

# Microscopy AND Microanalysis

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## Dear Abbe

Dear Abbe,

For years I have required my students of microscopy to produce a cross section of an amphibian larva. Recently, however, some students have objected and called the exercise cruel. They would much prefer to make happy sections, but I have never learned how to cut these and find no reference to them. Can you help me?

Grayson in Valparaiso

Dear Graybeard,

A bit of history is in order here. "Happy Sections" were actually the precursors to today's "Happy Meals." They were first introduced by my dear friends Camillo Golgi and Santiago Ramon y Cajal who in 1902 thought that they could inspire a whole generation of young people to take up what they referred to as "El pasatiempo feliz" By first introducing students to the pleasurable art of arranging cleaned diatom shells in a drop of warm balsam by pushing them around with a cat whisker they hoped to create a world in which Arab would sit down with Infidel, Christian would join Pagan and Brittany Spears would get out of rehab and stay out. Alas, it was not to be. In 1906 it ended badly when at the Nobel ceremony Camillo called Santiago Ramon a "Neurobiólogo del idiota" and Santiago Ramon smashed a set of serial sections over Camillo's head and threatened to do unwarranted things with his mother. The "Happy Section" was happy no more. Tell your students to get back to work and section their larva. Well, actually not THEIR larva. That would be cruel.

Dear Abbe,

I have tried for six straight years to get a grant funded and have been met with nothing but rejections. Sometimes the reviewers are helpful but other times it seems that they just want to go out of their way to belittle me and my research. Can you think of any alternative ways I can fund my research program?

Dejected in Dubai

Dear D.D.

Do you mean to tell me that with all that oil revenue in Dubai you can't sheik loose a few dollars for research? At one time or another we have all been in a similar situation. I remember that in the early days Pierre and Maria Curie used to haul a Pulyui tube and imaging phosphor to children's parties just to make a few extra francs. A more reliable source of funding is petty crime. Try holding up convenience stores using a white lab coat and "Groucho" glasses as a disguise. Then immediately run to the nearest scientific convention where you will blend in with the crowd. If that doesn't work try becoming an American and filing an income tax return. If it is an election year you could get at least \$300.

For answers to life's mysteries, please contact Herr Abbe's administrative assistant at [jshields@cb.uga.edu](mailto:jshields@cb.uga.edu).