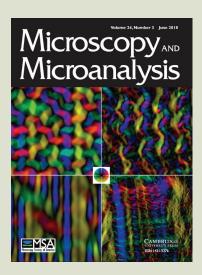
Microscopy Microanalysis

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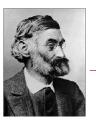
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Chaoyi Teng, Hendrix Demers, Nicolas Brodusch, Kristian Waters and Raynald Gauvin



DearAbbe

Dear Abbe.

My brother and co-worker came to me with this great idea. He claims that it is well accepted that a single drop of blood held on the fingertip for 30 seconds (prior to depositing layers of it onto a microscope slide) allows the specific gravity of the cells of different organs and tissues of the body to form patterns of oxidative stress that are easily identifiable when compared to the rings on Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man drawing. Not only that, but that each layer of dried blood corresponds to a period in the subject's life, back to infancy. I gave a quick artisanal chortle of disbelief (not being one for canned laughter). My brother then went on to describe how people have health practices diagnosing the illnesses of various organs and people's past medical history via a convoluted methodology based on this principle. I kid you not, there really are people doing this. At first I was struck by the sheer nonsense of this procedure. However, after perusing many dark-web pages of the Internet, and drinking absinthe in a room filled with cedar incense, I am inclined to believe his assertions. Have you encountered this potential lode of tailings from your illustrious mines of research? What do you think?

Mystical in Muskegon

Dear Mystie,

I believe in first impressions. And I think you should go with yours. I wish I could be surprised by this, but with all the quacks and flat-earthers that have been in the news lately, I'm not. In a former life, Leonardo and I used to chat at the Dandolo Salon over some limoncello, read from the De Architectura, and then amuse ourselves by pointing out all the erroneous conclusions of the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius, especially his idea that the proportions of the human body model the cosmos. I eventually talked Leonardo into producing a drawing to illustrate this fallacy. Unfortunately, Leonardo suffered the fate of many creative geniuses: people took his satirical disproof of Vitruvius's claims as not only gospel truth of The Proportions of Man, but great mystical wisdom connecting human health with the Starry Wisdom of the Cosmos (Lovecraft must be shuddering in Eldritch Horror at this). My thoughts are that you may be using the wrong image: a printed edition of Leonardo's drawing with all the mistakes of reproduction, instead of the original drawing. These errors made during the various printings of the Vitruvian Man diagram are like DNA copying errors during human reproduction. So, by knowing the printing history of your copy of the drawing, you can deduce not only the health of a subject's organs, but their genetic history as well. This is of course complete nonsense, but since the original drawing is also, why not compound the absurdity? Your brother will naturally receive your comment as Great Wisdom and rush off to start a whole new area of Quacksalberei. Now, I am going to go do what I really think should be done—sample some layers of schnapps. Just be sure to send me royalties from your brother's profits.

Is your life getting all out of proportion? Contact Dear Abbe at jpshield@uga.edu and he will at least make it more entertaining!

MT

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