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Introduction to Prof. Daniel Kahneman

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It is great honor for us to welcome Prof. Kahneman. The importance and creativity of his work has been widely recognized, notably, by his being awarded the Nobel Prize, but also in many other ways. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2013, the Distinguished Lifetime Career Contribution Award from the *American Psychological Association*, and honorary degrees from Harvard, Cambridge, Yale, Paris, among other places. As well as numerous other publications, Dr. Kahneman is the author of the best-selling *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, an absolutely fascinating book which, quite remarkable, has been on the New York Times best seller list for a number of years.

One of Dr. Kahneman's central contributions to our understanding of the human mind is his ingenious demonstrations of the non-rationality of decision-making and judgment, and his formulations of the underlying processes that account for this behavior. He shows repeatedly that fast, automatic, and implicit thinking, unaccompanied by slow, deliberative reasoning can lead us astray. Among the automatic heuristics we employ, Dr. Kahneman identifies affective heuristics, which entail automatic affective evaluations. This work, along with the rest of the body of Dr. Kahneman's work, is of special interest to a psychoanalytic perspective, a central feature of which is recognition of our non-rationality and the role of affectively based implicit schemas – one might call them heuristics – in influencing our behavior and mental states. Dr. Kahneman shows us the many faces of non-rationality, many of which we did not dream of.

In his autobiographical sketch, Dr. Kahneman writes that during his graduate school days his most intellectually stimulating experiences were not at graduate school, but during the summer he spent with Rapaport here at Austen Riggs. Dr. Kahneman also writes that he intended to return the following summer. But tragically, Rapaport died before the following summer and, of course, Dr. Kahneman did not return. Well, the circle is now completed. Dr. Kahneman is here with us at the *Rapaport-Klein Study Group*. Rapaport's legacy has given us a considerable gift. We are happy and honored to have you here.