

DAVID MARTYN RATZAN

Institute for the Study of the Ancient World
New York University
15 East 84th Street
New York, NY 10028

david.ratzan@nyu.edu
212.992.7832

Academia.edu: <https://nyu.academia.edu/DavidRatzan>

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/dmratzan>

Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/davidmratzan/>

Twitter: [@papyrologus](https://twitter.com/papyrologus)

EMPLOYMENT

- 2014 – present Head, Library of the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University, New York, NY
- 2013 – 2014 Visiting Assistant Professor, Dept. of Greek and Roman Classics, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
- 2011 – 2013 Lecturer in [Classics](#) and the [Columbia College Core Curriculum](#)
Curator of [Papyri](#), Columbia [Rare Book and Manuscript Library](#)

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. 2011 Columbia University, Dept. of Classics, New York, NY ([Classical Studies Program](#))
- M.A. 1999 Cambridge University, Clare College, Cambridge, UK
- B.A. 1997 Yale University, New Haven, CT

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Social History of the Roman Empire
Greco-Roman Egypt
Papyrology
Ancient Law
Ancient Literacy and Education
Greek Literature of the Roman Empire
Early Christianity
Numismatics

PUBLICATIONS

- 2019 Goler, S., Hagadorn, A., Ratzan, D. M., Bagnall, R. S., Cacciola, A., McInerney, J., and Yardley, J. T. "Using Raman Spectroscopy to Estimate the Dates of Carbon-based Inks from Ancient Egypt," *Journal of Cultural Heritage*. Accepted Dec. 3, 2018.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.culher.2018.12.003>
- 2018 "Chapter 9: Coins from the 2006-2008 Excavations," in N. Aravecchia, ed. *Amheida IV: 'Ain el-Gedida: 2006-2008 Excavations of a Late Antique Site in Egypt's Western Desert*. ISAW/NYU Press. 447-506.
<http://hdl.handle.net/2451/43659>
- 2018 "Freakonomika: Oracle as Economic Indicator in Roman Egypt," in Luijendijk, A. and Klingshorn, W. eds. *My Lots are in thy Hands: Sortilege and its Practitioners in Late Antiquity*. Brill. Pp. 248-289. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004385030>.
- 2018 Coins: In Rossi, C. and Ikram, S. eds., *The North Kharga Oasis Survey: Exploration in Egypt's Western Desert*. British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan 5. Leuven: Peeters.
- 2016 Goler, S., Yardley, J. T., Cacciola, A., Hagadorn, A., Ratzan, D. M., and Bagnall, R. S. "Characterizing the age of ancient Egyptian manuscripts through micro-Raman spectroscopy." *Journal of Raman Spectroscopy* 47: 1185-1193. DOI: [10.1002/jrs.4945](https://doi.org/10.1002/jrs.4945).
- 2015 "[Coins](#)," In Boozer, A., ed. *Amheida II: A Late Romano-Egyptian House in the Dakhla Oasis / Amheida House B2* (ISAW/NYU Press): 2756-61.
- 2015 Kehoe, D. P., Ratzan, D. M., and Yiftach, U., eds. *Law and Transaction Costs in the Ancient Economy*. University of Michigan Press.

Reviews: *H-Net Reviews* [April 2016](#) (S. Günther); *CR* 67.1 (2016): 1-3 (E. Lytle); *Latomus* 76.3 (2017): 857-59 (F.-G. Fodorean)
- 2015 "Transaction Costs and Contract in Roman Egypt: A case study in negotiating the right of repossession." In Kehoe, D. P., Ratzan, D. M., and Yiftach, U., eds. *Law and Transaction Costs in the Ancient Economy* (University of Michigan Press): 185-230.
- 2012 A Draft of a Rider to a Cession Contract." In Ast, R. A., Cuvigny, H., Hickey, T. M., and Lougovaya, J., eds. *Papyrological Texts in Honor of Roger S. Bagnall*. American Studies in Papyrology 53: [267-76](#).
- 2009 Huebner, S. R. and Ratzan, D. M., eds. [Growing up Fatherless in Antiquity](#). Cambridge University Press.

Reviews: *AHB Online Reviews* 3 (2013): [22-24](#) (R. Van Dam); *CR* 60.2 (2010): 488-91 (F. Dolansky); *JRA* 23 (2010): 606-9 (B. Rawson); *JRS* 100 (2010): 268-70 (C. A. Clark).

- “Fatherless antiquity? Perspectives on ‘fatherlessness’ in the ancient Mediterranean.” In Huebner, S. R. and Ratzan, D. M., eds. *Growing up Fatherless* (Cambridge University Press): 3-28 (with Sabine R. Hübner)
- 2008 Cribiore, R., Davoli, P., and Ratzan, D. M. “A teacher’s dipinto from Trimithis (Dakhleh Oasis),” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 21: 170-91.
- Forthcoming Goler, S., Ratzan, D. M., Bagnall, R. S., Hagadorn, A., McInerney, J., and Yardley, J. T. “Dating ancient papyri from Egypt through Raman spectroscopy: Concept and application to the fragments of the Gospel of Jesus’s Wife and the Gospel of John.” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. Accepted Dec. 3, 2018.
- In progress Cacciola, A., Goler, S., Hagadorn, A., Ratzan, D., Bagnall, R. S., and Yardley, J. T. “How Did Ancient Egyptians Manufacture Pigments for Black Ink? Morphological Exploration through Scanning Electron Microscopy.”
- In progress “‘Under Contract’ in Roman Egypt: *P.Ryl.* II 128 in Context.”
- In progress “The economics and outsourcing of mother-work in the Roman Empire: A case study in the social cost of motherlessness from Roman Egypt.”
- In progress “Vandalism and the Weapons of the Weak in Roman Egypt.”
- In progress “Small Finds: Coins,” Davoli, P., ed. *Amheida IV: A Late-Roman urban house at Trimithis: The House of Serenos*. Oxford: Oxbow.

MAJOR PROJECTS

- Collaborator (numismatist) UCLA Fayyum Project: Qarat el-Hamra
- Collaborator (numismatist) Living In a Fringe Environment (LIFE): Italian Archaeological Mission to Umm al-Dabadib, funded by ERC grant.
- In progress *Divination, Magic, and Rome’s Empire of Uncertainty*. (monograph)
- Roman imperial ideology, institutions, and policy profoundly affected the lives of ancient individuals when it came to the ways in which they conducted business and settled disputes. This much is visible in the documents that survive. It is the thesis of this book that we also see the impact of Roman rule in certain magical and religious activities that depend on institutional conditions related to information, uncertainty, and power, above all in oracles, oath, and curses. This book will integrate the new institutional history of the Roman Empire with the current cultural history of Roman religion and magic with the aim of showing how they are in fact intimately intertwined histories. In the process, it will suggest radical revisions to the interpretation of key documents in the history of magic and divination under the Empire and illuminate the dynamic

relationship between institutional, legal, and religious practice, particularly at the turn of the third century.

In progress

P. Columbia: Administrative, Financial and Legal Documents from Roman Egypt, edited in collaboration with Graham Claytor

REVIEWS

2018

Review of Venticinque, Ph. *Honor among Thieves: Craftsmen, Merchants, and Associations in Roman and Late Roman Egypt*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. *Classical World* 111.4 (2018): 590-92.
[doi:10.1353/clw.2018.0051](https://doi.org/10.1353/clw.2018.0051)

2015

[Review of Riggs](#), C. ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt* (Oxford University Press, 2012), *Near Eastern Archaeology* 78.2: 126-28.

2015

Review of Legras, B. and Thür, G. eds. *Symposion 2011: Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte (Paris, 7.-10. September 2011)*. (Verlag Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2012). [BMCR \(Jan. 2015\)](#).

2013

Review of McGinn, Thomas A. J. ed. *Obligations in Roman law: past, present, and future*. Papers and monographs of the American Academy in Rome 33. (University of Michigan Press, 2012). [BMCR \(Oct. 2013\)](#)

2012

Review of Johnstone, S., *A History of Trust in Ancient Greece* (Chicago University Press, 2011), [BMCR \(Sept. 2012\)](#).

Forthcoming 2019

Ratzan, David and Jonathan Valk. Review of Radner, K. (ed). *State Correspondence in the Ancient World*. New York: Oxford University Press. *Journal of Roman Archaeology*.

In Progress

Review of Houston, G. W. *Inside Roman Libraries*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2014. *Classical Philology*.

In Progress

Review of Nowak, M. *Wills in the Roman Empire: A Documentary Approach*. JJP Supplement 23. Warsaw: R. Taubenschlag Foundation. *BASP*

In Progress

Review of Kehoe, Dennis P. and Thomas A. J. McGinn (eds.). *Ancient law, ancient society*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017. 216 p. \$70.00. ISBN 9780472130436. *BMCR*.

TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

Oct. 2018

“Freakonomika: Oracle as Economic Indicator in Roman Egypt.” Dartmouth College (Hanover, NH).

Oct. 2017

“Non-destructive dating of ancient inks from Egypt using micro-Raman spectroscopy.” Penn Archaeology Colloquium (Philadelphia, PA).

- May 2017 “Non-destructive dating of ancient inks from Egypt using micro-Raman spectroscopy.” Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage, Yale University (New Haven, CT).
- May 2017 “Honoring Debt in Roman Egypt.” Association of Ancient Historians Annual Meeting, Brown University (Providence, RI).
- April 2017 “To Detect and Conserve: New Research on the Science and History of Columbia’s Ancient Manuscripts.” Butler Library, Columbia University (New York, NY).
- January 2017 “New scientific evidence for the date and composition of ancient carbon inks from Greco-Roman Egypt” (with S. Goler). *2017 Annual Meeting of the Society for Classical Studies* (Toronto).
- November 2016 “Dating Ancient Egyptian Papyri through Raman Spectroscopy: Concept and Application to Fragments of The Gospel of Jesus's Wife and the Gospel of John” (with J. T. Yardley and S. Goler). *2016 Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature* (San Antonio, TX).
- August 2016 “Honoring Debt in Roman Egypt.” *28th International Congress of Papyrology*. Barcelona, Spain.
- June 2016 “Vandalism and the Weapons of the Weak in Roman Egypt.” *Two Sides of the Same Coin - Dispute Resolution in Greco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt*. Leuven, Belgium.
- June 2016 “Power, form, and genre in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.” *MATERIA workshop*. Columbia University, New York, NY.
- May 2016 “Outsourcing ancient mother work: the economics of ancient mother absence.” [*Growing up Motherless in Antiquity*](#). May 26-28, 2016 (University of Basel, Switzerland).
- April 2016 “How the other half laughed: Ancient humor from the provincial perspective of Greek and Roman Egypt.” Pennsylvania State University (State College, PA)
- May 2015 “Progress Report on the Recent Work of the Ancient Ink Laboratory at Columbia University.” With Sarah Goler. North American Papyrology Seminar I (Ann Arbor, MI)
- April 2015 “Teaching with Papyri.” The Graduate Team-Teaching Pedagogy Colloquium, Classics Department, Columbia University (New York, NY)
- March 2015 “Partial Tragedies of Resentment: The *Acta Alexandrinorum* and the Art of Repression in Roman Egypt,” Temple University (Philadelphia, PA)
- February 2015 “Texting the Classics: How and Why We Should Read Ancient Texts,” Connecticut College (New London, CT)
- January 2015 “Ulpian and the Criminalization of Divination in the Roman Empire,” *SCS 146th Annual Meeting* (New Orleans, LA)

- September 2014 “ ‘Under Contract’ in Roman Egypt: *P. Ryl. II 128* in Context,” presented at *From Egypt to Manchester: Unravelling the John Rylands Papyrus Collection* (Sept. 4-6, 2014), John Rylands Library (Manchester, UK)
- April 2014 “Who read Homer in the Ancient World? (And why we should care),” Intellectual Heritage Program, Temple University (Philadelphia, PA)
- November 2013 “High Crimes and Misdemeanors: The Severan ban (*P. Coll. Youtie I 30*) and criminal divination in the Roman Empire,” The University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA)
- November 2012 “Occupy Latin! *Sumus XCIX per centum!* Latin letters from the people of the Roman Empire,” Montclair State University (Montclair, NJ)
- November 2012 “Legal Threats and the Enforcement of Contract in the Roman Empire” [[abstract](#)] for the panel “Or Else: Contract Enforcement in Roman and Medieval Law,” [2012 Meeting of the American Society of Legal History](#) (St. Louis, Mo.)
- November 2011 “Getting to Yes: the institutional context of economic divination in Roman Egypt,” at [Symposium on Sortilege in Late Antiquity, November 11-13, 2011](#) (Princeton University)
- September 2011 “Coins in Context: Numismatics and the Archaeology of the Egyptian Oases,” at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (New York)
- January 2011 “Voodoo Economics: Law, Magic, and Economics in Roman Egypt and the Case of *P. Mich. VI 423-424*,” [[abstract](#)] at the *American Society of Papyrologists Panel, APA Annual Meeting* (San Antonio, TX)
- August 2009 “Transaction Costs and Contract in Roman Egypt: A case study of the “ἀποσπᾶω-clause” at *Legal Documents in Ancient Societies II: Transaction Costs in the Ancient World* (Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington, D.C.)
- August 2007 “A Teacher’s *dipinto* from the Great Oasis of Roman Egypt,” at the *XXVth International Congress of Papyrology* (University of Michigan)

COURSES TAUGHT

For recent special presentations involving papyrology, please see [here](#).

- Spring 2019 *Greco-Roman Egypt, Cultures and Contexts*, Core Curriculum, New York University
- Fall 2018 *Risky Business: Law, Economics, and Society in the Ancient World*, The Gallatin School, New York University
- Spring 2018 *The Romans and their Empire, 754 BCE to 641 CE*, Columbia University
- Fall 2017 *Introduction to Digital Humanities for the Ancient World*, ISAW (with Patrick, Burns, Sebastian Heath, and Thomas Elliott)
- Spring 2017 *Race and Ethnicity in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, Cultures and Contexts, New York University Core Curriculum

Fall 2016	<i>Introduction to Digital Humanities for the Ancient World</i> , ISAW (with Sebastian Heath and Thomas Elliott)
Spring 2014	<i>Latin I</i> , Temple University <i>Latin II</i> , Temple University <i>The Romans</i> , Temple University
Fall 2013	<i>Latin I</i> , Temple University <i>Race in the Ancient Mediterranean</i> , Temple University <i>Mosaics I</i> , Intellectual Heritage, Temple University
2011–2013	<i>Contemporary Civilization</i> , Columbia University Core Curriculum (2 sections)
Fall 2012	<i>Independent Study: Editing Ancient Manuscripts of Homer</i> , Columbia University
Fall 2010	<i>Introductory Latin I</i> , Hofstra University <i>Introduction to Latin Prose: Cicero</i> , Hofstra University <i>Advanced Tutorial in Latin</i> , Hofstra University

SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION

2018-	Digital Publications Committee, ISAW, Chair
2018-	Publications Committee, Association of Ancient Historians
2017-2020	Selection Committee, Lionel Pearson Fellowship, Society for Classical Studies (Chair, 2018-2020)
2017-2019	Secretary, Forum for Classics, Libraries, and Scholarly Communication, Society for Classical Studies
2017-2019	Organizer, “Ancient MakerSpaces: Digital Tools for Classical Scholarship.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Classical Studies.
2016–2019	Co-Chair, Communications Committee, NYU Division of Libraries
2014–present	Editor of New York University Papyri APIS records
2012–present	Editor of Columbia University Papyrus Collection APIS records

HONORS AND AWARDS

2009	Core Curriculum Teaching Excellence Award, Contemporary Civilization, Columbia University
2006	Lewis Parks Graduate Fellowship, Columbia University
1997-1999	Paul Mellon Fellow from Yale College to Clare College, Cambridge University
1997	Roosevelt L. Thompson Prize for Public Service, Yale College
1996	Phi Beta Kappa, Yale College Brinstead Prize Scholarship for Latin, Yale College

1995

Winthrop Prize Scholarship for Greek, Yale College

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Ancient Ink Laboratory
American Society for Legal History
American Society of Papyrologists
American Library Association
Archaeological Institute of America
Association of Ancient Historians
Forum for Classics, Libraries, and Scholarly Communication
Digital Classics Association
Society for Classical Studies