

Celebrating Moshe Bernstein

In March the Dean's Office and Department of Bible, Hebrew, and Near Eastern studies celebrated the career and recent retirement of **Moshe Bernstein** with a one day colloquium, "Illuminating Texts, Inspiring Minds". Former students and colleagues – including, at YU, **Deena Rabinovich** (Bible), **Michelle Levine** (Bible), and **R. Jeremy Wieder** (RIETS), as well as alumni now teaching in the US and Israel – presented papers in his honor.

Moshe graduated from YC in 1966, and received an MHL from Revel and Smicha from RIETS before taking a PhD in classics, focusing on Euripides' play *The Trojan Women*, from Fordham (those of us who saw him at YU's commencements remember the pride with which he wore his gown in Fordham maroon). He taught briefly at the University of Illinois, Chicago, before returning to YU in 1978, later holding the David A. and Fannie M. Denenberg Chair in Biblical Studies, as well as teaching graduate classes at NYU. He turned to Second Temple intellectual history, ancient biblical interpretation, and especially the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Classics' loss was Biblical Studies' gain: Moshe became an extraordinarily prolific scholar, editing and interpreting what was found at Qumran. A 2-

volume collection of his essays was published in 2013, and his friends and colleagues honored him with a Festschrift (*HA-ʾISH MÖSHE* [This man Moses]) for his 70th birthday in 2017. Moshe's devotion, curiosity and rigor shaped generations of students: his willingness to question and push his pupils gave the best of them inspiration for life. Moshe has been deeply committed to YC as an institution as well: for many years he was the lynchpin of the Academic Standards committee and the Executive Committee.

Congratulations- מזל טוב - εὔγε Moshe! And many thanks to **Ari Mermelstein** (Bible) for coordinating the event.



Moshe in 2013, introducing a workshop he organized at YU on the Dead Sea Scrolls



Moshe at the March conference, with President Berman (r).

Presentations

Margarita Vigodner (Biology) took two of her students to the Joint Congress of the American Society of Andrology and the International Congress of Andrology in Washington D.C. at the end of March, where **Aliza Balsam** (SCW) presented a poster highlighting the Vigodner lab's work on the regulation of Meiosis and Sertoli cell function in mice.

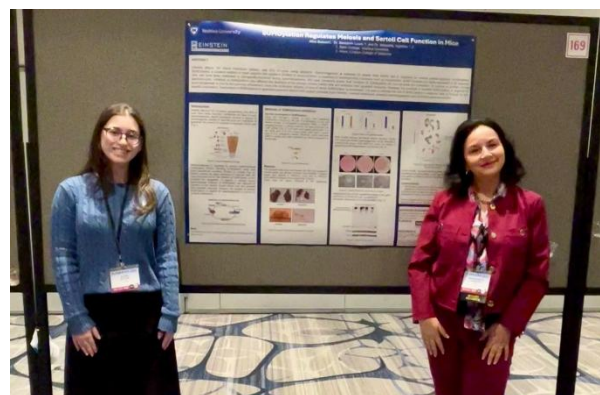
Marian Gidea (Math) gave an invited lecture at the 9th Workshop on Hamiltonian Systems and Related Topics, held at Kyoto University in March, on "Hamiltonian instability in the elliptic Hill four-body problem: geometric method and numerical verification." The presentation was based on joint work with Jaime Burgos-Garcia from the Universidad Autonoma de Coahuila in Mexico (a former postdoctoral fellow at Yeshiva University) and Claudio Sierpe from University of Bio-Bio in Chile.

Joe Angel (Bible) gave the Adolph and Ruth Schnurmacher Scholar-in-Residence Lecture at Fairfield University in April, on "Scrolls and Scripture: The History of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls Discoveries."

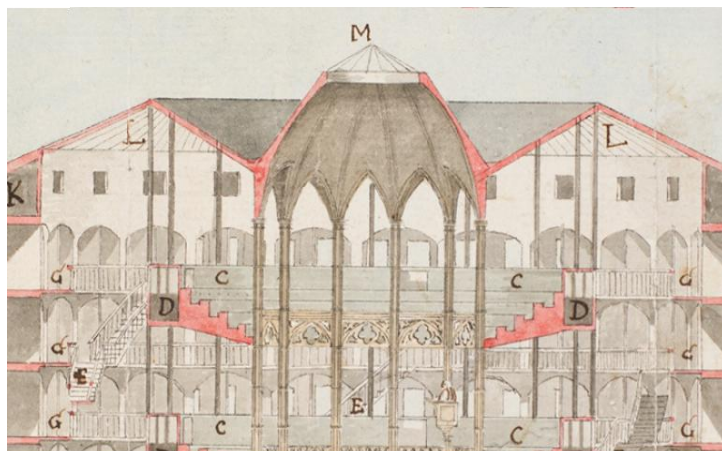
Gabriel Cwilich (Physics) spoke in April at the CompleNet (Complex Networks) conference in Fortaleza, Brasil, on "Mechanisms of Enhancing Resilience in a Banking Network", and will present "Comparative Study of Literary Networks based on Wikipedia Data-mining" at the NetSci conference in Maastricht, Netherlands, next month: the latter is part of his collaboration with the Center for the Physics of Materials in San Sebastian, and builds on his work with Kressel scholar **Yonatan Spivak** (YC).

In May, **Charlotte Fiehn** (English) gave a paper on "George Eliot and the Transformation of Biblical Narratives" in a Panel she organized on Eliot at the British Women Writers Conference in Sioux Falls.

Matt Incantalupo (Political Science) gave the second faculty colloquium sponsored by the Sacks-Herenstein Center and the undergraduate colleges, on "Voters and Local Financial Health", in which he talked about his research for his recent papers, "Voter Responsiveness to Signals of Local Government Financial Health," "Informing Voters about Public Finance: Evidence from a Survey Experiment," and his current project on "The Political Consequences of Local Financial Emergencies."



Margarita and her student Aliza



A plan of Bentham's Panopticon prison scheme

Carrie Shanafelt (English) was accepted to participate in an NEH Summer Institute on Slavery and Early Modern Philosophy to be held at Georgetown University in June. Since the defunding of this and most other NEH grants, the participants have unanimously decided to hold the institute remotely for the entire duration of the planned Institute, without NEH support. In July, she will deliver an invited plenary lecture on “Jeremy Bentham Meets the Unaccountability Machine” at University College London’s Bentham Project conference “Jeremy Bentham, the Panopticon penitentiary scheme, and ‘A Picture of the Treasury,’” in celebration of the publication of a substantial new volume of Bentham’s manuscripts.

At the beginning of May, **Elizabeth Goldman** (Psychology) and her student **Harry Meister** (YC) presented a talk entitled, “Do robots have a Theory of Mind? Children’s mental state attribution to humanoid and non-humanoid robots across theory of mind measures” at the Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting in Minneapolis.

Fredy Zypman (Physics) has been chosen to participate in ConCEPT in June to discuss physics teaching with colleagues from other universities.

Shaina Trapedo (English) travelled to London as a visiting scholar for YU Global in partnership with the Office of the Chief Rabbi’s Shalem Fellowship program. The program seeks to empower future Jewish leaders worldwide through customized courses that combine online and in-person learning experiences with Yeshiva University faculty. Shaina’s course, “Words, Words, Words: Hamlet, Hashkafa and the Hebrew Bible,” explored how literature and Torah illuminate the human journey and showed how thinkers across ages and disciplines have approached the study of timeless texts as informative and formative activities.



Shaina in London

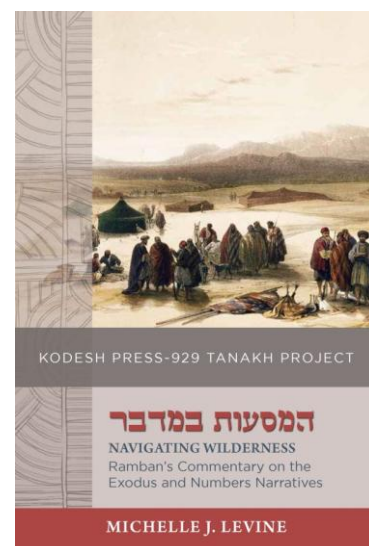
Publications

Michelle Levine (Bible) has just published her second book, *Navigating Wilderness: Ramban's Commentary on the Exodus and Numbers Narratives* ([Kodesh Press](#)). She also delivered a series of lectures for women in her Queens community on Shabbat afternoons, focusing on themes for the holidays, including “The Hiddenness of Purim: The Symbolism of Clothing in Megillat Esther”; “The Secret of Queen Esther's Inner Strength; Drawing Inspiration from Pesach and Moshe Rabbenu”; and “The Road to Redemption: All It Takes Are Righteous Women.”

Elizabeth Goldman's “Children’s attribution of mental states to humans and social robots assessed with the Theory of Mind Scale” has been published in [Scientific Reports](#).

Steven Fine (History) was honored with a [Festschrift](#) in volume 17 of *Images: A Journal of Jewish Art and Visual Culture*, as well as being promoted to Distinguished Professor here at YU. As Margaret Olin, the editor of the collection, writes in her introduction, “If there ever was a model for productive and genuine human interaction, Steven embodies it.”

And **Maria Zaitseva** (Political Science) has published a guide for students on classroom behavior, etiquette, and interacting with professors, based on her experiences at YU, [How to Survive \(and Even Succeed\) in a College Classroom](#). Maybe some professors will look for the sequel on how to get their students to read it!



Student research and achievements

In 2023 Mordechai Walder established the Dr. Joseph Walder Summer Research Fellowship to support summer undergraduate research in chemistry and biochemistry in honor of his father. Mordechai had worked on computational chemistry with **Raji Viswanathan** (Chemistry) at YC and wanted to give others an opportunity to do the same. Previous awardees include Rafael Saperstein (YC) and Eden Elkayam (SCW) who worked with scholars at Columbia, the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and Einstein. The 2025 awardee, **Phillip Hirschsprung**, will conduct research this summer in Andras Fiser’s lab at Einstein.

Three of **Paul Glassman's** (Art History, formerly Director of Scholarly and Cultural Resources and Librarian) architecture students are moving towards careers in the field: Isaac Emerson will begin the Master of Architecture program at the Pratt Institute in the fall; Nathan Stern has been accepted to the Master of Architecture programs at City College, Pratt, and NYIT; and Reuben Hartman is Construction Administrator at Landau Properties.



Performances

On Monday June 2 the Da Capo players will perform the world premiere of *Medici Slot Machine*, a new work by **David Glaser** (music). The piece, for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion is inspired by the shadowboxes of Joseph Cornell. The concert will include other work engaging with the visual arts: 8pm at St John's in the Village, 218 W 11th St, details [here](#).

Daniel Beliaevsky (music) is continuing to work with the San Diego opera making videos about their productions (see Daniel's archive [here](#)). On June 28 he will give a recital with discussion in La Jolla, details [here](#).

Field Trips!

Israel Benporat (History) took the students from his Puritan New England course at SCW and YC on a field trip to Plimoth Patuxet Museums (right). He also moderated the annual Hillel Rogoff Memorial Lecture, sponsored by the Straus Center and the S. Daniel Abraham Honors Program at Stern in conversation with Michael Hoberman, Professor of English at Fitchburg State University and author of *New Israel / New England: Jews and Puritans in Early America*.



Fred Sugarman (English, formerly Associate Dean at YC) walked over the Brooklyn Bridge with the students from his class on Melville and Whitman and discussed "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry".

*"I too many and many a time cross'd the river of old...
Saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water"*

With best wishes for a restful summer!

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