the ground. Luckily, Cecilia is unharmed by the fall. However, at the moment of impact she feels Fluffy’s ribs crack, squashed by her weight. As she gets up, she sees her puppy Fluffy bleed to death in front of her eyes.

Cecilia Smith sues Nicholas Boatman for damages.





Amsterdam Law Trials

amsterdamlawtrials@gmail.nl
www.amsterdamlawtrials.nl

Amsterdam University College
Politics, Psychology, Law and
Economics

Universiteit van
Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit
Amsterdam