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Risky business? Behavioral and neural mechanisms underlying risky decision-making in adolescents

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Propositions



*Accompanying the public defense of Neeltje Blankenstein's dissertation:
'Risky business? Behavioral and neural mechanisms underlying
risky decision-making in adolescents' on February 14, 2019.*

1. Attitudes towards explicit risk and ambiguous risk are two separate tendencies that drive (adolescent) risk-taking behavior differently, and are reflected in different neural mechanisms (*this thesis*).
2. Behavior under ambiguity, rather than under risk, is a more naturalistic reflection of adolescent risk-taking behavior in real life (*this thesis*).
3. Individual differences in task-based and real-life risk taking are reflected in brain activation. These individual differences are equally important as general age differences (*this thesis*).
4. Fun seeking behavior is a potential differential susceptibility marker that predicts both risk taking and prosocial tendencies (*this thesis*).
5. Adolescent risk-taking behavior is a multifaceted construct and studying it therefore warrants a multidisciplinary, multi-methodological approach.
6. Models on adolescent risk taking should give more weight to effects of individual differences and context. Not all adolescents are risk takers, and adolescents do not always take risks.
7. Adolescent risk taking is not necessarily maladaptive, since it may serve positive outcomes such as helping others and learning.
8. Studying longitudinal change in brain and behavior is essential to predict positive or negative life outcomes.
9. The significance of research should not be measured by the presence of significant results, but by the hypotheses and the methods used.
10. The scientific process is too ambiguous: open and collaborative science is the way forward.