

HOW TWO TRAILBLAZING PSYCHOLOGISTS TURNED THE WORLD OF DECISION SCIENCE UPSIDE DOWN

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Vanity Fair:

The dozen or so graduate students in Danny Kahneman's seminar at Hebrew University, in Jerusalem, were all surprised when, in the spring of 1969, Amos Tversky turned up. Danny never had guests: The seminar, called Applications of Psychology, was his show. Amos's interests were about as far removed from the real-world problems in Applications of Psychology as a psychologist's could be.

Amos himself seemed about as far removed from Danny as he could be. Danny had spent years of his childhood hiding in barns and chicken coops in France, from the Nazis who hunted him. Amos was born and raised in a society intent on making sure no Jewish child ever again would need to hide from those who wished to kill him. Israel had made him a warrior. A Spartan. Danny was deeply, painfully uncertain about himself. "His defining emotion is doubt," said one of his students. "And it is very useful. Because it makes him go deeper and deeper and deeper." Amos was the most self-assured human being anyone knew.

The people who knew Amos and Danny best couldn't imagine them getting along with each other. "It was the graduate students' perception that they had some sort of rivalry," said one of the students in the Applications of Psychology seminar. "They were clearly the stars of the department who somehow or other hadn't gotten in sync." And yet for some reason Danny had invited Amos to come to his seminar to talk about whatever he wanted to talk about. And, for some reason, Amos had accepted.

Read the whole story: [Vanity Fair](#)