



Ancient Rome and Jerusalem

In July, **Jill Katz** (Sociology) and **Steve Fine** (History), with **Ronnie Perelis** (History) took students from Stern, YC, and the Bernard Revel Graduate School on a stunning journey to Italy and Israel. They called it “From Rome to Jerusalem: An Archaeological Tour with Chazal,” interpreting Roman sites and artifacts through the lenses of Classical Jewish sources. In Rome, they saw the Colosseum, the Arch of Titus, the Baths of Caracalla, and the Jewish Catacombs of the Vigna Randanini. Shabbat was spent with the Jewish community in Rome and included an “Ask your professor anything...” shmooze in the late afternoon. The group went on to Naples, where they explored the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum and the Island of Capri before flying to Israel. There they visited archaeological sites connected to the

themes of the course in Jerusalem and in the oasis of Ein Gedi. A project of the YU Center for Israel Studies, the trip was also supported by the Rabbi Arthur Schneier Program for International Affairs and the Shevet Glaubach Center for Career Strategy and Professional Development.

Emily Grunstein, SCW: “Our first touring stop in Israel was Ein Gedi. The day began at the beautiful kibbutz of Ein Gedi where we learned about the foreign trees and got to see the ancient synagogue. Ein Gedi was not only refreshing physically, but spiritually too. The entire class (professors included) was unable to resist dunking into the springs and lying in the cold water to cool down”



David Samson, YC: “In the Naples Archeological Museum, we saw a helmet that belonged to a Roman gladiator. It bore the symbol of a palm tree, which likely identifies the wearer as Jewish. Jewish slaves in Rome wore such helmets to publicize the fact that the Romans had conquered their homeland. The helmet is just one of the many pieces of physical evidence of the hardships of our forefathers”

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Summer research symposium

Margarita Vigodner (Biology) and colleagues held a conference where their student researchers from Stern, YC, and the Katz school presented details of their summer work. Students from five labs presented, the largest number yet. Margarita's student presented research on infertility using transgenic mouse models. Students working with **Ran Drori** (Chemistry) presented research on studies of ice crystallization, exploring ways of inhibiting ice growth to protect organisms such as fish, insects, plants, and fungi from freezing injury. Three students from the lab of **Radhashree Maitra** (Biology) have been working with her on colorectal cancer with an emphasis on the subset of patients with oncogenic KRAS mutation. **Fredy Zypman** (Physics) and **Josefa Steinhauer** (Biology) have been mentoring a student working on neurodegeneration and motor activity using the fruit fly model. And **Anderson Oliveira's** (Chemistry) student presented her research on bioluminescence, the emission of light by living organisms in studies of biological processes. Congratulations all!



Liat Polinsky (SCW), presenting research she did with Ran Drori



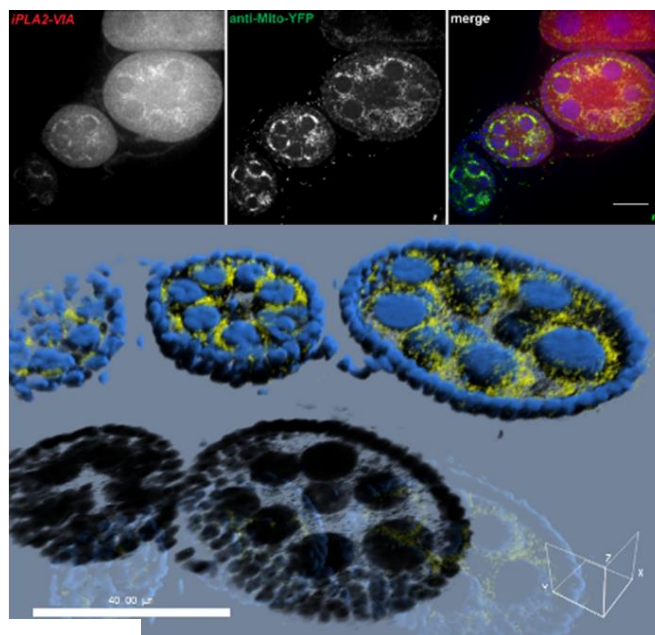
Isaac Silverman (YC), who has been working with Rad Maitra

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National Science Foundation Grant

Irina Catrina (Chemistry) and **Josefa Steinhauer** (Biology) have won a three-year NSF grant for nearly \$600,000 to study the localization and transportation of RNA molecules within organisms, a tribute to their research record and commitment to mentoring undergraduates. Despite the importance of proper RNA localization for organism development, understanding where RNAs are and how they got there is challenging. It is very difficult to detect RNAs *in vivo*, which requires multidisciplinary expertise to design and deliver the RNA detection probes into the cell or tissue of interest, as well as advanced live-cell imaging and microscopy. This project will develop computational and experimental tools to facilitate quick and sensitive studies of RNA transport and localization in real time. Of particular interest, vesicles are subcellular structures that have been well described regarding their roles in intra- and inter-cellular transport of proteins but only recently have been linked also to intracellular RNA trafficking. These tools will be applied to co-visualize RNAs and transport vesicle markers and determine the role vesicles play in long-range RNA transport in a favorite cell biology model system, the fruit fly egg. The project is supported under the NSF's commitment to facilitate research at primarily undergraduate institutions and will provide plenty of opportunities for undergraduate students to work and learn research methods.

The project will use cost-effective probes to detect and co-visualize a messenger RNA and mitochondrial protein in fruit fly eggs, shown in 2D (top) and 3D (bottom)



Promotions

Last but by no means least, **Elizabeth Stewart** (English) and **Josh Karlip** (History) have both been promoted to Professor, recognizing their commitment to research and teaching and their many scholarly achievements. Elizabeth applies ideas from psychoanalytic theory and trauma studies to modern literature and film, with a focus on post-war Germany. Josh's research examines Eastern European Jewish culture and Jewish nationalism in the early twentieth century. Mazel tov!

