

Ancestors and Astronomy to Scientists and Cancer

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Astronomy is the oldest science. Even records of the earliest cave paintings depict prehistoric humans gazing at the stars and tracking their positions. Across cultures, the interpretation of the darkness and its stars provided insight into all aspects of life and has guided humanity for thousands of years. Connections between what was seen looking up and how the world changed around them, derived into a reliance on the stars for navigation and as predictors of weather for agriculture.

In the field of cancer biology, instead of looking up for answers, we look down into a microscope. Like our ancestors, we look for signs as we gaze into the unknown. We look for patterns and connect these patterns to health and disease. The image is of a Melanoma tumor slice. With the advance of imaging technologies, we can see and track the position of cells (blue) and other structures within tissue such as blood vessels (red). In doing so, we hope to make a connection between what we see looking down and how these markers change when diseased. In a sense, imaging is our guide for navigating and predicting the unknowns of cancer.

