

Identification of the *Telomere elongation* mutation in *Drosophila*

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Background. Telomeres in *Drosophila melanogaster* are similar to those of other eukaryotes in terms of their function, although they are formed by non-LTR retrotransposons instead of telomerase-based short repeats. The length of the telomeres in *Drosophila* depends on the number of copies of these transposable elements. A dominant mutation, Tel1, causes a several-fold elongation of telomeres.

Methods. In this study we identified the Tel1 mutation by a combination of transposon-induced, site-specific recombination and next generation sequencing.

Results. Recombination located Tel1 to a 15 kb region in 92A. Comparison of the DNA sequence in this region with the *Drosophila* Genetic Reference Panel of wild type genomic sequences delimited Tel1 to a 3 bp deletion inside intron 8 of Ino80.

Discussion. The mapped Tel1 mutation (3-bp deletion found in Ino80) did not appear to affect the quantity or length of the Ino80 transcript. Tel1 causes a significant reduction in transcripts of CG18493, a gene nested in an intron 8 of Ino80, which is expressed in ovaries and expected to encode a serine-type peptidase.

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ABSTRACT

Background. Telomeres in *Drosophila melanogaster* are similar to those of other eukaryotes in terms of their function, although they are formed by non-LTR retrotransposons instead of telomerase-based short repeats. The length of the telomeres in *Drosophila* depends on the number of copies of these transposable elements. A dominant mutation, *Tel1*, causes a several-fold elongation of telomeres.

Methods. In this study we identified the *Tel1* mutation by a combination of transposon-induced, site-specific recombination and next generation sequencing.

Results. Recombination located *Tel1* to a 15 kb region in 92A. Comparison of the DNA sequence in this region with the *Drosophila* Genetic Reference Panel of wild type genomic sequences delimited *Tel1* to a 3 bp deletion inside intron 8 of *Ino80*.

Discussion. The mapped *Tel1* mutation (3-bp deletion found in *Ino80*) did not appear to affect the quantity or length of the *Ino80* transcript. *Tel1* causes a significant reduction in transcripts of CG18493, a gene nested in an intron 8 of *Ino80*, which is expressed in ovaries and expected to encode a serine-type peptidase.

Keywords: *Drosophila melanogaster*; telomere; next generation sequencing; transposon induced recombination

INTRODUCTION

Telomeres in all eukaryotes are functionally similar, although structural differences between some species exist (Frydrychova and Mason 2013). Linear chromosome ends are not replicated completely, and telomeres must compensate this end replication problem by adding new sequences at the chromosome end. The majority of eukaryotes use a specialized reverse transcriptase, telomerase, which adds a short, tandemly repeated DNA sequence to chromosome ends for telomere elongation (Sfeir and de Lange 2012). Insects in the order Diptera lack both telomerase and the short terminal repeats found in other organisms. The telomeres of *Drosophila* instead contain three families of non-long terminal repeat (LTR) retrotransposons, *HeT-A*, *TART* and *TAHRE* (jointly termed HTT), which transpose specifically to chromosome ends and attach using their 3' oligo(A) tails. Among these three families of elements *HeT-A* is most abundant, comprising as much as 80-90% of the total number of elements (Capkova Frydrychova et al. 2009). Telomeric chromatin consists of the HTT elements and different proteins that are bound to them (Andreyeva et al. 2005). The rate of transposition of these HTT elements may depend on an equilibrium between the level of their expression and the chromatin bound proteins (Takács et al. 2012; Silva-Sousa et al. 2013).

Telomere elongation may also be accomplished by terminal gene conversion using a neighboring telomere as a template (Roth et al. 1997; Kahn et al. 2000; Mason et al. 2008). The mechanism of telomere elongation by gene conversion has also been observed in yeast and in certain human cancers and immortalized mammalian cells, in which overall telomere length increases in the absence of telomerase activity. This mechanism is called alternative lengthening of telomeres (ALT) (Henson et al. 2002; Neumann and Reddel 2002). A recent study showed that this mechanism may also be found in normal mammalian somatic cells (Neumann et al. 2013).

The genes involved in telomere elongation and the mechanisms of elongation are not well studied in *Drosophila*. Two independent studies in *Drosophila* identified dominant factors *Tel* (Siriaco et al. 2002) and *E(tc)* (Melnikova and Georgiev 2002), which developed telomeres several fold longer than controls, to the extent that these differences can be observed microscopically in polytene chromosomes. Mutations in *Su(var)205*, which encodes the HP1a protein, and deficiencies for components of the Ku70-Ku80 complex are also dominant telomere elongation mutations. While *Su(var)205* mutants seem to increase both HTT transposition frequencies and terminal gene conversion, and Ku deficiencies increase gene conversion, the specific mechanisms by which telomere elongation occurs in these mutants are not understood (Capkova Frydrychova et al. 2008).

Early efforts to map *Tel* (Siriaco et al. 2002) allowed meiotic recombination between the *Tel^l* bearing chromosome and a multiply marked chromosome; the results located *Tel^l* at 69 on the genetic map, which translates roughly to 92 on the cytogenetic map. Meiotic mapping of *E(tc)* (Melnikova and Georgiev 2002) indicated that this gene is in the same vicinity. In the present study we took advantage of the observation that there is no meiotic recombination in *Drosophila* males. Thus, site specific genetic recombination induced by double strand breaks that result from the excision of DNA transposons can be identified (Chen et al. 1998). We used both *P* elements and *Minos* transposons to induce recombination, which allowed the localization of *Tel^l* to a 15 kb region in the middle of the right arm of chromosome 3 (3R) at 92A. Whole genome sequencing resulted in the identification of many single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) and small insertion/deletion polymorphisms (indels) in the *Tel^l* bearing genome relative to the reference sequence. Comparison of the *Tel^l* genomic sequence with a collection of inbred

lines of the Drosophila Genetic Reference Panel (DGRP) (Mackay et al. 2012) eliminated all of these SNPs and most of the indels, and mapped *Tel^l* to a 3 bp deletion (TGT) at 3R:15,221,791 in the middle of intron 8 of *Ino80*. Examination of the expression of neighboring genes in oocytes shows that only *CG18943* activity is significantly altered in the *Tel^l* mutant.

MATERIAL & METHODS

Mapping by site-specific recombination

Transposon-induced male recombination was performed as per the mating scheme reported earlier (Chen et al. 1998; Zhai et al. 2003). The chromosome carrying the *Tel^l* mutation was marked with two mutations with eye color phenotypes, *st* and *ca*. A *st Tel ca* chromosome was made heterozygous in males with a *P* element and the $\Delta 2-3$ transposase. Recombinant chromosomes bearing either *st* or *ca* were collected and put into stocks. Stock generation zero occurs at the time the stock was established, two generations after the homozygous recombinants were obtained. These stocks were maintained for a further 12 generations, flies from homozygous recombinants at generation zero, six, nine and twelve were collected and frozen for DNA isolation in order to assay *HeT-A* copy number over time.

Minos element-induced male recombination mapping is the same as the *P* element-induced male recombination procedure, except that the P{hsILMiT}2.4 transposase was used in place of $\Delta 2-3$. The P{hsILMiT}2.4 transposase is under the control of a heat shock promoter, therefore the larvae generated by the cross of heterozygous *st Tel ca/Minos* males, were exposed to heat shock at 37°C in a water bath for 1 hr daily from day two to day six post egg laying (Metaxakis et al. 2005).

Genome sequencing, mapping to reference and de novo assembly

DNA was isolated from approximately 30-40 adult flies by standard procedures of lysis, phenol:chloroform extraction and ethanol precipitation. The DNA pellet was resuspended in TE buffer (10 mM Tris, 0.1 mM EDTA, pH 7.8). DNA quality and concentration were estimated using a Qubit dsDNA BR Assay Kit and measured by Qubit 2.0 Fluorometer (Life Technologies), as per the manufacturer's protocol. Five micrograms of DNA was taken for library preparation.

All Illumina genome sequence generated for this project can be found in BioProject Accession PRJNA255315 at NCBI. Genome sequencing was done on an Illumina GA IIx sequencer following standard protocols by the NIH Intramural Sequencing Center. For a detailed step-wise protocol for library preparation and genome sequencing, see Supplementary methods. For *Tel* 66,654,840 paired reads of 101 bp length were obtained, and for *y w* 76,757,736 reads were obtained, representing a genome coverage of 48X and 55X, respectively. Genomic reads for each strain were mapped to the *D. melanogaster* reference by two methods. First, all the reads were imported into CLC Genomics Workbench 4.8 and mapped using the parameters Min distance = 150, Max distance = 10,000 to the Genbank annotated chr3R of dm3 (Release 5 from ftp.ncbi.nih.gov). Second, the same raw reads were mapped to the same reference sequence with bwa 0.6.0 (Li and Durbin 2010) using default settings.

The genomic reads were also assembled *de novo* by two methods. First, in CLC Genomics Workbench 4.8 using parameters of Min distance = 150, Max distance = 2000 which generated the highest N50 for *Tel* (28.8 kb). Then in ABySS 1.2.3 (Simpson et al. 2009) a range of kmers from 25-65 was tested using the *Tel* sequence, with a kmer setting of 45 generating the highest N50 (45.3 kb). This setting was subsequently used for both genomic assemblies; all other ABySS settings were default.

Variant detection

SNPs and indels (referred to as deletion insertion polymorphisms, DIPs, by CLC Genomics Workbench) were identified from mapped reads in comparison to the reference genome by two methods. First, using CLC Genomics Workbench 4.8 with the SNP and DIP Detection tools at default settings. Separately, the bwa assemblies were imported into CLC as bam files, and both SNP and indel detection were performed on these assemblies as above. As this software is not trained for detecting large indels (>5 bp), we scanned a large mapped region of 79 kb (chr3R: 15,151,000 -15,230,000) manually and identified additional indels, which had not been detected by the CLC software. To complement this SNP/indel analysis by CLC, the same assemblies (CLC and bwa) were also analyzed for SNPs and indels using the pileup program of SAMtools 1.6 (Li et al. 2009).

Separately, the contigs spanning the 79 kb region of interest were extracted from each of the *de novo* assemblies and were aligned to the corresponding reference region with MAFFT 6.849 (Neron et al. 2009) and manually inspected for indels.

Comparison to DGRP data

Files containing the SNPs identified in 162 DGRP (Mackay e2012) lines on chr3R were downloaded (Freeze 1, August 2010 release; <http://www.hgsc.bcm.tmc.edu/content/drosophila-genetic-reference-panel>) and the chromosomal coordinates of those 159 strains of normal telomere length were compared with the SNPs identified in the *Tel* genome assembly (SNPs identified by either CLC or pileup). Any SNP identified in the *Tel* genome that was also identified in the SNP collection from DGRP was ruled out as possibly causing the *Tel* phenotype.

As there was no indel data for DGRP lines in Freeze 1, each indel found in the *Tel* genome assembly, as described above, was compared to the DGRP data. For a subset of eight DGRP lines the Illumina fastq sequence was downloaded from SRA (SRP000694, Lines 40, 85, 177, 321, 352, 405, 426, 802), imported into CLC Genomics Workbench and assembled to the chr3R reference as above, and indel detection was performed. Any indel identified in the *Tel* genome and also found in one or more of these DGRP lines was ruled out as potentially causative. For the indels discovered by manual inspection of both the *Tel* assembly to reference and the *Tel de novo* assemblies a separate local *de novo* assembly strategy was used for comparison to a subset of the DGRP population. Using 200-300 bp of reference sequence around a candidate indel as bait, BLAT (Kent 2002) was used to identify individual reads covering this region from the fasta sequence of a given DGRP line. These reads were then extracted, assembled and compared to both the *Tel* and reference sequences. Any manually identified indel also found in one or more of these DGRP lines was ruled out as a candidate mutation.

Real-time PCR

DNA was isolated from 20-30 flies by using DNeasy Blood & Tissue Kit (Qiagen) columns as per the manufacturer's protocol. For large numbers of samples, DNA was isolated from 10 flies of each line using Agencourt DNAdvance Genomic DNA Isolation Kit (Beckman Coulter) as per the manufacturer's protocol. DNA isolation steps were handled by Biomek 4000 Liquid Handling System (Beckman Coulter robotic system). DNA was eluted in 50 μ l water. The DNA concentration was estimated by using NanoDrop 2000 (Thermo Scientific) and diluted to a concentration of 10 ng/ μ l, using sterile water.

Primers used for real-time PCR are:

RpS17-F: 5'AAGCGCATCTGCGAGGAG3',
 RpS17-R: 5'CCTCCTCCTGCAACTTGATG3',
 HeT-9D4GAG-ORF-F: 5'TTGTCTTCTCCTCCGTCCACC3',
 HeT-9D4GAG-ORF-R: 5'GAGCTGAGATTTTCTCTATGCTACTG3',

Predicted sizes of amplicons are 195 bp for RpS17, 152 bp for the HeT-9 D4 GAG-ORF. GenBank accession number for *HeT-A* element 9D4 is X68130 and for RpS17 is M22142 (Török et al. 2007; Wei et al. 2017). An aliquot of 20 ng of each DNA sample was taken for quantitative PCR using 50 nM of each primer and 5 μ l of 2X Power SYBR green PCR Master Mix (Applied Biosystems) in a 10 μ l reaction volume. These samples were amplified under the following conditions: 95 $^{\circ}$ C for 10 min (polymerase activation), followed by 40 cycles containing denaturation at 95 $^{\circ}$ C for 15 sec, and annealing/extension at 60 $^{\circ}$ C for 1 min. Real-time PCR was run using ABI Prism 7900 HT Sequence detection system (Applied Biosystems)

Competitive threshold (Ct) values for each sample were collected for *HeT-A* primers (9D4 element GAG ORF) and for control Rps17 (ribosomal protein17) primers. Delta Ct values for each sample were calculated by normalizing *HeT-A* Ct values to control Ct values and graphed using Microsoft Excel. Each DNA sample was run in triplicates to estimate average Ct values.

RNA isolation and cDNA synthesis

RNA was isolated by using RNeasy plus Mini kit (Qiagen) as per the manufacturer's protocol. Ovaries from 2-3 day old adult females were removed and placed in lysis buffer (RLT buffer) containing 1% β -mercaptoethanol. While dissecting the ovaries the tubes were kept in dry ice. Immediately after dissection ovaries in RLT buffer were stored at -80 $^{\circ}$ C until RNA was isolated. Samples were passed through gDNA eliminator mini spin columns (Qiagen) after lysis to eliminate DNA contamination. RNA samples were eluted in sterile DEPC-treated RNase free water. RNA concentrations were estimated using a NanoDrop 2000 (Thermo Scientific). cDNA was synthesized from 1 μ g of RNA using Superscript III First-strand synthesis system for RT-PCR (Life Technologies) as per the manufacturer's protocol. Twenty μ l of cDNA was diluted five-fold with water, and 2 μ l of each diluted cDNA was taken for quantitative real time PCR to measure the level of transcript expression. Each Q-RT-PCR was repeated three times, with triplicate reactions at each time, with each set of gene primers. Mean and standard deviation values of the three replicates were used to estimate expression levels. Significance of differential expression was determined by an unpaired two-tailed t test.

Primers used for transcript expression analysis are:

Ino80 (CG31212): 169 bp
 For: 5'- TGCCGAAGATGAGGACGAAGTAG -3'
 Rev: 5'- AAAGAAGGATGTGGAGAACGAGC -3'
 CG3581: 107 bp

216 For: 5'- TGAAAAAGGCACAGTGGAGGG -3'
 217 Rev: 5'- GAACTTGTC AACACAGGGTATGGG -3'
 218 CG31404: 112 bp
 219 For: 5'- GCTTTTGGAACACACTTGGGC -3'
 220 Rev: 5'- GCACCTTGGGTTTACGAACAATG -3'
 221 CG31245: 126 bp
 222 For: 5'- AAAAGCCAGGACCGATGAGC -3'
 223 Rev: 5'- CAACAATGGGTTTGCTATCTCGC -3'
 224 CR34285: 171 bp
 225 For: 5'- ACAGTTCCTCAAGCAATGGCAG -3'
 226 Rev: 5'- GGAACCCAGCCCAAATCAATC -3'
 227 CG3734: 106 bp
 228 For: 5'- AGGCATTTCTTTGGCTCTGTTG -3'
 229 Rev: 5'- ATTCTGAGTGGTTGGCAGTGGTGG -3'
 230 CG18493: 230 bp
 231 For: 5'- GTGAAAATGGCTGCTCTGCG -3'
 232 Rev: 5'- TGATAGGTTTGCGTGTTGCTCG -3'
 233 CG3739: 131 bp
 234 For: 5'- GAATGCGTTCGTCAAATCTCTGAG -3'
 235 Rev: 5'- TGGCGTTGTTGCTGTCATCG -3'
 236 CG31244: 166 bp
 237 For: 5'- TGGACAGGACCAAGACTACGAAAC -3'
 238 Rev: 5'- CGCTTTACGCTCGGTATCTCTG -3'
 239 Ino80_ Exon8-9: 148 bp
 240 For: 5'-TGGGGAATTAATTTAACAGCCGCC-3'
 241 Rev: 5'-ATGGTTCCTTTGCAAATCAGTCG-3'

242

243 RESULTS

244 Transposase induced male recombination mapping

245 As there is no meiotic recombination in *Drosophila* males, it is possible to identify site-specific
 246 recombination events generated by transposable elements that transpose by a cut-and-paste
 247 mechanism and leave a double strand DNA break in their wake (Chen et al. 1998; Zhai et al.
 248 2003). In general, our procedure was similar to previous work (Chen et al. 1998; Zhai et al.
 249 2003); in particular it involved generating heterozygous *st Tel ca*/transposon males, inducing
 250 transposition with an exogenous transposase and recovering recombinant *st* or *ca* chromosomes
 251 to be tested for the *Tel* phenotype. Initial efforts to map the *Tel*^l mutation by male recombination
 252 were limited by the paucity of useful transposon insertions in the surrounding chromosomal
 253 region and continued as new insertion chromosomes became available. The assay used to
 254 identify *Tel*^l on the recombinant chromosomes changed over time. The assay used in early
 255 recombination experiments (Table 1, Round 1) used a cytogenetic analysis of heterozygous
 256 chromosomes exposed to *Tel* for two years (Siriaco et al. 2002). Later, relative telomere length
 257 was estimated by measuring relative copy number of the open reading frame (ORF) of *HeT-A* at

zero, six, nine, and twelve generations after a recombinant stock was established (Török et al. 2007; Wei et al. 2017).

The initial round of mapping, using seven *P* element insertions lying in the 91-93 cytogenetic region (Table 1), showed that *Tel^l* mapped between the *P{PZ}Dl⁰⁵¹⁵¹* and *P{SUPor-P}CG16718^{KG06218}* transposon insertion sites (Hereafter we refer to the transposon insertions simply with their allele designation; full names are listed in Table 1). The physical location is 3R:15,151,940 to 15,467,496, a region of 316 kb. This region showed a surprising paucity of *P* element insertions.

As new *P* element insertions became available, we used three transposons lying within this 316 kb region (Table 1, Round 2; Figure 1A). All three *st*-bearing recombinant chromosomes generated using *P* element insertion *d10097* showed telomere elongation from generation 0 to 12, whereas the three *ca*-bearing recombinant chromosomes from the same *P* element did not show significant telomere elongation (Figure 1B). Thus, *Tel^l* lies to the left of this *P* element insertion (3R:15,229,135). Similar results were obtained for recombinants from *P* element insertions *EY10678* and *d03320* (see Figure S1), both of which are to the right of *d10097* (Figure 1A). These results mapped *Tel* to 3R: 15,151,940 to 15,229,135, a region of ~77 kb.

Minos elements were also used to induce recombination (Table 1), although *Minos* elements had not previously been shown to induce recombination in males. Two *Minos* insertions, *MB02141* and *MB0163*, lying to the right of *d10097* in the 316 kb region showed similar results (see Figure S1), indicating that they are situated to the right of *Tel^l* as expected. Two *Minos* insertions in the 77 kb region were selected for further mapping studies (Table 1, Round 3; Figure 1). Even after heat shock, these *Minos* elements generated only a few recombinant males. We obtained only one *st*-bearing recombinant chromosome from each of these *Minos* transposons (Table 1). The *st* recombinants for *MI03112* and *MI02316* showed no evidence of telomere elongation from generation zero through twelve (Figure 1B). This result eliminated the region to the left of *MI02316* as containing *Tel^l* and mapped *Tel^l* to a 15 kb region (3R:15,214,101 to 15,229,135).

Telomere length in transposon insertion lines

We measured relative *HeT-A* copy number in the transposon lines used to induce site-specific recombination. Q-PCR analysis showed that all of the lines, except one bearing *MB09416*, had telomeres comparable in length to the Oregon R control (Figure 2). The relative *HeT-A* copy number in the *MB09416* insertion stock was highly elevated and similar to that of *Tel^l*. The *MB09416* *Minos* element is inserted at 3R:15,224,448, which is in intron 8 of *Ino80*, and within the 15 kb *Tel^l* region identified above. As it is likely that the high *HeT-A* copy number in this line might interfere with the ability to observe an increase in telomere length, this transposon was not used in the mapping of *Tel^l*. It is also possible that genome of the *MB09416* line carries a genetic factor, either at the insertion site or elsewhere, that has a phenotype similar to that of *Tel^l* and might therefore confound the analysis.

Effect of *Tel* copy number on telomere length

Different deficiencies and duplications spanning region 92A3 (Figure 3A), where *Tel* was mapped, were analyzed for an effect on telomere length by measuring relative *HeT-A* copy number by Q-PCR in the respective stocks. None of the deficiency and duplication stocks showed longer telomeres (Figure 3B). Thus, it appears that neither a 50% increase nor a 50% decrease in copy number of the region around *Tel* had an effect on telomere length.

301 SNP and indel identification

302 The genomes of the three strains *Tel*, *y^l w^l* and *E(tc)* were sequenced using the Illumina GAIIx
303 platform. As *Tel^l* appeared in a wild-caught strain that had not been outbred to any laboratory
304 flies (Siriaco et al. 2002), there was no useful wild type control. *E(tc)*, however, appeared in a *y^l*
305 *w^l* laboratory stock (Melnikova and Georgiev 2002); we therefore used a *y^l w^l* stock as a wild
306 type control. Upon sequencing, the *E(tc)* genome appeared to be highly heterozygous. We
307 therefore assumed the stock was contaminated and did not pursue it further. The other two stocks
308 were sequenced to 48X and 55X coverage, respectively. Both genomes were assembled to
309 reference using CLC Genomics Workbench and bwa. Also, two *de novo* assemblies, using CLC
310 Genomics Workbench and ABySS, were generated. Concurrently with the *Minos* transposon
311 recombination mapping, a 79 kb genomic region of 3R: 15,151,000 to 15,230,000, roughly the
312 region between inserts *05151* and *d10097*, extended slightly on either end, was analyzed for SNP
313 and indel variations with the above assemblies (Figure S2). Within this region, there were 626
314 SNPs and 88 indels identified on the *Tel^l* chromosome compared to the reference using the CLC
315 Genomics SNP and DIP Detection analysis (Table 2). A similar number of variations (586 SNPs
316 and 80 indels) were also found in the *y^l w^l* control strain. After eliminating common variations
317 between *Tel* and *y^l w^l* in this region, we are left with 332 SNPs and 53 indels that appear to be
318 unique to the *Tel^l* genome in this 79 kb region.

319 Current variant calling tools are only proficient at defining small indels (1-5 bp) (Krawitz et
320 al. 2010; O'Rawe et al. 2013). To detect larger indels, we scanned *Tel^l* genomic assemblies
321 manually and detected 13 polymorphisms of 5 bp or larger (Table 2). These large indels, present
322 in the *Tel^l* genome but not in *y^l w^l*, were analyzed by PCR with primers flanking these indels
323 and by Sanger sequencing of PCR products (Supplementary results, see Figure S4). A limitation
324 of the assembly to reference strategy for variant identification is that potential novel insertions
325 not present in the reference sequence will not be detected by this approach. To search for such
326 variations, we aligned the *de novo* assemblies of the *Tel^l* genome to the reference. Manually
327 scanning this alignment identified an additional 14 insertions not found by the above methods
328 (Table 2).

329 Comparison of variations to DGRP data

330 To differentiate natural polymorphisms among these remaining SNP and indel variations found
331 in the *Tel^l* genome, we compared them with the genomes available from the DGRP (Mackay et
332 al. 2012), a collection of wild-caught, inbred *Drosophila* strains whose genomes have been
333 sequenced. Our hypothesis is that if any variant found in the *Tel^l* genome is also found in a
334 DGRP line having normal length telomeres that variant can be ruled out as causing the *Tel*
335 phenotype. As a first step, all DGRP lines were tested for relative *HeT-A* copy number as a proxy
336 for telomere length. The *HeT-A* copy number data for these strains fit a log-normal distribution,
337 with three outliers that had copy numbers higher than the *Tel^l* strain (Figure 4). These three lines,
338 RAL-161, -703 and -882, have been excluded from the following discussion and described
339 elsewhere (Wei et al. 2017).

340 As the remaining DGRP lines have what we consider to be normal telomere length, close to
341 that found in the Oregon R control, the SNPs identified from Freeze1 (August 2010) of the
342 DGRP lines (Mackay et al. 2012) were compared to the SNPs in the *Tel^l* genome identified by
343 the CLC SNP detection software. All the SNPs found in the 79 kb region around *Tel^l* were also
344 found in the DGRP lines (Table 2). Thus, all the SNPs found in the *Tel^l* genome are natural
345 polymorphisms with little expected effect on telomere elongation. No indel data were available

for DGRP lines in Freeze1. We therefore identified indels in a selection of eight DGRP lines for the 79 kb region of interest. All except two indels found on the *Tel^l* chromosome, a deletion of C at 3R:15,162,997 and a deletion of TGT at 3R:15,221,789-91, were also found in one or more lines from the DGRP collection (Table 2). The deletion of C is located in a large intergenic region, 11 kb to the right of *Dl* and more than 16 kb to the left of *CG43203*, while the deletion of TGT is located in intron 8 of *Ino80*. The latter is the only indel specific to the *Tel^l* genome in the 15 kb region of interest and therefore was identified as the *Tel^l* mutation.

Comparison to modENCODE data

RNA sequence coverage for the 15 kb *Tel* region was analyzed by comparison with the modENCODE database, including stage and tissue specific transcript expression levels. This analysis shows that the candidate *Tel^l* mutation was not included in a transcript at any stage in any tissue (Figure 5) and suggests that *Tel^l* could be acting to alter the expression of other transcripts near or within the *Ino80* locus. The UCSC Genome browser map for this 15 kb region was examined for sequence conservation among *Drosophila* species and other insect species. This analysis showed that, even though the candidate *Tel^l* mutation is noncoding, it is in a well-conserved region, similar in the level of conservation to neighboring coding regions (see Figure S3). The transposon insertion site of *MB09416*, which is carried in a strain with elongated telomeres, however is not conserved (see Figure S3).

Transcript analysis

The transcript levels from the ovaries of *Tel^l* and Oregon R were analyzed for 9 genes in the vicinity of the *Tel^l* mutation (TGT deletion), which include *Ino80* and those found within its introns. Quantitative PCR with cDNA from these two lines showed that there is no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in the expression levels between the two strains for most of these genes (Figure 6A). The transcript level of *Ino80* around the exon 8-9 junction that spans the intron 8, where *Tel^l* mutation is located, also showed an intact transcript with normal expression similar to other parts of the transcript, indicating that the *Tel^l* mutation does not interfere with local splicing (Figure 6A). *CG18493*, however, showed a 15 fold lower expression in *Tel^l* compared to the control ($p = 0.0006$) and *CG3734* showed a slight reduction of expression in *Tel^l* ovaries ($p = 0.0103$). Given that a 50% reduction in *Tel⁺* copy number appears to have no effect on telomere length (Figure 3), and that after a Bonferroni correction the small decrease seen for *CG3734* expression (Figure 6A) may not be considered significant, it seems likely that expression of this gene is not relevant for the *Tel* phenotype. To analyze further the significance of the reduction in the *CG18493* transcript, we repeated this comparison with more control lines [Oregon R, Canton S and DGRP line RAL-513, which has a *HeT-A* copy number near the mean of the DGRP distribution (Figure 4)]. The long-telomere line *MB09416* was also examined. This comparison confirmed the differences seen in the expression levels of *CG18493* between *Tel^l* and Oregon R and extended it to the two other genetically unrelated controls (Figure 6B). Thus, the *Tel^l* mutation may affect expression of *CG18493* but not any of the other neighboring genes. Further, the *MB09416* insertion strain exhibits significantly reduced *CG18493* expression ($p < 0.05$) compared with all three controls. Thus, both *Tel^l* and the *MB09416* insertion are associated with a significant reduction in expression of *CG18493*, and based on their proximity to each other may cause this reduction by similar mechanisms.

DISCUSSION

389 Mechanism of telomere elongation

390 The stability of telomeres in *Drosophila* depends on terminin and non-terminin telomeric
391 proteins. The terminin proteins Moi, Ver, HipHop, and HOAP are found only at telomeres,
392 whereas non-terminin proteins HP1, the ATM and ATR kinases, and the proteins of MRN
393 complex also have biological roles apart from their involvement in telomere maintenance and
394 structure (Mason et al. 2008; Raffa et al. 2013). Mutations in any of the genes encoding these
395 proteins cause telomere fusions and abnormal cell divisions. However, only mutations in HP1
396 (Savitsky et al. 2002) and the Ku70/Ku80 complex (Metaxakis et al. 2005) are associated with
397 telomere elongation. The exact mechanism and the genes involved in telomere length
398 homeostasis in *Drosophila* are largely unknown. There are reports of RNAi control over *HeT-A*,
399 *TART* and *TAHRE* transcript levels (Savitsky et al. 2006), but the exact mechanism of its
400 involvement in telomere length homeostasis is not well characterized. Two dominant mutations
401 *Tel* and *E(tc)* showed telomere elongation (Melnikova and Georgiev 2002; Siriaco et al. 2002).
402 One study reported that the *E(tc)* mutation is associated with elevated rates of gene conversion in
403 telomeric regions; whereas the *Tel* mutation was associated with both transposition of the
404 telomeric retrotransposons and gene conversion (Proskuryakov and Melnikova 2008), but not
405 with the transcription of telomeric retrotransposons (Pineyro et al. 2011). The data thus suggest
406 the involvement of *Tel* in a recombination pathway. The *Tel* mutation has no known phenotype
407 other than telomere elongation (Siriaco et al. 2002; Walter et al. 2007). The genetic mapping of
408 this mutation and identification of a candidate *Tel* gene will give us insight into telomere length
409 homeostasis in *Drosophila* and possibly the recombination-mediated telomere maintenance
410 mechanisms, such as the ALT pathway found in some human cancer cells. Although the ALT
411 pathway is suggested for some human cancers, the molecular details remain still unknown
412 (Nabetani and Ishikawa 2011).

413 Mapping *Tel* using transposon-induced male recombination

414 The *Tel^l* mutation in *Drosophila* was previously localized by meiotic recombination to 69 on the
415 genetic map (Siriaco et al. 2002). Meiotic recombination in *Drosophila* occurs only in females,
416 but it is possible to induce site-specific recombination in males using transposons and use this for
417 mapping (Chen et al. 1998; Ryder and Russell 2003). A collection of more than 15,000 publicly
418 available *P* element insertions means that in many regions a resolution of 5-10 kb is possible for
419 *P* element-induced recombination (Spradling et al. 1995; Bellen et al. 2004).

420 One major drawback of the *P* element, however, is its strong bias for insertion into some
421 genes (hot spots) and against insertion into others (cold spots). The region around *Tel* is a cold
422 spot for *P* element insertions. *Minos*, a member of the *Tc1/Mariner* family of transposable
423 elements, is active in diverse organisms and cultured cells; it produces stable integrants in the
424 germ line of several insect species, in the mouse, and in human cells (Metaxakis et al. 2005). To
425 expand the usefulness of transposon mapping in *Drosophila*, collections of other transposable
426 elements with different insertional specificities, such as *Minos* (Franz and Savakis 1991;
427 Loukeris et al. 1995), have been introduced (Bellen et al. 2004). A recent analysis of *Minos*
428 elements found a generally uniform distribution in the genome (Venken et al. 2011). We used
429 available *Minos* elements to refine our mapping of the *Tel^l* mutation and show for the first time
430 that these transposons can induce recombination events useful for this purpose. This approach
431 localized *Tel^l* to a region of 15 kb.

432 Genome sequencing and DGRP resources for *Tel^l* mapping

The molecular lesion associated with *Tel^l* was identified by deep sequencing of the *Tel^l* genome and analyzing this sequence for novel SNP and indel variants not found in the DGRP lines (Mackay et al. 2012). After comparing the variants in the genome bearing *Tel^l* with DGRP polymorphisms we ruled out all SNPs and all but one indel in intron 8 of *Ino80* as candidates for *Tel^l*. Thus, the combination of formal genetics and next generation sequencing resulted in the identification of the molecular defect in *Tel* as a 3 bp deletion (TGT) at 3R:15,221,789-91.

To our knowledge, this is the first study using the DGRP collection to map a Mendelian trait in *D. melanogaster*. The *Tel^l* mutant used in this study was caught near Gaiano, Bergamo in northern Italy, likely prior to 1946 (Siriaco et al. 2002). It is of interest that the natural genetic diversity captured by DGRP in a Raleigh, North Carolina population was of sufficient diversity to identify all of the SNPs and all but two indels within our 79 kb region defined by the transposon mapping. This suggests that the DGRP will be an important general resource for genetic mapping of genes in *Drosophila melanogaster*, even from strains not closely related to the standard reference isolates.

Transposon insertion MI{ET1}Ino80^{MB09416} shows elongated telomeres

Flies carrying the *Minos* transposon *MB09416* show long telomeres similar to those of the *Tel^l* mutant strain. This insertion site is 2660 bp to the right of the TGT deletion in the same intron of *Ino80*. However, flies bearing nearby *Minos* insertions have normal length telomeres, suggesting that neither the *Minos* elements themselves nor the genomes in which they reside contribute to the formation of long *HeT-A* arrays. Rather, it appears the specific *MB09416* insertion may be causative. Expression of *CG18493* in this transposon insertion stock is reduced significantly relative to the control, although not to the same extent as *Tel^l*. This supports the idea that the telomeres seen in *Tel^l* and *MB09416* may result from reduced *CG18493* expression.

Effect of *Tel^l* on transcript expression in ovaries

This study identified a 3 bp deletion (TGT) in intron 8 of *Ino80* in the middle of chromosome arm 3R as the most likely causative factor for the telomere elongation phenotype found in the *Tel^l* strain. The *Drosophila Ino80* gene has 14 exons that spans 34,159 bp and produces a 5,243 nt long transcript, which encodes a single 1,638 aa protein. Intron 8 of *Ino80* has four other genes nested inside it, while intron 12 includes another three genes. The *Drosophila Ino80* gene has a regulatory role in DNA binding, and mutants in this gene showed its role in regulation of gene expression (Bhatia et al. 2010). The protein is part of the Ino80 complex and present in nuclear chromatin (Klymenko et al. 2006). Based on its sequence structure it is predicted to have a role in ATP binding and helicase activity. Homozygous deletion mutations *Ino80^{Δ3}* and *Ino80^{Δ4}*, with 3 kb and 4 kb deletions respectively, spanning intron 11 and exon 12 of *Ino80*, are late embryonic lethals (Bhatia et al. 2010). This suggests that *Ino80* has an essential, non-redundant function during *Drosophila* development. The *Tel^l* mutation has no known phenotype other than telomere elongation, suggesting the 3 bp deletion in intron 8 does not inactivate the normal function of *Ino80*. The results in this study also show that the integrity of the exon 8-9 splice junction of the *Ino80* transcript is not affected, as its expression is at a normal level in comparison to other exons in the ovary. The *Tel^l* mutation might have a role at a specific stage in the germ line that allows the telomeres to elongate. The possibility of a truncated/altered *Ino80* transcript in the germ line or a novel transcript (non-coding RNA or small RNA) found in intron 8 of *Ino80* cannot be ruled out.

Of all the genes within the *Ino80* locus, only *CG18493* showed a significant repeatable reduction in expression in *Tel^l*. A slight reduction in the expression of *CG18493* observed in the *MB09416* stock also supports the hypothesis that the long telomere phenotype observed in both the lines could be caused by a reduction in expression of *CG18493*. This gene has no known function, but based on the sequence information is predicted to have a serine-type peptidase activity involved in proteolysis. It is expected to produce a transcript of 1,566 nt with a protein of 480 aa at embryonic stages 13-16 in embryonic/larval midgut. The TGT deletion is located 4 kb from the 3' end of *CG18493* with one gene between them, and *MB09416* is located more than 5 kb downstream of *CG18493* with two intervening genes, suggesting *Tel^l* and *MB09416* might alter regulation of this locus by disrupting enhancers or other regulators. Further studies are needed to elucidate the mechanism of this regulation.

CONCLUSIONS

This study mapped the *Tel1* mutation in *Drosophila melanogaster* by *P* elements and *Minos* transposons induced male recombination and subsequent analysis on telomere elongation measurements over generations to a 15 kb region in the middle of the right arm of chromosome 3 (3R) at 92A. Further analysis by whole genome sequencing of *Tel1* and comparison of variants in the mapped region to *Drosophila* Genetic Reference Panel (DGRP) genomes eliminated all the SNPs and most of the indels, and mapped *Tel1* to a 3 bp deletion (TGT) at 3R:15,221,791 in the middle of intron 8 of *Ino80*. This approach can be used to identify any mutation to a nucleotide level from the entire genome of *Drosophila*, even if that mutation is not part of a coding region.

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612

613 FIGURE LEGENDS

614 **Figure 1. Localization of *Tel^l* by site-specific recombination.** A. The upper chromosome
615 map shows the candidate genes between two P element insertion sites, *05151* and *05113*
616 (vertical green lines). This region was identified as containing *Tel^l* based on Table 1, round
617 1. Positions of transposons used for further mapping are indicated by green arrows. The *Tel^l*
618 mutation is boxed in red. The lower chromosome map shows expansion of the 92A3 region.
619 B. Graphs showing the change in relative *HeT-A* copy number (telomere length) in
620 recombinants of *Tel^l/MI02316*, *Tel^l/MI03112* and *Tel^l/d10097* over 12 generations. The *st*
621 recombinants are shown as red lines; *ca* recombinants as purple lines. These data delimit
622 *Tel^l* to a 15 kb between inserts *MI02316* and *d10097* (shown as red rectangles in Figure 1A).

623 **Figure 2. Telomere length in transposon insertion stocks.** Q-PCR analysis of *HeT-A* copy
624 number in different transposon insertion stocks used for mapping *Tel^l* mutation. Error bars

625 represent standard deviation measured from the triplicate Q-PCR results. *MB09416* was not
626 used for subsequent site-specific recombination mapping.

627 **Figure 3. Dosage effects of *Tel* on *HeT-A* copy number.** **A.** The cytogenetic and physical
628 map of genomic region 91C-91D is displayed, highlighting the 15 kb *Tel^l* region as a
629 vertical box. The lower part of the panel shows the extent of chromosome deficiencies. The
630 bottom rectangle, *Dp(3;3)cam30T*, is a duplication for this region. Dotted lines beyond this
631 rectangle show that the duplication extends beyond the represented region. **B.** Shows the
632 relative *HeT-A* copy number in stocks of the aberrations shown in A. The highlighted box
633 represents a duplication that includes mapped region (*Dp(3;3)cam30T* covers 90C-93C) and,
634 another duplication of a neighboring region of the genome (*Dp(3;3)cam35* covers 67C5-
635 69A5) as a control. The mean from three replicates is represented here and error bars
636 represent standard deviation.

637 **Figure 4. Telomere lengths in DGRP lines.** A bar graph shows the log normal distribution
638 of telomere lengths among the 162 DGRP lines measured. The blue arrow shows the
639 position of the Oregon-R control, and the red arrow shows the position of *Tel^l*. Three lines
640 have *HeT-A* copy numbers that exceed three standard deviations from the mean. These are
641 RAL-161, -703 and -882. The red curve indicates the expected distribution.

642 **Figure 5. Genetic activity and conservation of the 15 kb *Tel1* region.** **A.** The genes found
643 in this region are aligned with molecular coordinates. Minos insertions used for mapping are
644 shown in cyan triangles. Minos insertion MB09416, which showed telomere elongation, is
645 highlighted in red square. **B.** The University of California Santa Cruz genome browser map
646 highlights sequence conservation in this region among different insect species. **C.** A
647 developmental transcriptome analysis for the same region as determined by the
648 modENCODE project is also shown. The red vertical line spanning all three panels indicates
649 the position of the TGT deletion.

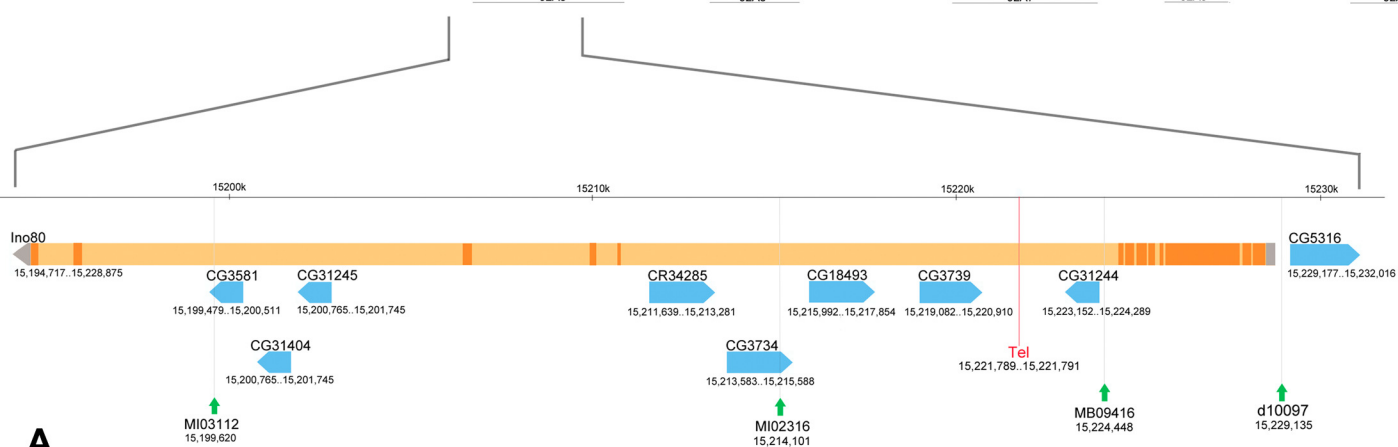
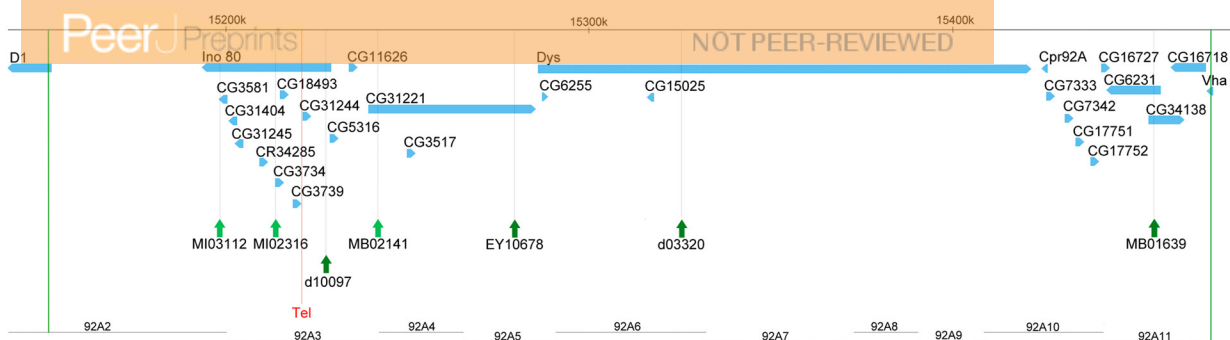
650 **Figure 6. Transcript analysis in the genes near *Tel^l*.** **A.** The histogram represents the
651 relative transcript levels from *Tel1* mutant (red) and Oregon-R (blue) adult ovaries. The
652 genes analyzed are found near *Tel^l* (TGT mutation), which include *Ino80* and the genes
653 within its introns. The last bar represents the expression of *Ino80* gene spanning exons 8-9,
654 around the position of the TGT deletion in intron 8. The expression levels of *CG31244* and
655 *CG31245* are very low, similar to the modENCODE data. **B.** The relative transcript level of
656 *CG18493* was measured among different control lines. Standard laboratory strains Oregon R
657 and Canton S were tested as well as DGRP line RAL-513, which has a chromosomal *HeT-A*
658 copy number near the DGRP mean. As the *MB09416* insertion is very close to the *Tel* TGT
659 deletion, it was tested at the same time and shows a reduction in expression of *CG18493*
660 compared to all of the controls.

661

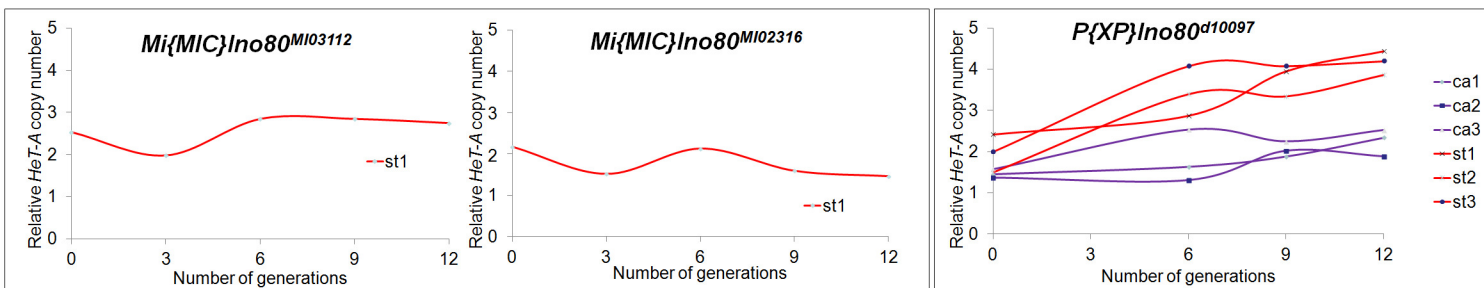
Figure 1(on next page)

Localization of *TeI^l* by site-specific recombination.

A. The upper chromosome map shows the candidate genes between two P element insertion sites, *05151* and *05113* (vertical green lines). This region was identified as containing *TeI^l* based on Table 1, round 1. Positions of transposons used for further mapping are indicated by green arrows. The *TeI^l* mutation is boxed in red. The lower chromosome map shows expansion of the 92A3 region. **B.** Graphs showing the change in relative *HeT-A* copy number (telomere length) in recombinants of *TeI^l/MI02316*, *TeI^l/MI03112* and *TeI^l/d10097* over 12 generations. The *st* recombinants are shown as red lines; *ca* recombinants as purple lines. These data delimit *TeI^l* to a 15 kb between inserts *MI02316* and *d10097* (shown as red rectangles in Figure 1A).



A



B

Figure 2(on next page)

Telomere length in transposon insertion stocks.

Q-PCR analysis of *HeT-A* copy number in different transposon insertion stocks used for mapping *Tel¹* mutation. Error bars represent standard deviation measured from the triplicate Q-PCR results. *MB09416* was not used for subsequent site-specific recombination mapping.

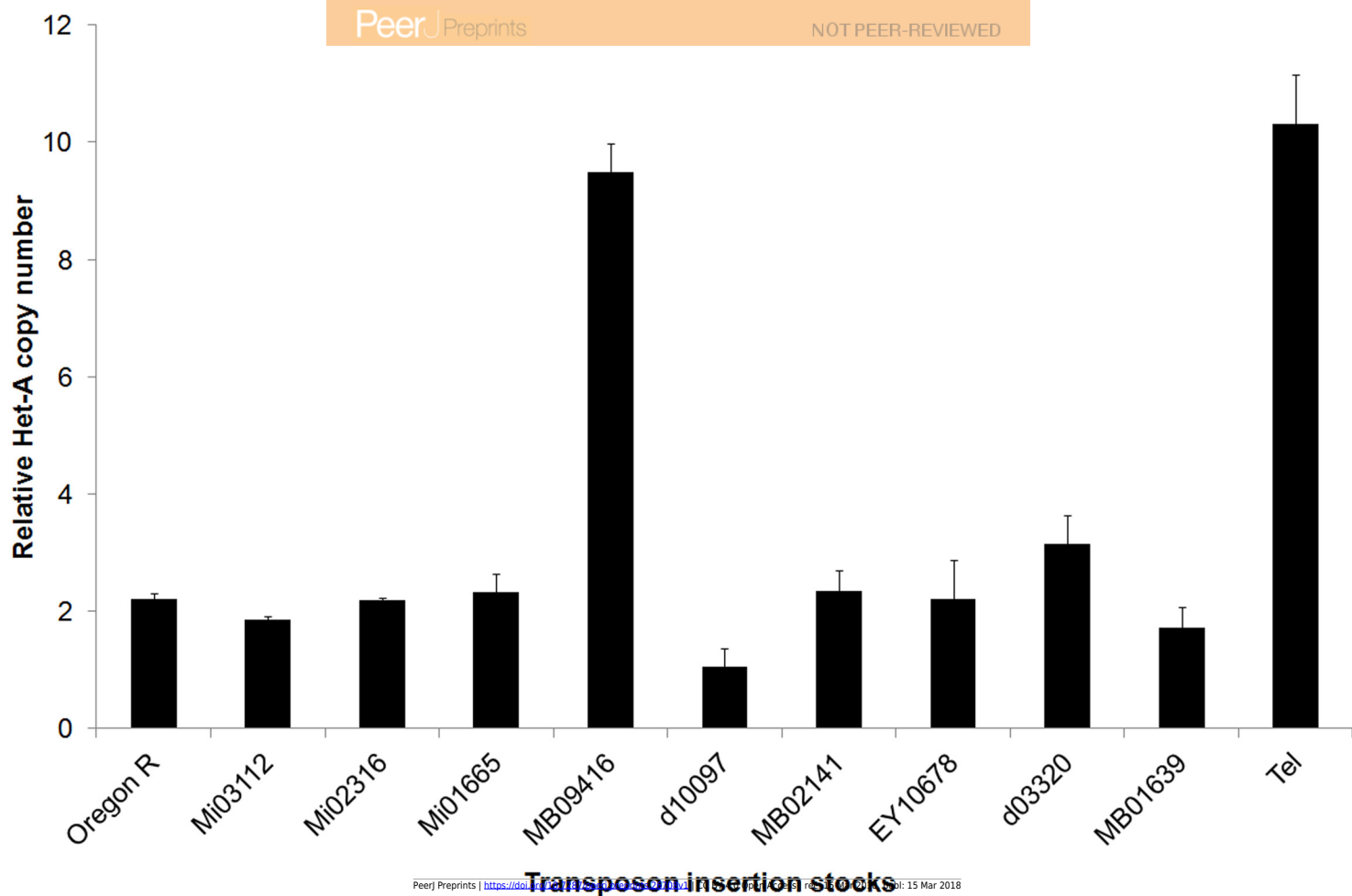


Figure 3 (on next page)

Dosage effects of *Tel* on *HeT-A* copy number.

A. The cytogenetic and physical map of genomic region 91C-91D is displayed, highlighting the 15 kb *Tel*¹ region as a vertical box. The lower part of the panel shows the extent of chromosome deficiencies. The bottom rectangle, *Dp(3;3)cam30T*, is a duplication for this region. Dotted lines beyond this rectangle show that the duplication extends beyond the represented region. B. Shows the relative *HeT-A* copy number in stocks of the aberrations shown in A. The highlighted box represents a duplication that includes mapped region (*Dp(3;3)cam30T* covers 90C-93C) and, another duplication of a neighboring region of the genome (*Dp(3;3)cam35* covers 67C5-69A5) as a control. The mean from three replicates is represented here and error bars represent standard deviation.

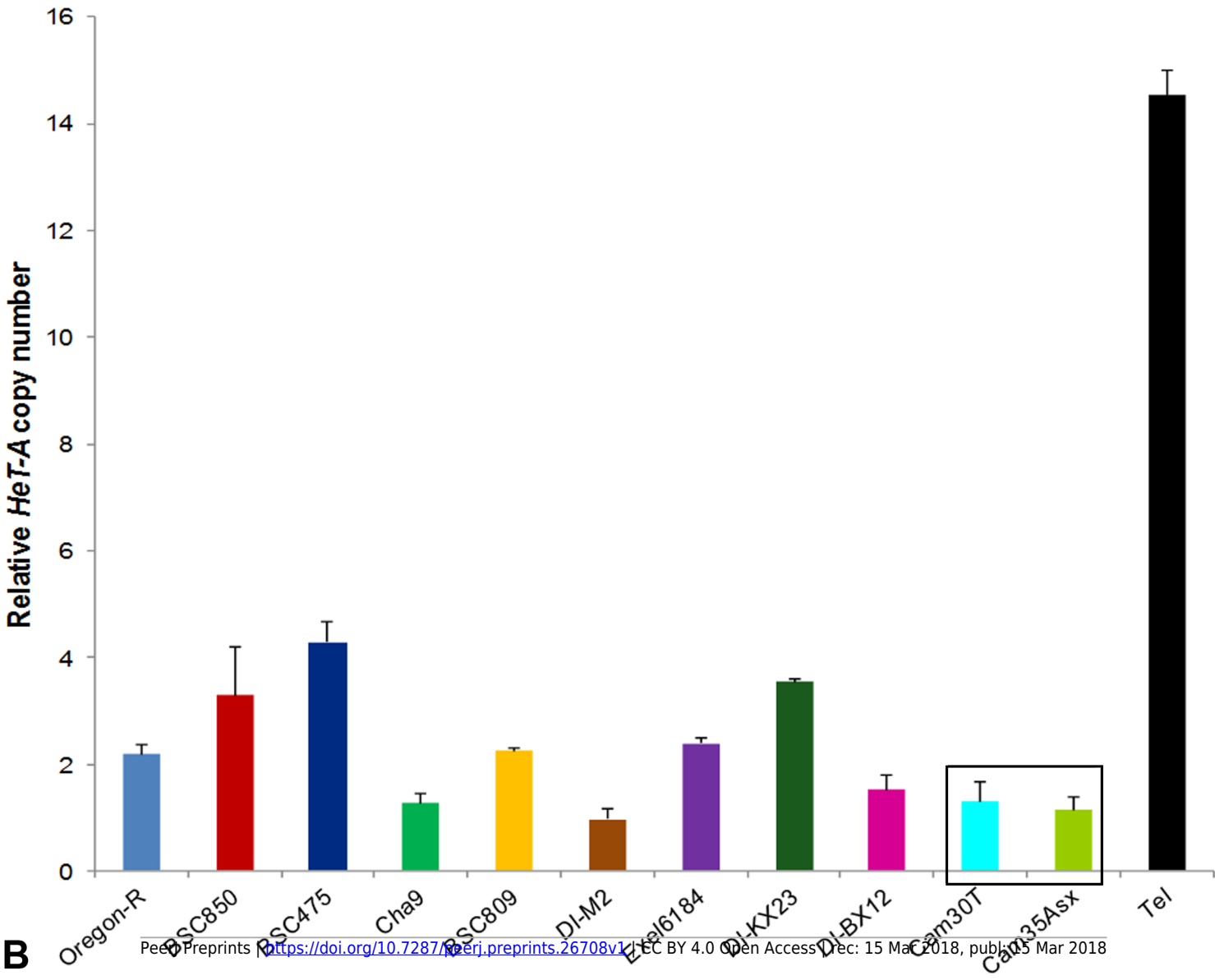
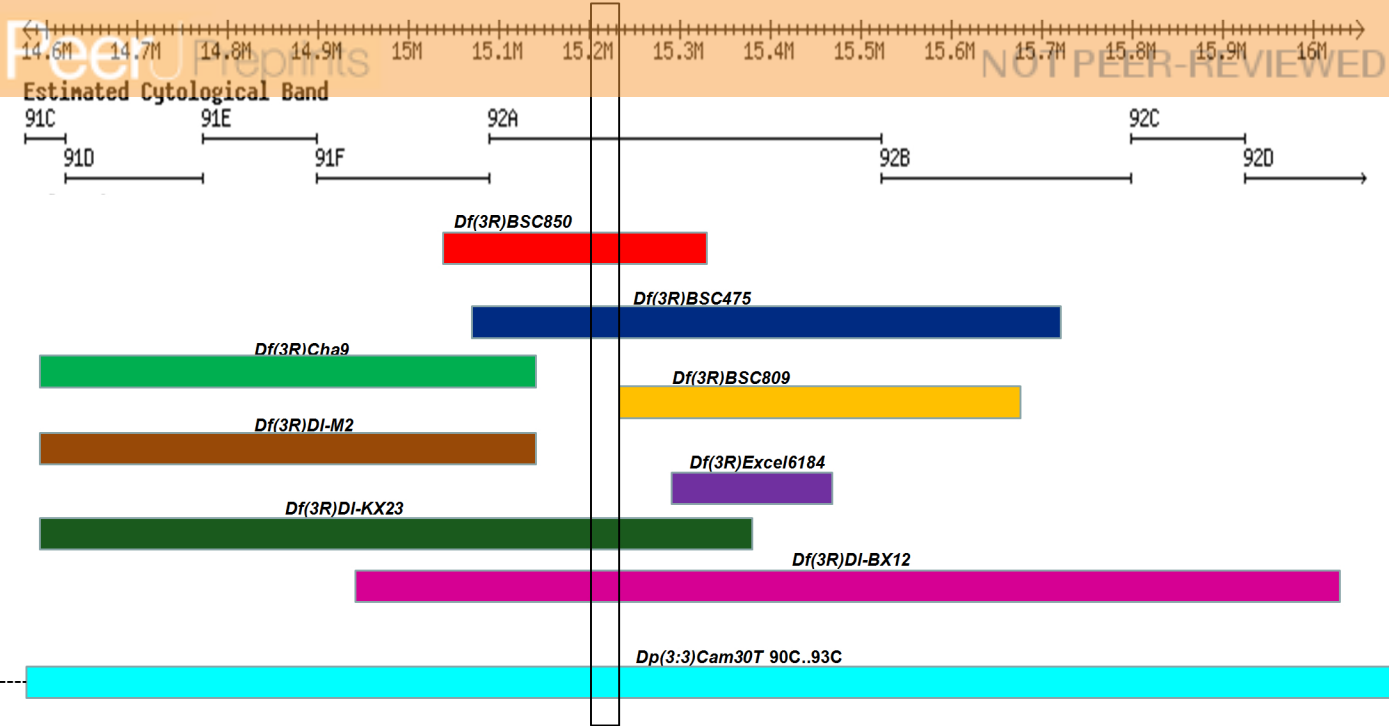


Figure 4(on next page)

Telomere lengths in DGRP lines.

A bar graph shows the log normal distribution of telomere lengths among the 162 DGRP lines measured. The blue arrow shows the position of the Oregon-R control, and the red arrow shows the position of *Tel¹*. Three lines have *Het-A* copy numbers that exceed three standard deviations from the mean. These are RAL-161, -703 and -882. The red curve indicates the expected distribution.

Oregon-R

Tel

number of strains

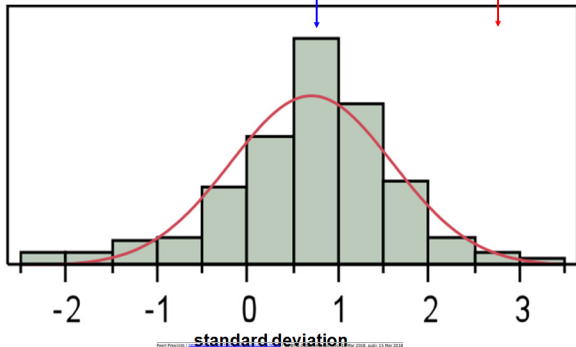
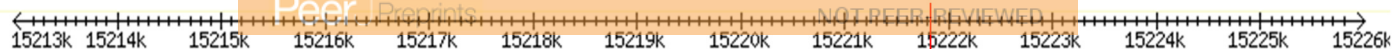


Figure 5(on next page)

Genetic activity and conservation of the 15 kb Tel1 region.

A. The genes found in this region are aligned with molecular coordinates. Minos insertions used for mapping are shown in cyan triangles. Minos insertion MB09416, which showed telomere elongation, is highlighted in red square. **B.** The University of California Santa Cruz genome browser map highlights sequence conservation in this region among different insect species. **C.** A developmental transcriptome analysis for the same region as determined by the modENCODE project is also shown. The red vertical line spanning all three panels indicates the position of the TGT deletion.



Transcript

pseudogene:CR34285-RB

Ino80-RA

CG3734-RA

CG3734-RB

CG18493-RA

CG3739-RB

CG31244-RA

Transgenic insertion site

Mi{MIC}Ino80[MI02316]

Mi{MIC}Ino80[MI01665]

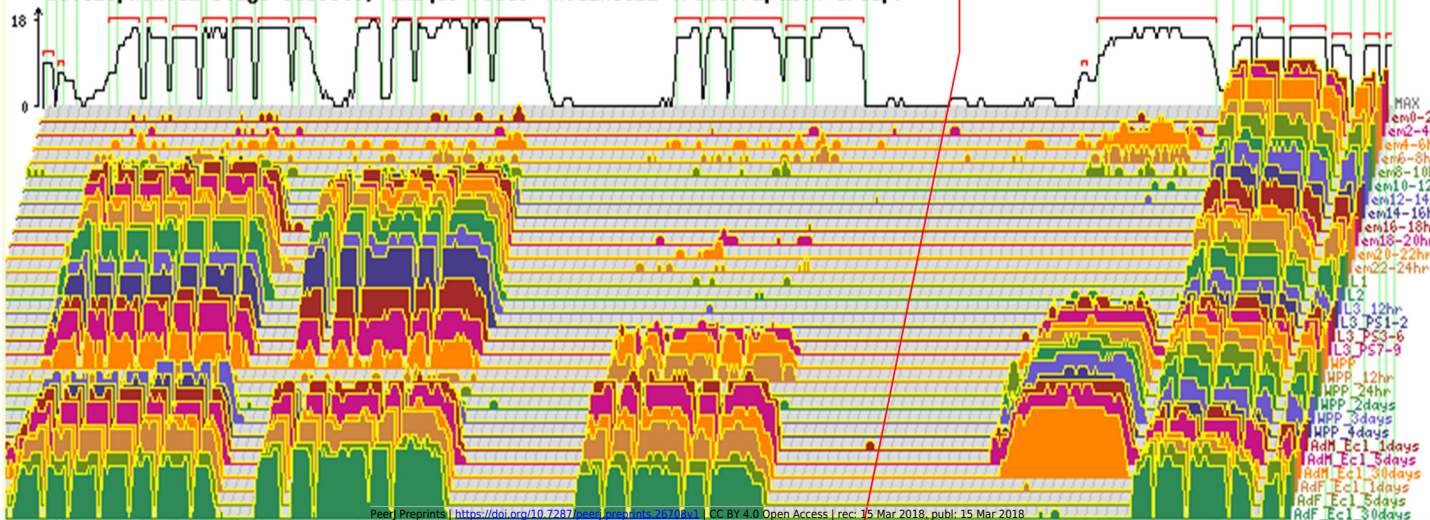
Mi{ET1}Ino80[MB0941]

12 Flies, Mosquito, Honeybee, Beetle Multiz Alignments & phastCons Scores

Conservation

B

Developmental stage subsets, unique reads (noENCODE Transcription Group)



C

Figure 6 (on next page)

Transcript analysis in the genes near *TeI¹*.

A. The histogram represents the relative transcript levels from *Tel1* mutant (red) and Oregon-R (blue) adult ovaries. The genes analyzed are found near *TeI¹* (TGT mutation), which include *Ino80* and the genes within its introns. The last bar represents the expression of *Ino80* gene spanning exons 8-9, around the position of the TGT deletion in intron 8. The expression levels of *CG31244* and *CG31245* are very low, similar to the modENCODE data. **B.** The relative transcript level of *CG18493* was measured among different control lines. Standard laboratory strains Oregon R and Canton S were tested as well as DGRP line RAL-513, which has a chromosomal *HeT-A* copy number near the DGRP mean. As the *MB09416* insertion is very close to the *TeI* TGT deletion, it was tested at the same time and shows a reduction in expression of *CG18493* compared to all of the controls.

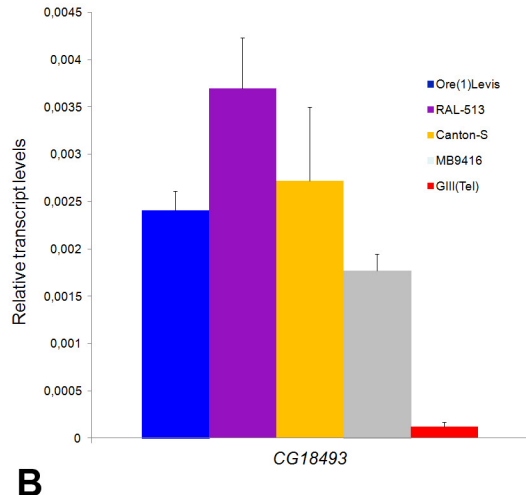
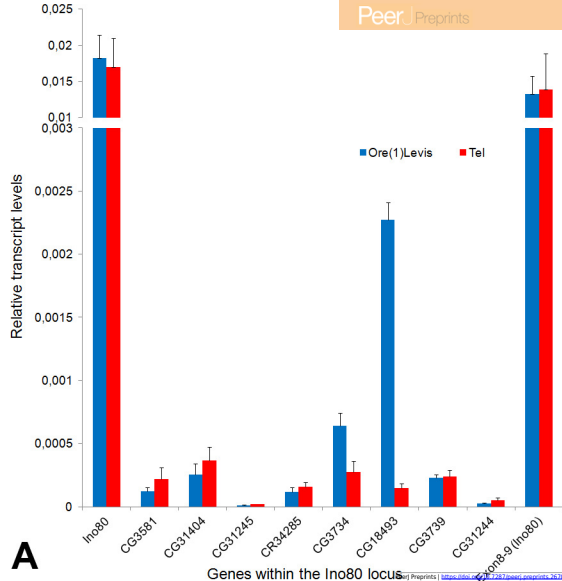


Table 1 (on next page)

Recombinants obtained from each transposon used for site specific recombination

^a Transposons were used to induce recombination as they became available. Succeeding rounds used slightly different procedures as described in the text. ^b Estimated cytological band as reported in FlyBase. ^c Nucleotide position in the genomic sequence of chromosome arm 3R. ^d The position of *TeI*¹ relative to the insertion site.

Table 1. Recombinants obtained from each transposon used for site specific recombination

Round ^a	Transposon insertion	Cytology ^b	Coordinate ^c	No. Recombinants	Tel position ^d
1	<i>P{PZ}sqz⁰²¹⁰²</i>	91F4	14991598	3	Right
1	<i>P{lacW}vib^{j5A6}</i>	91F12	15052087	6	Right
1	<i>P{PZ}l(3)05820⁰⁵⁸²⁰</i>	91F12	15055218	3	Right
1	<i>P{PZ}Dl⁰⁵¹⁵¹</i>	92A2	15151940	2	Right
3	<i>Mi[4]Ino80^{MI03112}</i>	92A3	15199620	1	Right
3	<i>Mi[4]Ino80^{MI02316}</i>	92A3	15214101	1	Right
2	<i>P[26]Ino80^{d10097}</i>	92A3	15229135	6	Left
2	<i>Mi{ET1}CG31221^{MB02141}</i>	92A3	15239869	5	Left
2	<i>P{EPgy2}CG31221^{EY10678}</i>	92A5	15279376	4	Left
2	<i>P[26]Dys^{d03320}</i>	92A6	15324651	3	Left
2	<i>MI{ET1}CG6231^{MB01639}</i>	92A11	15455374	6	Left
1	<i>P{SUPor-P}CG16718^{KG06218}</i>	92A11	15467496	3	Left
1	<i>P{PZ}Vha13⁰⁵¹¹³</i>	92A11	15469740- 15470048	3	Left
1	<i>P{hsneo}l(3)neo50¹</i>	92B3	15662593	3	Left

^a Transposons were used to induce recombination as they became available. Succeeding rounds used slightly different procedures as described in the text.

^b Estimated cytological band as reported in FlyBase.

^c Nucleotide position in the genomic sequence of chromosome arm 3R.

^d The position of *Tel*¹ relative to the insertion site.

Table 2 (on next page)

Table 2. SNPs and indels found in the *Te/1* genome relative to the standard reference sequence of chromosome arm 3R between coordinates 15,151,000 and 15,230,000

¹ There were 159 DGRP lines used in the SNP comparison (Freeze1 data) and eight used in the indel comparison.

Table 2. SNPs and indels found in the *Tel1* genome relative to the standard reference sequence of chromosome arm 3R between coordinates 15,151,000 and 15,230,000

Polymorphisms	SNPs	Indels
Identified by CLC-Genomics	626	88
Identified by manual comparison	-	13
Identified by <i>de novo</i> assembly	-	14
Total	626	115
Not in DGRP ^a	0	2

¹ There were 159 DGRP lines used in the SNP comparison (Freeze1 data) and eight used in the indel comparison.