

Topic Page: [Tversky, Amos \(1937 - 1996\)](#)

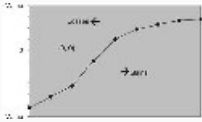


Image from: [S-shaped curve in Encyclopedia of Medical Decision Making](#)

Summary Article: **Amos Tversky Pioneer of cognitive science**
From *QFinance: The Ultimate Resource*



1937	Born in Haifa, Israel.
1961	Received BA from Hebrew University.
1965	Received PhD from the University of Michigan.
1966	Taught at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.
1970	Became a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University.
1978	Joined the faculty at Stanford University.
1980	Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
1982	Received the American Psychological Association's award for distinguished scientific contribution, with Daniel Kahneman.
1984	Received the MacArthur Fellowship.
1984	Received the Guggenheim Fellowship.
1985	Elected to the National Academy of Sciences.
1991	Became a member of the faculty senate at Stanford University.
1992	Appointed professor of behavioral sciences at Stanford University.
1996	Died in Stanford, California.

LIFE AND CAREER

Amos Tversky became a war hero at the tender age of 19. He was an officer in an elite paratrooper unit, which fought in three wars, when he earned Israel's highest military decoration by saving the life of a fellow soldier. He went on to become one of the world's most respected and influential psychologists, and a pioneer of cognitive science. He was a professor at Stanford, contributing to a number of interdisciplinary programs, and was a cofounder with Kenneth Arrow of the Stanford Center of Conflict and Negotiation. He was also a member of the Academic Council's advisory board to the president and

provost. His accomplishments were recognized with many academic honors, and he would also have received the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, but for his untimely death.

KEY THINKING

- Amos Tversky helped create the field of cognitive science with longtime collaborator, Daniel Kahneman, and was a key figure in the discovery of systematic human cognitive bias, and the handling of risk.
- With Kahneman, he originated Prospect Theory to explain irrational human economic choices.
- His work in behavioral economics applied to financial markets, and challenged the efficient market hypothesis.
- His work on the limits of human rationality and decision-making had a major impact on philosophy, social sciences, statistics, political science, law, and medicine.

IN PERSPECTIVE

- His approach was based on counterintuitive results, using practical experiments and formalizations, and drawing on everyday experience to assess the processes and failures of human judgment and decision-making.
- His early work with Kahneman focused on the psychology of prediction, probability judgment, and cognitive illusion, arguing that people repeatedly make errors in judgment, and economic choices that can be predicted and categorized.
- They demonstrated that very small risks are given disproportionate weight, that prospective losses and gains are not treated symmetrically, that the presence or absence of non-selected alternatives can reverse preference orderings, and that the manner in which options are framed can exert an influence on decision-makers.
- They also devised a series of ingenious experiments to expose the illogical ways in which people make decisions that involve probability—including playing roulette, or guessing what someone does for a living.
- Kahneman received the Nobel Prize for the work he did in collaboration with Tversky, and it is assumed that Tversky would have shared the prize but Nobel prizes are not awarded posthumously.
- In his decision-making analysis, he pointed out the misconception in basketball that players tend to get “hot”—that they sometimes score many more consecutive shots than would normally be expected—arguing that this was nothing more than the standard laws of chance, and a problem of human cognition.
- Produced many classic papers focusing on the gap between actual human intellectual performance and the normative standards that should seemingly govern such performance.

MORE INFO

Books:

Kahneman, Daniel; Slovic, Paul; Tversky, Amos (eds). *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982. Describes various judgmental heuristics and the biases they produce, not only in laboratory experiments, but also in important social, medical, and political situations.

Kahneman, Daniel; Tversky, Amos (eds). *Choices, Values, and Frames*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000. Presents an empirical and theoretical challenge to classical utility theory, offering Prospect Theory as a realistic alternative.

Krantz, David H.; Luce, R. Duncan; Suppes, Patrick; Tversky, Amos. *Foundations of Measurement* (3 vols). New York: Academic Press, 1971. A classic series in quantitative measurement.

See Also:

Daniel Kahneman

“People use mental approximations to understand an uncertain world. As a result, we make certain types of errors in judgment.”

Amos Tversky

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

Amos Tversky Pioneer of cognitive science. (2014). In Qatar Financial Center, & Qatar Financial Center (Eds.), *QFinance: the ultimate resource* (5th ed.). London, UK: A&C Black. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/tversky_amos_1937_1996



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Chicago

"Amos Tversky Pioneer of cognitive science." In *QFinance: The Ultimate Resource*, edited by Qatar Financial Center, and Qatar Financial Center. 5th ed. A&C Black, 2014.

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Harvard

Amos Tversky Pioneer of cognitive science. (2014). In Qatar Financial Center & Qatar Financial Center (Eds.), *QFinance: the ultimate resource*. (5th ed.). [Online]. London: A&C Black. Available from:

https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/tversky_amos_1937_1996 [Accessed 16 October 2019].

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"Amos Tversky Pioneer of cognitive science." *QFinance: The Ultimate Resource*, edited by Qatar Financial Center, and Qatar Financial Center, A&C Black, 5th edition, 2014. *Credo Reference*,

https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/tversky_amos_1937_1996. Accessed 16 Oct. 2019.