7 September 2018

Dear Dr. Benham-Deal,

I write to apply for the position of director of the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research (WIHR). I am an associate professor in the departments of English and African American and Diaspora Studies. My areas of expertise are the literatures of the Americas during the 19th century, with a focus on democracy, labor, slavery, and the public humanities. I have a combination of qualifications that make me uniquely suited for this position. My research record and agenda are exemplary—in 2017, I received an Extraordinary Merit in Research Award from the College of Arts and Sciences. Furthermore, the content of my research is directly related to WIHR’s mission: among my current projects is a history of the public humanities at the Land Grant Universities and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities. My administrative experience, including my current position on the Board of Directors of the Wyoming Humanities Council and in the current class of Leadership Wyoming, shows that I can serve my communities effectively. I have the interpersonal skills to build relationships and to fundraise in conversation with a diverse set of constituencies. My work experience as a grant writer will be indispensable in the effort to increase UW’s rate of external funding. Most importantly, I am a product of the Land Grant University—its principles are central to my identity. This unique combination of qualifications defines my vision and will guide my work to grow and to diversify a sustainable institute. In what follows, I detail these qualifications and my plans for this position.

The WIHR directorship is an opportunity to put my research on democracy, cooperation, and the public humanities into action as a leader on campus, a model for peers, and a mentor for junior faculty and students. In 2017, I published a book titled *Direct Democracy: Collective Power, the Swarm, and the Literatures of the Americas* in the Caribbean Studies Series by the University Press of Mississippi. This book won the 2018 C. L. R. James Award for Best Published Book for Academic or General Audiences from the Working Class Studies Association. The book is a literary history of the collective power that I call direct democracy. I argue that this power is evident in the cooperation of enslaved people, women, and workers to resist exploitation. Building from this work, I have a current book project under contract, also with the University Press of Mississippi, titled *After the General Strike: Democracy and Labor Repression in the Long 19th Century*. The argument begins with a focus on what W. E. B. Du Bois, in *Black Reconstruction*, calls the “opportunity for real and new democracy” in the United States after the Civil War. Du Bois shows the problems and possibilities involved in building inclusive and diverse educational and cultural institutions. For me, Du Bois’s examples are more than history—they are ideas to guide how I will build an institute in which all of us, as participants in a democratic process, can develop our talents and skills to as great a degree as possible.

My other current book project, *Democracy’s Colleges: The Humanities and the Public University Mission from the 19th to the 21st Century*, has given me a thorough understanding of the history of public higher education and the place of the humanities on campus. For this project, I was nominated by WIHR for the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend competition. The funds from that award allowed me to collect materials at the Moreland Spingarn Research Center at Howard University and at the libraries at the University of Illinois during the summer of 2017. This project charts the history of the public humanities in the era before that phrase named a coherent field, and uncovers the often-hidden relationship between the Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the Land Grant Universities.
(These institutions were chartered by the Morrill Land-Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890, the second of which was specifically enacted to include people of color.) In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, these were among the primary institutions designed to educate a broader public. The book’s aim is to show a trajectory of how these institutions have collectively articulated their missions so that such a trajectory can guide us in our work. I presented initial results of this research at UW in a talk titled “The Humanities and the Land Grant University Mission from the 19th to the 21st Century,” which was co-sponsored by WIHR and the UW Office of the President. I delivered it while we were drafting our current strategic plan. This talk, which is available on WIHR’s YouTube channel, is perhaps the best example of my vision of what publicly-engaged humanities work could be.

That research on the public humanities and public engagement provides the vision for my proposal for WIHR’s future, which I have attached to this letter. The guiding principle of my proposal is to retool the institute so that it is an engine for producing scholarship and a leading center for interdisciplinary community on campus, in the state, and in the nation. Each element of this proposal is designed to build a broad, inclusive unit, increasing participation in new ways. The key component of the proposal is a system of faculty and graduate student fellowships in which awardees attend weekly Research Group meetings to workshop projects in progress. This proposal will multiply research production, which is vital to the university’s prominence, and it will strengthen efforts to meet Goal #1 of our Strategic Plan. It will also have a cascade of positive effects on metrics such as quality of teaching (Goal #2), extent of outreach (Goal #3), levels of external grant funding and campus morale (Goal #4). The institute’s reaffirmed commitment to community engagement and civic discourse will make it a showpiece on campus and an example of how the democratic principles of the Land Grant University mission can best be expressed in the 21st century.

My record of administration and service to the humanities community has prepared me for this role. I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Wyoming Humanities Council, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. In that capacity, I provide governance for the council and serve on its Grants Committee, helping to fund programs throughout the state. I was recently elected to a three-year term as president of the Working Class Studies Association, which is an international and interdisciplinary scholarly organization. I am a member of this year’s class of Leadership Wyoming. In this program, I am traveling the state, learning more about our civic, cultural, and economic institutions as well as meeting some of the state’s most involved citizens, including elected officials and members of the ENDOW committee, who will help to shape the state’s future paths. Such networks can help WIHR and the university engage more fully with people in our communities. Last year, I chaired WIHR’s program committee; as part of that work, I organized Dr. David Roediger’s visit to campus to give a keynote at the Shepard Symposium on Social Justice. In addition to engagement work like giving talks for the Saturday University program, I am a member of UW’s Public Humanities in Prison program, helping to provide instruction to the state’s incarcerated population. This project recently won a Major Grant from the Wyoming Humanities Council; in the upcoming year, I will travel to the Wyoming Honor Conservation Camp near Newcastle, a men’s minimum security facility, in order to teach a class titled “Contemporary Literature in Prison: Critical Reading and Thinking to Foster a Meaningful and Fulfilling Life.”

What I want most from my career is the challenge that comes with building something larger than myself, a community of scholars dedicated to advancing humanities research on and beyond our campus. I can be reached at <scott.henkel@uwyo.edu> or at (307) 399-7100. I look forward to speaking with you.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Scott Henkel
Goals for the Humanities Institute:

- To be an engine for producing research and a hub of interdisciplinary community
- To help UW achieve designation as a Carnegie Engaged Institution, through an emphasis on the Public Humanities and Land Grant ideals; to be a model of democratic education
- To strengthen ties with partners like Wyoming Humanities Council, Cooperative Extension, the Native American Education, Research, and Cultural Center, the American Heritage Center, Libraries, Art Museum, the ENDOW committee, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the American Council of Learned Societies. The strength of this network can improve the cultural landscape and artistic economy of the state and the region.

Initiatives for the Humanities Institute:

1) Inaugurate a Research Group (to meet UW Strategic Plan Goal #1)

For faculty and graduate students, one course release for one semester (fellowships granted on merit, but on rotation, to maximize participation), in exchange for which the fellow:

- Attends a weekly Research Group workshop in which fellows share work in progress and help other fellows move projects toward publication/exhibition/performance, and
- Credits the institute in the final version of the publication/exhibition/performance

2) Expand public engagement (SP Goals #2 and #3)

- Work with Wyoming Humanities Council, Cooperative Extension, and UW Engagement Task Force to expand statewide engagement
- Become a host site for a program such as the ACLS Public Fellows

3) Support faculty through fundraising, grant applications, and through hosting and promoting prominent events (SP Goal #4)

- With WIHR external board and UW Foundation, build a strategy for a sustainable future
- Train humanities faculty in grant writing to increase funding rate
- Continue annual UW faculty lecture partnership with the UW Office of the President

4) Coordinate a cluster hire in the Public Humanities (SP Goals #1 and #2)

- Grow the humanities faculty in ways that are diverse but coherent, spread as widely as possible across relevant departments

5) Obtain permanent space for Institute (SP Goals #1 and #4)

- Criteria for location: high visibility/traffic, near coffee/food, in the humanities corridor, with space for small and large meetings and offices for institute faculty
Budget

Fellowships:

- Faculty buyout for fellowship $120,000 ($6000 * 10 * 2 semesters)
- Graduate student buyout for fellowship $24,000 ($6,000 * 2 * 2 semesters)
- In kind support and stipends for ACLS Public Fellows $20,000 ($5,000 * 2 * 2 semesters)

Programming:

- Support for Research Group $10,000
- Administration (one ½ time staff/GA/grant admin.) $30,000
- Director stipend $15,000
- Annual fall WIHR distinguished invited lecture $40,000
- Annual spring WIHR distinguished invited lecture $40,000
- Annual WIHR faculty lecture $3000
- Additional programming for campus initiatives/cosponsorships $50,000
- Subvention funds for faculty authors $10,000
- Small grants for campus working groups $10,000

Grants to faculty and graduate students:

- WIHR Research Grant (travel, equipment) $24,000 (4 * $3000 * 2 semesters)
- WIHR/NEH Summer Stipend $12,000 (2 yearly)*

Total $408,000

* If unfunded by NEH, these funds come from WIHR

Notes:

In the near future, most funds must come from university sources. In subsequent years, WIHR budget should come from a mix of university direct support, philanthropy, and external grant support. Immediately after taking office, and in preparation for the next university capital campaign, the director will convene a conversation with the external advisory board and the UW Foundation in order to design a gift table to use as the guiding document for our fundraising efforts. The ultimate goal is to have an institute that has a broad base of support from all its constituencies as well as an endowment that makes the institute not only self-sufficient, but also able to meet the needs of those constituencies.

As called for by the position advertisement, immediately after taking office the director will convene a widely-inclusive conversation in order to formulate a process for the election of an internal advisory board that is representative of all faculty who define their research and teaching as motivated by humanities-related principles.
Dr. Scott Henkel  
Departments of English and African American and Diaspora Studies  
University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY 82070  
https://uwyo.academia.edu/ScottHenkel  
scott.henkel@uwyo.edu

EDUCATION

Dissertation: “Leaves of Grassroots Politics: Democracy, the Swarm, and the Literatures of the Americas”; Committee: Scott Michaelsen (director), Ellen McCallum, Salah Hassan, and Zarena Aslami

MA English, Creative Writing, *Ohio University*, 2000  
Thesis: “Us”; Director: Darrell Spencer

BA English and Education, *Western Michigan University*, 1997

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Literatures of the Americas in the long 19th century; Transnational American Studies; Democracy, Labor, and Slavery; Globalization, Critical Theory, Political Movements, Free Speech, Complex Systems

FACULTY POSITIONS

Associate Professor, Departments of English and African American and Diaspora Studies *University of Wyoming* (2018-present)

Assistant Professor, Departments of English and African American and Diaspora Studies *University of Wyoming* (2015-18)

Assistant Professor, Department of English, General Literature, and Rhetoric *Binghamton University, State University of New York* (2008-15)

Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of English, General Literature, and Rhetoric *Binghamton University, State University of New York* (2007-8)

Adjunct Professor, University Writing Program *University of Notre Dame* (2004-7)

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs


Democracy’s Colleges: The Humanities and the Public University Mission from the 19th to the 21st Century. In progress.

Articles


Book Reviews and Encyclopedia Articles


**Essays in Progress**

Edson, Michael and Scott Henkel. “Premodernism, Solidarity, and Solitude in Austin Reed’s *The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict*.” Currently in peer review at *American Literary History*.


Henkel, Scott and Justin Rogers-Cooper. “Riots as Policing in Chesnutt’s *The Marrow of Tradition* and Ida B. Wells’ Anti-Lynching Journalism.”

Obert, Julia, and Scott Henkel. “Labor and Desire in George Lamming’s *In the Castle of My Skin*.” In progress; research conducted at the West Indies Special Collection and the George Lamming Special Collection in the library of The University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, Barbados, during January 2018.

**AWARDS**

C. L. R. James Award for Best Published Book for Academic or General Audiences from the Working Class Studies Association (for *Direct Democracy*, 2018)
Extraordinary Merit in Research Award, University of Wyoming College of Arts and Sciences (2017)
Paper Prize for “‘There are 2,000 Leaders’: Swarm Democracy in the Haitian Revolution” given by the Irmgard Coninx Foundation and the Social Science Research Center, Berlin, Germany (Fall 2012)
Nominee, Michigan State University CISAH Somers Teaching Award (2002)
Honorable Mention, Ohio University Teaching Associate Award (2000)
First Place Award, Excellence in Journalism Competition, Detroit Press Foundation (1996)

**FUNDED RESEARCH**

University of Wyoming/Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research Junior Faculty Nominee to the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend Competition (2017)
Basic Research Grant, University of Wyoming College of Arts and Sciences (2017)
Caitlin Long Excellence Grant, University of Wyoming College of Arts and Sciences (2016)
Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, Binghamton University (awarded Spring 2011, Spring 2012, and Fall 2012)
Recipient, Harpur College Dean’s Research Semester award (Spring 2012)
Recipient, Francis X. Newman Research Grant for travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina and Santiago, Chile, for book research (January 2009)
Recipient, Individual Development Award from the United University Professions/State University of New York Joint Labor/Management Committee to defray costs associated with travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina and Santiago, Chile for book research (January 2009)
Research Fellow, Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies (Spring 2001)
Recipient, John Houk Memorial Research Grant for travel to the northern California gold country and the Bancroft library, University of California at Berkeley, to conduct thesis research (awarded Summer 1999)

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC TALKS

“The Emerging Field of Working Class Studies: A Roundtable” accepted for presentation to the American Studies Association, November 2018.


“Fictions of Development in Lucy Pickens’ The Free Flag of Cuba” presented to the Caribbean Studies Association, Nassau, Bahamas, 5-10 June 2017.

“The Black Worker and the Class Struggle in Black Reconstruction” presented to the Working Class Studies Association Bloomington, IN, 31 May-3 June 2017.

Chair/Respondant for “Socialism and ‘Other’ Revolutions of the 20th Century” at the Working Class Studies Association Bloomington, IN, 31 May-3 June 2017.


“Proslavery Fictions of Management in David Walker’s Appeal” Fictions of Management conference, Freie Universität, Berlin, Germany. 8-10 December 2016


With Justin Rogers-Cooper, “Riots as Policing in Charles Chesnutt’s The Marrow of Tradition.” American Studies Association conference, Denver, CO. 17-20 November 2016


“There are 2,000 Leaders’: Swarm Democracy in the Haitian Revolution” delivered to the 19th Annual Berlin Roundtables on Transnationality, Berlin, Germany, 17-20 October 2012.

“Free Speech and Cooperation in Salt of the Earth” Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, Binghamton University, 10 October 2012.


“Sedition and the Slave Narrative” Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, Binghamton University, 30 March 2011.

“A Compassionate Act: Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, and the Attentat” delivered at the Midwest Modern Language Association Conference, Chicago, IL, 4 November 2010 (paper co-written with H. Louise Davis, Miami University, Ohio).


“Leaves of Grassroots Politics: Complex Systems and Literary Study” delivered to the English Department Junior Faculty Colloquium, 24 March 2010.


“Aiming an Arrow at Achilles: Complex Systems and Literary Scholarship” given on 4 March 2009 to the Collective Dynamics of Complex Systems Research Group at Binghamton University.

“Literature and Political Movements” Opening Plenary talk given at the 2008 State University of New York Social Justice Conference.


“The Leaves of Grassroots Politics: Whitman, Carlyle, and Democratization” given at the 2006 Purdue University Globalization and Resistance Conference.

“Working Conditions = Learning Conditions: Graduate Employee Unions and the Quality of Higher Education” given at the 2004 Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), San Antonio, Texas.

“Mark Twain’s Political Popularity” given at the 2002 Popular Culture Association and American Culture Association Conference (PCA/ACA), Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

“Mark Twain and the Culture Industry” given at the 2001 Modern Languages Association Conference (MLA), New Orleans, Louisiana.

“My Grandmother Said That’: Literary Works and Their Folk Influences” given at the 2001 Blue Ridge International Conference on the Humanities and Arts (BRICHA), Boone, North Carolina.

“Addendum To A Suicide Note: Huck and Ruth’s Meditations on Stillness and Death” given at the 1999 Comparative Literature Conference at the University of Western Ontario, Canada.
LANGUAGES

Spanish (proficiency in reading and speaking), French (proficiency in reading and speaking), German (novice proficiency in reading and speaking)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Wyoming (2015-present)
Departments of English and African American and Diaspora Studies

ENGL 2020: The Literature of Equality
ENGL 2435, Literature in English III: Banned Books and Stories Not Told
ENGL2350/AAST 2350: Introduction to African American Literature
ENGL 4640/AAST 4990: Slavery and Resistance in the Americas
ENGL 4640/AAST 4990/ENGL 5600: Democracy in the Literatures of the Americas
ENGL 4640/AAST 4990: The Literature of Social Justice
ENGL 4990: Senior Seminar, A Better World is Possible

State University of New York at Binghamton (2007-15)
Department of English, General Literature, and Rhetoric

ENG 270: Liberty and Authority in American Literature
ENG 370 (undergraduate) and 572 (graduate): Democracy and the Literatures of the Americas
ENG 450: Literature of Global Political Movements
ENG 450: The Literature of Labor
ENG 450: Slavery and Resistance in the Americas
ENG 450 (undergraduate) and 572 (graduate): American Radicalism
ENG 450, cross listed with Latin American and Caribbean Studies 480: Zoot Suit Riots: Chicano and Chicana Literature
ENG 498: English Department Honors Seminar

University of Notre Dame (2004-7)
University Writing Program

FYC 13090: Introduction to Academic Writing and Research
FYC 110: First Year Composition: Democracy in America
FYC 13300: Multimedia First Year Composition: Free Speech and Censorship

Michigan State University (2000-4)
Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures

WRA 1005: Preparation for College Writing
WRA 125: The American Ethnic and Racial Experience (Special Topics in Composition)

Department of English

ENG 101: Cross Cultural Literature: The Literatures of Globalization
ENG 232: Writing as Exploration: Writing Human Rights
ENG 232: Writing as Exploration: Exploring Democracy in America 2004

Michigan State University College of Law

RWA I: Research, Writing, and Advocacy: First Year Law Writing Skills Workshop

Center for Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities

IAH 201: The United States and the World

Ohio University (1998-2000)
Department of English

ENG 151: Rhetoric and Writing
ENG 200: Introduction to Literature
ENG 201: Critical Approaches to Fiction

UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

President-Elect, Working Class Studies Association (2018-19); [President, 2019-20; Past President, 2020-21]
Leadership Wyoming (2018-19)
Board of Directors, Wyoming Humanities Council (2017-present)
Steering Committee, Working Class Studies Association (2016-present)
Director, University of Wyoming Department of English Honors Program (2016-2018)
Chair, Program Committee of the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research (2017-18)
Member, LL Smith Distinguished Speaker Committee, Department of English, University of Wyoming (2017-present)
Board Member, Higgins Labor Research Center, University of Notre Dame (2004-present)
Board of Directors, Cornell Cooperative Extension (2011-13)
Faculty Advisor, Binghamton University Peace Action (2012-13)
Director, English Department Honors Program (2009-10)
Senator, Binghamton University Faculty Senate (2009-11)
Affiliate Faculty Member, Collective Dynamics of Complex Systems Research Group, Binghamton University (2008-present)
Affiliate Faculty Member, Democracy and Humanities Research Group, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, SUNY Binghamton, (2009-10)
Member, Binghamton University Library Committee, (2012-14)
Member, Binghamton University English Department 19th c. Hiring Committee (2011-12)
Member, Binghamton University Faculty Senate Committee on Committees (2008-10)
Member, Binghamton University English Department Salary Committee, (2009-10)
Member, Binghamton University English Department Undergraduate Committee (2008-9)
Member, Binghamton University English Department 18th c. Hiring Committee (2008-9)
Steering Committee Member, Binghamton for Obama (Summer/Fall 2008)
Faculty Advisor, Amnesty International—University of Notre Dame (2005-2007)
Volunteer Reader, Librivox.org (2005-2010)
Faculty Mentor, University of Notre Dame Writing Program (2005-6)
Member, St. Joseph Valley Project, Jobs with Justice (2004-2007)
American Federation of Teachers Representative, Internal Revenue Service hearings regarding changes to the Federal Income Contributions Act, Washington, DC 16 June 2004
President, Graduate Employees Union, Michigan State University (2002-2004)
Additional Offices: Steering Committee, Grievance Committee Co-Chair, CISAH
Department Steward

MEMBERSHIPS

Working Class Studies Association
Caribbean Studies Association
American Studies Association
Modern Languages Association
Rocky Mountain Modern Languages Association
Labor and Working Class History Association

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Advisor to the family of Dr. Sue Eakin, the historian who performed much of the work to recover Solomon Northup's narrative, *Twelve Years a Slave*, from obscurity. Currently I am helping to distribute Dr. Eakin's materials to research centers, libraries, and museums. I have thus far placed material at the International Slavery Museum, Liverpool, England; the Gilder Lehrman Center, Yale University; the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio; and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture at the New York Public Library.
Editorial Collective member, *Journal of Working Class Studies*.
Peer reviewer for the University of Alabama Press and the *Rocky Mountain Review* (the journal of the Rocky Mountain Modern Languages Association).
Editor, *Quarter After Eight* magazine, Athens, Ohio. Read and evaluated manuscripts for publication; wrote grants for the organization. (1999-2000)
Research Assistant, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Western Michigan University. Served the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Education, Fine Arts, and Health and Human Services in the search for federal, state and local government funding to promote education and social services research and technical assistance; wrote and proofread grants. (1997-1998)

*References from faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students available upon request.*