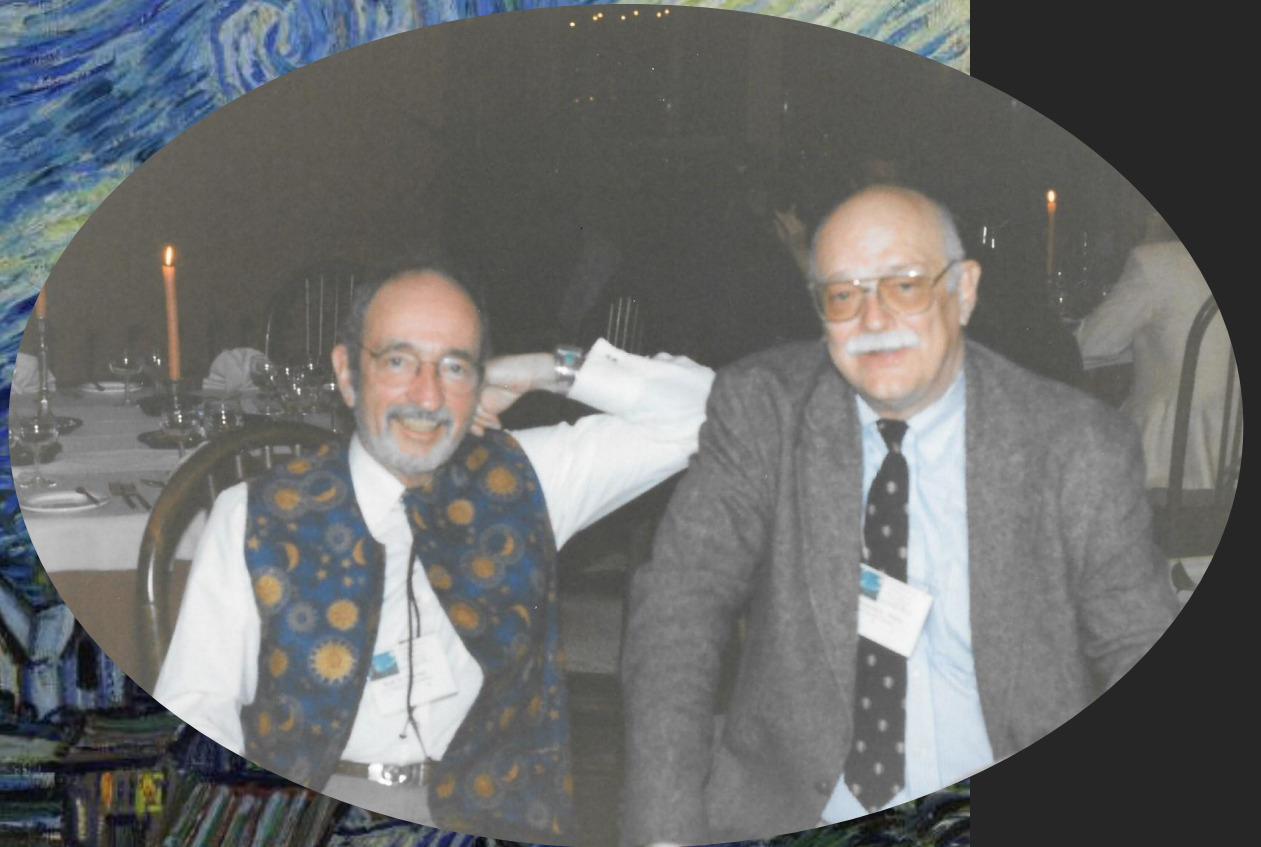



The image is a reproduction of the painting 'The Starry Night' by the Dutch Impressionist painter J.M.W. Turner. It depicts a coastal town at night, viewed from an elevated position. The sky is filled with a vibrant, swirling pattern of blues and yellows, representing a starry night. The stars are depicted as bright, glowing spheres with concentric circles around them. In the foreground, a dark, silhouetted cypress tree stands on the left. The town below is illuminated by warm, yellow lights from windows and a church spire. The overall style is characterized by visible, expressive brushstrokes and a rich, textured surface.

# Conferences on the Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena

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*If the stars should appear one  
night in a thousand years, how  
would men believe and adore! ...*

*But every night come out these envoys  
of beauty and light the universe with  
their admonishing smile.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1836



# Astronomy in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, (c. 1606)

- *These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us ... we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars (I, ii)*
- *It is the stars above that govern us (IV iii)*
- *Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world (III, ii)*



# Riddles in King *Lear*

- *The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.*

*Because they are not eight?*

- *Yes, indeed. (I,v)*



# Comets: good, bad?

