



# Secret Life of the Brewer's Yeast: A Microbiology Tale

*David G. Wooster Ph.D.*

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"Secret Life of the Brewer's Yeast" is told by Benjamin Ketchum, a microbiologist who lives in Montana and has just one year left to gain his tenure. Ben also recently lost his big anthrax grant so now he's forced to turn to the brewer's yeast, a microbe he knows virtually nothing about, just to keep his lab up & running. On a whim, the bacteriologist buys a ticket to Egypt - birthplace of perhaps the world's oldest civilization - where he learns all he can about the yeast's role in building the pyramids, as well as the history of brewing, baking, and winemaking. Next, Ben travels to a more recent example of a beer culture - Munich, Germany - where he learns the yeast's role in helping bring about Western civilization including the birth of lager beers & the field of biochemistry. Towards the end of the story, Ben attends a symposium in Seattle on the brewer's yeast, where he uncovers all the ways the yeast has been helping scientists accomplish such diverse tasks as manufacturing valuable human proteins like insulin, biofuels such as ethanol, finding clues about human aging, detecting poisonous gases in subway systems, and even gaining insight into the origins of cancer. This book is part one of "Cystic Fibrosis & the Brewer's Yeast", a 4-part novel.

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