Abstract for an Invited Paper for the TSF09 Meeting of The American Physical Society

Van Gogh's Starry Nights, Lincoln's Moon, Shakespeare's Stars, and More: Tales of Astronomy in Art, History, and Literature DONALD OLSON, Texas State University - San Marcos

How do astronomical methods make it possible to calculate dates and times for Vincent van Gogh's night-sky paintings? Why is there a blood-red sky in Edvard Munch's The Scream? On what dates did Ansel Adams create his moonrise photographs in Yosemite? How can the 18.6-year cycle of the lunar nodes and the Moon's declination on the night of August 29-30, 1857, explain a long-standing mystery about Abraham Lincoln's honesty in the murder case known as the almanac trial? Why is a bright star described in Act 1, Scene 1, of Hamlet? To answer questions like these, our Texas State group has published a series of articles over the last two decades, applying astronomy to art, history, and literature.