



Universiteit
Leiden

The Netherlands

Making sense of risk together: a dissertation on the social factors that drive risk talk

Perlstein, S.G.

Citation

Perlstein, S. G. (2026, April 22). *Making sense of risk together: a dissertation on the social factors that drive risk talk*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4302646>

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4302646>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Propositions

1. The relationship between interpersonal risk talk and risk perception is neither linear nor straightforward. (Ch. 1)
2. Uncovering people's preferences about social situations can help us understand how these situations unfold—even when people only have limited control over the situation. (Ch. 2)
3. People are more ready to talk about risk when its associated activity is less normalized in society. (Ch. 3)
4. Interpersonal risk talk varies greatly depending on the characteristics of the risk in question. (Ch. 4)
5. Most distinctions between the social and the individual are simplifications of reality and should be treated as such.
6. Risk talk is complex and multifaceted, but it is not a black box. When a subject matter is difficult to study, researchers should think creatively rather than shy away from it.
7. Risk perception and risk communication research have historically relied on communication relay models, and therefore risk perception is often framed accordingly. My research demonstrates that this approach is only meaningful under specific circumstances and should be used with caution.
8. Generative AI, while still in need of refinement, has immense potential for the upscaling of qualitative analysis to very large datasets. Researchers should keep experimenting with generative AI as a support tool for qualitative analysis.
9. Academia needs to rethink its employment structure. If PhD candidates vastly outnumber postdocs, who outnumber assistant professors, and if the time of full professors is monopolized by administrative work, then the least experienced academics produce the bulk of the research.
10. The peer review system is under pressure: peer reviewers receive little recognition or reward for their work, and AI is an increasingly enticing tool, if unethical, for academics under pressure. Promising avenues to combat these issues include

increased visibility of peer review activity as well as the proliferation of registered report submissions.

11. AI is a fantastic opportunity for science and knowledge-building. It is a game-changing tool for independent learning, holds immense support potential in large-scale qualitative analysis and reviewing literature, and can effectively conduct menial tasks, freeing up time and space for researchers to engage in meaningful work.
12. AI is a serious threat to science and knowledge-building. It easily deprives us of the most cognitively challenging—and therefore impactful—learning moments, robs society of originality, and it often conducts the most meaningful work, leaving humans to do the menial tasks.