

Title: Behavioural risk in the wild

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Abstract: Psychologists' experiments have the virtue of affording the study of behaviour under controlled conditions. However studying the human response to risk under laboratory conditions presents ethical and methodological challenges: given the constraints on presenting people with significant risks laboratory studies of responses to risk are vulnerable to criticism of their artifice. An alternative methodology is to analyse field data reflecting behavioural responses to naturally occurring risks "in the wild". Here I discuss a series of field studies investigating how psychological factors influence human behaviours with significantly risky consequences in diverse contexts. These studies reveal evidence of behaviours incompatible with a strictly rational perspective.