What have I learned from Ron and The Return of Nd:YAG

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This conference, honoring Ron Naaman, is a great opportunity to analyze the strong connection between academic supervisors and graduate students, while focusing on a specific model system: Ron & I.

In this short presentation, numerous examples on the ways by which Ron, unknowingly and in some cases, subconsciously, has influenced my academic career will be presented. These effects span beyond choosing scientific areas and fields to the less tangible aspects of academic life.

Among the examples that will be discussed are the role of self-assembled monolayers in photocatalysis, in particular as probes for understanding basic phenomena and as a means to improve selectivity. Another example will be the use of FRET as a tool for designing catalytic particles and as a probe in the plastics industry.

Nd:YAG laser was used heavily during my graduate studies at Ron's lab. As my graduate studies progressed, FTIR took the lead as the main technique. It is quite symbolic, therefore, that after so many years of working without the aid of lasers, the same type of laser is currently being "fused" together with an FTIR machine, to provide information on transient processes occurring in photocatalytic materials.