

Propositions

Accompanying the public defense of Jochem Spaans' dissertation:
'Happy to help – neural mechanisms of vicarious gaining in adolescence'
on June 24th, 2022.

1. Whether or not prosocial behavior is experienced as rewarding is dependent on individual differences in perspective taking, and on how important the target is to you (this thesis).
2. While false-choice paradigms cannot measure prosocial *behavior*, observing responses to prosocial outcomes can still provide valuable information on prosociality (this thesis).
3. For effective prevention of social exclusion and bullying, the role of friendships to victims and perpetrators should be taken into account (this thesis).
4. Increased sensitivity to rewards in adolescence should not only be associated with risks, but additionally with the opportunities for development towards a more complex cognitive and more social adulthood (this thesis).
5. Whether or not prosocial acts are generally felt as rewarding to the self, could be one of the factors that affect to what extent adolescents grow up to carry out prosocial behavior as an adult (this thesis).
6. The importance of individual differences and representativeness of research samples should never be overlooked when drawing conclusions from scientific studies. Nuance is essential for any thoughtful discussion.
7. In terms of effectiveness in helping others, cognitive empathy is more important than affective empathy.
8. Academia should value both the classic scientific talents such as scientific impact and output, as well as modern important traits for successful academics, such as excellence in teaching, management, mentorship, and transparency of their research.
9. The publication of replication studies, non-significant, and unexpected results should be weighed at least as important as the publication of new, hypothesis driven results.
10. There is no such thing as pure (selfless) altruism.
11. Writing a PhD-thesis could be considered a prosocial act in and of itself.