

Curriculum Vitae

Darold Leigh Henson, PhD

Professor Emeritus of English
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Note: Some links may require you to copy and paste them into a browser window.

RETIREMENT GOALS

Research and publication about Abraham Lincoln's rhetorical growth, the Lincoln heritage of central Illinois, and the social-cultural history and literature of Illinois. Public service projects to expand, refine, preserve, and promote the Lincoln heritage of his first namesake town and Logan County, Illinois.

Continued development of the award-winning community history of the first Lincoln namesake town: *Mr. Lincoln, Route 66, and Other Highlights of Lincoln, Illinois*:
<http://findinglincolnillinois.com>.

EDUCATION

PhD in English Studies, Illinois State University (1982), with emphasis on the theory, practice, and teaching of technical communication. Dissertation: "A Data-Based Pedagogy of Rhetoric for Lower-Division Technical Writing." Dissertation chairman and mentor Dr. Stan Renner.

MS in English, Illinois State University (1969). Thesis: "Treatment of the Negro in Wolfe and Faulkner."

BS in English, Illinois State University (1964).

Freshman year at Lincoln College (1960-1961).

CORE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Instructional design and teaching. Research using the Internet and commercial databases, interviewing, and the ability to combine qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Analyzing and evaluating academic and business documents. Experienced in designing various kinds of documents, including ads, books, brochures, instruction manuals, policy and procedure manuals, proposals, technical reports, and websites. Data graphics design. Writing and editing that includes coordinating text and graphics. Consulting for better communication in business, industry, nonprofits, government, and education.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Online teaching of technical communication at Missouri State University (2006–2008).

Professor emeritus of English at Missouri State University (2006).

Tenured full professor of English (2005–2006).

Tenured associate professor of English, Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, MO 65804 (1999–2004).

Assistant professor of English, Southwest Missouri State University (1994–1999); Member of the Graduate Faculty since 1996. Mentored and befriended by Dr. Kristene Sutliff, founder and coordinator of the MSU professional/technical writing undergraduate and graduate programs and fellow of the Society for Technical Communication.

Teacher of English, Pekin Community High School, Pekin, IL 61554 (1964–1994).

Part-time instructor, Illinois Central College, East Peoria, IL 61635 (1972–1976).

Doctoral intern, Illinois State University (1978). Designed and taught a course in freshman composition with emphasis on literature and composition relating to the workplace.

SCHOLARSHIP

Note: My formal education in the liberal arts as well as professional and personal experiences have enabled me to research, write about, and publish on a wide range of subjects of interest to academic and popular reading audiences: the theory, practice, and pedagogy of technical and marketing communication; rhetoric and composition; the pedagogy of literature; Illinois history, local history, and family history, including reminiscence; selected, autobiographical fiction of William Maxwell; and the rhetoric of Abraham Lincoln. Some publications are listed in WorldCat, the world's largest online catalog:

http://www.worldcat.org/search?qt=worldcat_org_all&q=%22Leigh+Henson%22.

Publications

Lincoln's Rise to Eloquence: How He Gained the Presidential Nomination. A rhetorical/textual analysis of more than sixty major and several minor compositions (speeches and other writings) from Lincoln's two, prepresidential political careers to tell the story of his rhetorical achievements and growth. From the University of Illinois Press (2024). Of 16,000+ books on Abraham Lincoln, the only rhetorical biography to date.

<https://www.press.uillinois.edu/books/?id=p088032>

“Where and How Lincoln Composed His Main Works,” *Lincoln Lore* No. 1936 (Winter 2022), 14–19. *Lincoln Lore* is the peer-reviewed, four-color journal of the Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana, Fort Wayne.

“Analyzing Lincoln's Language with Readability Formulas: A Footnote to Studies of His Rhetoric”: a research-based technical report that takes a fresh approach to nearly 300,000 words of Abraham Lincoln's most important compositions (speeches and other writings) covering his two political careers and presidency. *The Lincoln Herald* 123, Nos. 1–2 (Spring/Summer 2021), 3–25. *The Lincoln Herald* is the peer-reviewed journal of the

Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum at Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee.

The Real Estate Empire of the John Dean Gillett Family of Elkhart, Illinois; the Gillett Great Estate Trial of 1904 at Lincoln, Illinois; and Gillett History to the Present (2019). (a pictorial, research-based website, featuring images of rare sources and designed for printing and binding): <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/johndeangilletteempire-2.html>.

Pictorial, research-based essay and public affairs proposal (2017): “The Five Lincoln Memorial Trees of Bloomington-Normal, Illinois, 1850s to the Present and a Proposal for Illinois State University to Advance its Commemoration of the Lincoln Legacy”: <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/lincolntreesbloomington-normal-3.html>.

Book: *Inventing Lincoln: Approaches to His Rhetoric* (May 2017): <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/inventinglincoln.html>.

“Classical Rhetoric as a Lens for Reading the Speeches of Lincoln’s Political Rise, 1852–1856.” *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 35, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 1–25.

Public affairs proposal: “The Lincoln Statues of His First Namesake City and a Long-Range Plan to Brand It as the Second City of Lincoln Statues”: <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/lincolnstatueplan.html> (2013).

Book: *The Town Abraham Lincoln Warned: The Living Namesake Heritage of Lincoln, Illinois* (2011, 240 pages): <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/townabewarned.html>.

“Max Bachman's Lincolns,” a 2,000-word pictorial essay (2010). Max Bachman (1862–1921) was an architectural stone carver and sculptor of Abraham Lincoln busts and statues. Bachman sculpted the Lincoln statue in the rotunda of the Logan County, Illinois, Courthouse: <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/abestatueplan/BachmansLincolns12-12.pdf>.

“Lincoln at Lincoln: Abraham Lincoln Rallies Logan County, Illinois, in His First Namesake Town on October 16, 1858,” the Lincoln Bicentennial (double) issue of the *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (refereed) (101, 3–4 fall/winter, 2009: 356–392). This 13,500-word article describes the research used to create a one-act play about one of Abraham Lincoln's political rallies and stump speeches, and the play was written for the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission of Lincoln, Illinois, for its re-enactment of this historic event on October 16, 2008 (the sesquicentennial anniversary of this rally-speech). This project required a combination of research and creative writing because no full text of one of Lincoln's stump speeches has ever been found, and newspaper accounts of those kinds of speeches tend to be brief. The play re-enactment was part of the Illinois bicentennial celebration of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. More information about this historical play is available at <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/abes200th-lincoln.html>.

“Lincoln at 100 at Lincoln: The Abraham Lincoln Centennial Celebration (1909) in His First Namesake Town” (2009). A study of the planners, honorees, other special guests, and speakers at this event provides insight into the social structure, local Abraham Lincoln heritage, and other cultural elements of this small Midwestern town at the beginning of the 20th century. Cited in the WorldCat database (the world's largest library catalog):

http://www.worldcat.org/title/lincoln-at-100-at-lincoln-the-abraham-lincoln-centennial-celebration-1909-in-his-first-namesake-town/oclc/317883669&referer=brief_results.

“Peeking Behind the Wizard’s Screen: William Maxwell’s Literary Art as Revealed by a Study of the Black Characters in *Billie Dyer and Other Stories*” (2006). A critical examination of the black characters in Maxwell’s last book, with emphasis on the limitations of his sources and character portrayal. Cited in the *Annual Bibliography of Midwestern Literature, 2006*, and the WorldCat database (the world’s largest library catalog):

http://www.worldcat.org/title/peeking-behind-the-wizards-screen-william-maxwells-literary-art-as-revealed-by-a-study-of-the-black-characters-in-billie-dyer-and-other-stories/oclc/301323838&referer=brief_results.

Review of Burkhardt, Barbara. *William Maxwell: A Literary Life*. Champaign, IL: The University of Illinois Press, 2005. Invited by the *Journal of Illinois History*, a refereed publication of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Springfield, IL. Review published in the spring, 2006, issue (Vol. 9, No. 1: 72–74). Access review at <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/williammaxwellreview.html>.

“Using the Internet as a Tool for Public Service: Creating a Community History Web Site.” *The Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, Vol. 35(1) 71–94, 2005. (refereed; 10,000 words; 37 sources).

“Social Consciousness in William Maxwell’s Writings Based on Lincoln, Illinois.” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (refereed) (98.4, winter, 2005/2006: 254–286). 13,000 words, 36 sources, including analysis of 16 primary sources of William Maxwell based on Lincoln, Illinois: 11 short stories, 4 novels, and a nonfiction book of family history. Cited in the *Annual Bibliography of Midwestern Literature, 2006*. Full text available at <http://findinglincolnillinois.com/wmmaxwellsocialclasses.html>.

Mr. Lincoln, Route 66, & Other Highlights of Lincoln, Illinois (2003–present): <http://findinglincolnillinois.com>. An innovative, research-based, and massive community history Web site created as a “distance” public service project in support of the Missouri State University public affairs mission. The homepage of this Web site explains the site’s connection to the Missouri State University public affairs mission. Refereed and in 2004 awarded “Best Web Site of the Year” by the Illinois State Historical Society (ISHS) for “superior achievement: serves as a model for the profession and reaches a greater public”).

“Teach Local Authors: Considering the Literature of Lincoln, Illinois.” *Illinois English Bulletin (IEB)*, spring, 2005 (92.2): 81–103. The *IEB* is the main journal of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English (IATE). (5,600 words; 34 sources).

“A Service Learning Approach to Business and Technical Writing Instruction.” *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*. 28.2 (1998): 189–205. (refereed). (with Dr. Kristene Sutliff: 50% hers, 50% mine).

“Technical Communication and Service Learning: Goals and Guidelines.” *Society for Technical Communication 45th Annual Conference 1998 Proceedings*. Arlington, VA: STC, 1998: 44–46. (with Dr. Kristene Sutliff: 50% hers, 50% mine).

“Why and How to Advance Technical Copywriting.” *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* 26.2 (1996): 193–209. (refereed).

Unsolicited review of *Writing High-Tech Copy That Sells*. Janice M. King. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995. In *Technical Communication Quarterly* 4.4 (fall, 1995): 432–433. (unsolicited reviews ordinarily not accepted).

“A Preliminary Rhetoric of Technical Copywriting.” *Technical Communication* 41.3 (1994): 447–455. (refereed). This article was the only source cited in an introduction to a special section on marketing communication published in the May, 1995, issue of *Technical Communication*.

“Preparing Students to Write in Major-Field Courses: A Faculty Questionnaire for Data-Based Instructional Design.” *Technical Writing Teacher* (Winter, 1987): 108–110. (refereed).

“Using Original Surveys to Promote Thinking in Library Research Projects.” *Illinois English Bulletin* 73.3 (1986): 20–26. (refereed).

“Discovering Theme Through Writing: A Response-Oriented Approach to ‘The Lottery’.” *Illinois English Bulletin* 72.3 (1985): 30–38. (refereed). (This issue of the *IEB* has been offered as a publication of the National Council of Teachers of English and was featured for sale at the 1992 NCTE Annual Convention.).

“Identifying Effective Writing Exercises for Lower-Division Technical Writing Courses.” *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* 14 (1984): 307–316. (refereed).

“A Note on the Status of Lower-Division Technical Writing.” *Technical Writing Teacher* 11 (1984): 89–93. (refereed).

COURSES DESIGNED AND TAUGHT AT MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

English 321, Writing II: Beginning Technical Writing (1994–2008). Sample [course policy/syllabus](#) (online version, 2008) (PDF). Related [research worksheet](#) (PDF).

English 675, Designing Technical Documents (fall, 1996; fall, 1997; spring, 1999 to spring, 2006). *Note*: 600-level courses are graduate courses in Missouri State University's Master of Arts in Writing program. Sample [course policy/syllabus](#) (PDF).

English 626, Issues in Professional/Technical Writing, Web Site Design and Development (fall, 2001; fall, 2004).

English 600, Problems and Methods of Research in Professional/Technical Communication (fall, 1999).

English 626, Issues in Rhetoric/Professional Writing (technical copywriting) (spring, 1997).

English 421, Advanced Technical Writing (spring, 1996).

English 377, Scientific and Technical Editing (fall, 1995).

MASTER'S THESES DIRECTED

Primary advisor for "Creating an Introductory-Level Online Technical Report Writing Course for a Two-Year Community College" by Latonia Bailey (144 pages, 2000).

Primary advisor for "A Survey of White Papers" by Edward Thompson (2008).

Secondary advisor for "A Framework for Developing a Single-Source Online Help System for Multiple Products" by Andre Evans (2000).

SELECTED SEMINAR (DEGREE) PAPERS FACILITATED

"Document Design Guidelines for Newsletters" by Sarah Nord (2004).

"Color in Web Design" by Tom Richardson (2003).

"Ethical Issues in Technical Communication: Creativity vs. Conscience" by Jill Canady (1999).

"Marketing Activities and Materials at Positronics Industries, Inc." by Laura Massey (1999).

AWARDS AND HONORS

2025 Award of Certificate of Excellence from the Illinois State Historical Society for *Lincoln's Rise to Eloquence: How He Gained the Presidential Nomination*:
<https://www.press.uillinois.edu/books/?id=p088032>.

2020 Award of Certificate of Excellence from the Illinois State Historical Society for the website-book *The Real Estate Empire of the John Dean Gillett Family of Elkhart, Illinois; the Gillett Great Estate Trial of 1904 at Lincoln, Illinois; and Gillett History to the Present*: <https://findinglincolnillinois.com/johndeangilletteempire-2.html>.

Distinguished Alumni Award from the English Department of Illinois State University (2019).

A Most Distinguished Alumnus of the Lincoln Elementary Schools, Lincoln, Illinois (2013).

Award of Superior Achievement from the Illinois State Historical Society for the book *The Town Abraham Lincoln Warned: The Living Namesake Heritage of Lincoln, Illinois* (2012).

[Membership in the Society of Midland Authors](#) (membership by invitation only from the Society's Board of Directors, 2012).

[Membership in the Illinois Center for the Book](#), affiliated with the Library of Congress (2011).

Award from Main Street Lincoln, Illinois, Looking for Lincoln Committee (heritage tourism group) for "preserving and promoting the history of Logan County, Illinois" (2009).

Honorary and contributing member of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission of Lincoln, Illinois. Developed the playscript for a two-hour reenactment of an 1858 Republican rally featuring a stump speech by Abraham Lincoln. See above under publications: "Lincoln at Lincoln: Abraham Lincoln Rallies Logan County, Illinois, in His First Namesake Town on October 16, 1858" (2008).

“Best Website of the Year” awarded for a collaborative, community history website of Lincoln, Illinois, by the Illinois State Historical Society (spring, 2004). (See Scholarship above.).

Sabbatical received from Southwest Missouri State University (fall, 2003).

SELECTED SERVICE TO MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

Member of the technical writing faculty, assisting the coordinator of technical writing with strategies to promote the program, including development of a technical writing Web page (1994–2006).

Member of several search committees for assistant professors and lecturers of technical writing (1997–2006).

Member of search committees for Distributed User Support Specialist (DUSS) (Department of English Computer Lab Supervisor) (fall, 1995; spring, 2004).

COAL representative to the Graduate Council (fall, 2000).

Member of the Graduate Committee, Department of English (1996–2006).

Member of the Technology Committee, Department of English (1994–2006).

SERVICE TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION CONCERNED WITH TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Advocate who nominated Dr. Kris Sutliff as Associate Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication (STC). Application included narrative report and letters solicited from colleagues as well as former professors and students. (Dr. Sutliff was unanimously approved for this honor by both the Nominating Committee and the STC Board of Directors [January, 1997]).

Advocate who wrote letters recommending Dr. Kristene Sutliff for STC’s Jay R. Gould Award for excellence in mentoring and teaching technical communication (1997 and 1998).

Participated in research on the grading of technical writing. Research conducted by faculty at the University of Memphis (summer, 1995).

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Research and development of the award-winning, book-length community history Web site for Lincoln, Illinois (approximately 4,000 hours combining scholarship and public service from 2002 to the present; see Scholarship above).

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS WORK, PROFESSIONAL WRITING, AND EDITING (1984–1993)

Consulting in Corporate Communication

Marketing consultant to R.A.N. Consultants, Inc., 3647 Meadowbrook Road, Peoria, IL 61604. R.A.N. is a civil, municipal, and structural engineering firm. R.A.N. also performs land surveying. *Note:* Developed marketing strategy, telemarketed, and wrote promotional

letters for lead generation. Designed, wrote, and desktop published list of completed projects and business reply card.

Writing Consultant presenting an 18-hour writing workshop at the World Headquarters of Caterpillar Inc., Peoria, IL 61629 (fall, 1986).

Marketing and technical communication consultant to *Techcom, Inc., and *Triad Equipment Corporation, both of 110 Queenwood Rd., Morton, IL (61550). Techcom designed off-highway vehicles and components. This company also occasionally developed service publications relating to construction equipment. These companies were superseded by Paul Wever Construction Equipment (PWCE), which continued to use my consulting and writing services. *Note:* Tutored technical writers at Techcom. Designed, wrote, and edited corporate communications.

Management Experience

One of three founding partners of Technical Publication Associates, Inc. (1990–1993) 112 Queenwood Rd., Morton, IL 61550. Responsibilities included marketing strategy and execution, client contact, determining fee schedules, and writing and editing various materials for clients. TPA has gained repeat business from small and large companies.

Vice President of Communications at Techcom, Inc. (1986–1989). Developed marketing strategy and materials, including proposals, technical reports, and corporate brochures.

Professional/Technical Copywriting and Editing (The asterisk denotes clients who offered repeat business.)

Ads

- Client: *Paul Wever Construction Equipment. *Note:* Created lead-generation ads in trade magazines.
- Client: *Technical Publication Associates, Inc., P.O. Box 5333, Morton, IL, 61550. TPA, Inc., is an agency providing technical writing, copywriting, illustration, consulting, and editing services to manufacturers of industrial and high-tech products. *Note:* Wrote small ads promoting creative services in *Adweek* and *Interbusiness Issues* magazines.

Catalog Copy

- Client: American Media Inc., 1454 30th St., West Des Moines, IA 50265. American Media produces training films and videos for business and industry.

Concept Work

- Client: Robert Brandt & Associates, Inc., 806 York Road, Hinsdale, IL 60521. Robert Brandt & Associates is a marketing communications agency. Provided background for ad strategies targeting several industries.

Corporate Capabilities Brochures

- Client: American Financial Security Corporation, 827 East War Memorial Drive, Peoria Heights, IL 61614 American Financial is one of the Midwest's largest credit insurance agencies.

- Client: Techcom, Inc.

Instructional Materials

- Client: Caterpillar Inc., 100 N.E. Adams St., Peoria, IL 61602. *Note:* Designed writing workshop, wrote instructional materials, and delivered instruction for writing on the job.
- Client: *Caterpillar Inc. Service Technology Group, 600 W. Washington St., East Peoria, IL 61630. *Note:* Edited *Operator's Manual for Hydraulic Components' Test Bench*.
- Client: Caterpillar Inc. Technical Information Center, Bld., East Peoria, IL 61630-037. *Note:* Edited *Guidelines for Reusable Parts and Salvage Operations*.
- Client: Techcom, Inc. *Note:* Edited instructions for installing steel-belted, track-carrier roller modification on Caterpillar 963 track loader. Developed instructional manual on how to write service publications. Designed and edited instructions for installing auxiliary fuel tank on track loader. Designed and edited operator's and maintenance manual for crane attaching to backhoes.
- Client: Rhino Robots, Inc., 308 S. State St., P.O. Box 4010, Champaign, IL 61820. *Note:* Designed and edited workbook for training students to use a computer numerically controlled lathe.
- Client: Kobelco America, Inc., 10515 Harwin, Houston, TX 77036. *Note:* Edited operator's manual for use with a hydraulic excavator.

Press Releases

- Client: *Triad Equipment Corporation. *Note:* Wrote press release promoting crane attaching to backhoes. Release helped generate feature stories in *Equipment Today* (April, 1990) and *Construction Equipment* (May, 1990). Wrote press release promoting crane attaching to backhoes.
- Client: Paul Wever Construction Equipment.

Product Brochures and Flyers

- Client: Triad Equipment Corporation. *Note:* Designed and wrote brochure on imported down-sized dumpers.
- Client: *Komatsu Dresser Company, Haulpak Division, P.O. Box 240, Peoria, IL 61650-0240. *Note:* Designed and wrote flyers to promote special service technology products to end users. Co-authored new product announcements sent to distributors.
- Client: Caterpillar, Inc., Service Technology Group, 600 W. Washington St., LD 180, East Peoria, IL 61630. *Note:* Co-authored brochure promoting computerized engine diagnostic tool.

Proposals, Letters of Agreement, and Technical Reports

- Client: *Techcom, Inc. *Note:* Designed, wrote, and/or edited numerous documents, including a two-volume report to the Italian Trade Commission. This study was

concerned with the technical and marketing feasibility of introducing Italian construction equipment into North America.

Sales Promotion Letters

- Client: Paul Wever Construction Equipment (lead generation).
- Clients: Techcom, Inc., and the Triad Equipment Corporation (lead generation and mail order).
- Client: American Media Incorporated (mail order.)
- Client: R.A.N. Consultants, 3647 Meadowbrook Road, Peoria, IL 61604 (lead generation).

Videotape

- Client: Paul Wever Construction Equipment. *Note:* Edited and narrated a script for promoting an excavator stick attachment.

Other Sales Promotion Material

- Client: Two-Fold Associates, 1928 Grandview Terrace, Peoria Heights, IL 61614. Two-Fold is a writing agency specializing in construction equipment. *Note:* Wrote material emphasizing gear technology.

*Designates clients offering repeat business.

MEMBERSHIPS

Society of Midland Authors (2012–present).

Abraham Lincoln Association (2011–present).

Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (1985–2005).

Illinois Association of Teachers of English (2004–2011).

Illinois State Historical Society (2004–present).

Society for Technical Communication (senior member, 1990–2008).

Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature (2008–2012).

SOCIAL MEDIA

Bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/aberhetician.bsky.social>.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/leigh.henson>.

LinkedIn: <http://la.linkedin.com/pub/d-leigh-henson/16/1a5/923>.

X: @DLeighHenson1.