

Proposal Narrative & Vitae Summary
Ariel Beaujot
***Hear Here* Phase II: Analyzing the Voices of La Crosse**

1-Statement of the Problem/Significance of the project:

Problem: social history and economic development

The *Hear, Here* project is attempting to address two problems that will be analyzed in Phase II, the subject of this grant:

- 1) The history of our town focuses not on the social history of our diverse citizenry but on the successful European men who made their fortunes here.
- 2) The historic downtown district is flanked by arts and culture venues, but there is little historic content in the core.

1) The history of our town focuses not on social history of our diverse citizenry but on the successful European men who made their fortunes here.

Firstly, the *Hear, Here* project is attempting to address the problem that the average citizen of La Crosse has little voice in the history of their town. We know well the stories of “great white men” like Nathan Myrick, founder of the fur trade and lumber barons Gideon C. and Frank D. Hixon. But the voices of average people are not present in the history we tell about our city. *Hear, Here* seeks to redress this lapse by seeking to engage the city's diverse citizenry.¹

This is street-level history, or history from below. We have actively recruited all kinds of community members as story tellers including residents and visitors to La Crosse, undergraduate-aged students, local business owners, semi-homed or homeless people, as well as the LGBTQ* community, the Hmong community, and the Ho-Chunk Nation. Once heard, these stories can change the way people think about their city because they see their part in the larger historical narrative. In listening to the experiences of other people, community members will deepen their understanding of the city and each other.

After Phase I has presented 30 signs directing listeners to the recorded stories, and additional contributions have come in, a key moment in the project occurs that needs to be actively managed. It is

¹ Recent scholarship in the area of museum studies has begun to address the issue of unequal representation

important to study the project as it exists at its first stage and as it continues to develop. Having a Faculty Research Grant will allow me time to work with the project, assessing whether or not it is fulfilling its mission, and making a plan for moving forward in order to include all the possible types of people and stories.

2) The historic downtown district is flanked by arts and culture venues, but there is little historic content in the core.

A second problem that this project addresses is that the downtown area is surrounded by arts and culture venues—Children’s Museum, Pump House, Weber Center, Public Library—but little heritage information exists within the core. Michael Scott, a longtime resident of La Crosse, recently said to me: “We talk a lot about how our downtown is historic and we can see that in the buildings, but we don’t *know* anything about them. Where is the *history* in historic downtown La Crosse?” This is a question that *Hear, Here* will address.

We should also ask ourselves what the potential benefits are of expanding the heritage element in the core of our city. Research done by Amy E. Facca and J. Winthrop Aldrich shows that history is a component of cultural economic development of any city.² Heritage development and tourism stimulate state and local economies. According to the Museum Association of New York, 74% of businesses recognize that it is important to have an active arts community where they operate. Heritage tourism is consistently among the most popular and lucrative forms of tourism, generally ranking in the top three economic sectors of most states. People who travel to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present typically stay longer and spend several times more money than other tourists, resulting in a greater economic impact for host communities. So it is important to move the heritage component of our city from the periphery into the core with projects like *Hear, Here*.

One of the aspects that I will be studying in Phase II is: which stories are more often listened to and at what times of day? Does this correlate with the hours of a local business, with foot traffic in the area. Are the signs in visible areas and do they lead people to certain parts of the downtown that they would

² Amy E. Facca and J. Winthrop Aldrich, ‘Putting the Past to Work for the Future,’ *The Public Historian*, 33.3 (August, 2011): 38-57.

not normally visit? What are the benefits of *Hear, Here* to the local businesses and how can we capitalize on my study of this as we put up more stories and signs?

Significance: new museum theory

Nina Simon, Stephen Weil, Jay Rounds and writers from the School of Museum Studies in Leicester, England, have, over the past decade, begun to identify a new type of heritage consumer who seeks to participate by generating some of the content-knowledge for exhibits and projects.³ *Hear, Here* fits as a *participatory project* not only because we seek stories from the public but also because of its strong user-generated component: after people listen to the stories, they are encouraged to leave their own stories by pressing the # key on their cell phones and recording a message with our phone system. If my analysis in Phase II shows that their contributions are appropriate for fulfilling the goals identified by my research, these new stories will be added to the overall project as it moves into Phase III.

2-Objectives:

Project Phases:

This project has four phases. This grant would help me fulfill Phase II of the project.

Phase I will take place between September 2014 and April 2015. In phase I, local and state grants were secured, interviews were conducted and recordings edited, a website and Facebook page were launched, the telephone system was set up and 30 signs were posted around downtown at which people could listen to recorded stories on the streets using their mobile phones. Phase II will take place from May 2015 until June 2016. In this phase I will assess the results of Phase I asking the question “Has this project included the various types of peoples and stories that represent our downtown?” I will also assess:

- a. when the project is being used,
- b. which signs get the most use, and

³ Jay Rounds, “The Museum and Its Relationships as a Loosely Coupled System,” *Curator: The Museum Journal*. 55.4 (2012): 413-434; Nina Simon, *The Participatory Museum*, (Santa Cruz: Museum 2.0., 2010); University of Leicester, *Let’s Talk A Case Study: Change growth impact*. (Leicester: Print Services, University of Leicester, 2012). Accessed September 20, 2014, at <https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/rcmg/publications/BGCI%20case%20study-Change%20growth%20impact.pdf>; Stephen Weil, *Making Museums Matter*, (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2002).

- c. why the 30 signs have varying impacts.

In Phase III I will use the assessment done in Phase II to make the project more effective and inclusive as we mount another 30 signs for the project. In Phase IV we will develop educational programs to encourage local elementary and high-school students to gain knowledge about their local history.

This project has six objectives with action plans and measurable components to make sure that we offer a strong contribution to our community after project has been completed:

1. **Objective:** Represent all populations and experiences, especially those that normally are not represented.

Action Plan:

- Make a list of all the ‘populations’ in the La Crosse area. Throughout the story selection process keep checking back to see which populations are represented.
- While selecting stories, ask the questions:
 - What population does this represent and how visible are they in our downtown community?
 - Is this a quintessential Downtown La Crosse story or not?
 - Does the story tell us something we did not know about downtown, or something we see all the time?
 - Is the experience of this story already represented, underrepresented or overrepresented?

Measurable: Keep a running tally of ‘populations’ and type of story or experience represented and build analysis.

2. **Objective:** Promote relationships between people and downtown spaces.

Action Plan:

- Record the stories in the space they happened. Include the background noises in the recording.
- Center the stories around the place by reminding the interviewee to bring their tale back to the space. Have them direct where the listener should be looking, what they should be picturing, what time of day or night it is etc.
- Avoid choosing stories that have little to do with place.
- Take the places that people avoid because they know nothing about them and find a story to explain and give significance to the space.

Measurable: Keep a detailed map of the locations of stories and the type of space in which they are situated (near business, alley, park, etc.) for reference and analysis. Work with downtown businesses and measure their traffic and compare with the years before the project. Although this might not be a direct correlation it merits further research.

3. **Objective:** Generate community involvement and sustainability of the project.

Action Plan:

- Reach out to citizens beyond the downtown La Crosse area to come listen to the stories. Advertise at the local level in the La Crosse area and also at the state level.
- Plan and coordinate groups to tour the signs (schools, clubs and associations, retirement communities, etc.)
- Set up an Executive Council to review the stories as they come in and to assess the project every year asking what worked the past year and how it could improve for the next year.

Measurable: Count the number of participants using the phone system, record the number of stories submitted and set up a spreadsheet to keep track. Also use this spreadsheet to analyze which stories are listened to most, which are listened to the least, and what time participants are listening and contributing to the project.

4. **Objective: Create** a safe space for sharing stories.

Action Plan:

- Interviewers have written up a proposal for the Human Subjects Review Institutional Review Board and undergone ethics training.
- Discuss with the interviewee, the process of recording before going to the location and recording the story. Have them sign an Informed Consent Form.
- Allow interviewees to retract their stories from the project if they decide they do not wish to participate.

Measurable: Ask the storyteller at every step of the process if they are comfortable with the progression of their story and the project.

5. **Objective:** The project is as accessible as possible

Action Plan:

- Produce a website that will work in conjunction with the street level signs for people who may not be able to physically visit the sites.
- Offer on the website a transcript of all stories for the deaf.
- Make sure all the signs are in an area accessible to all people, making them especially wheelchair accessible.
- Do not place signs in areas where participants may not feel safe.

Measurable: Offer on the website a “contact us if you were unable to participate in the project” option.

6. **Objective:** Maintain a constructive atmosphere for the discussion of controversial topics

Action Plan:

- The Executive Council will come to a group consensus about which stories are suitable to be chosen and which are not. Discuss the issues brought up by the story.
- Do not accept stories that include hate speech against a person, group or community so that no one feels jeopardized by the project.
- Do not exclude stories that may cause controversy.
- Place advisory statements on the signs of stories that may be unsuitable for young children, and offer a separate tour for children and families (through a brochure and a note on the website).
- Create a statement on all publicity materials regarding controversial topics that explains that the project is a platform upon which personal experiences and opinions are shared for the greater good of the community, not to harm any one person or group.

Measurable: For the most part, controversy means we are doing something right. Keep track of the dialogue about the project to verify that no harm is being done by monitoring the complaints we receive and reviews people are giving the project on the website and in media.

The measurable outcomes of Phase II of this project are threefold:

1. Generate a list of proposed stories and topics for future study and addition to the project based on the overall mission of the project to include diverse voices from the many communities of La Crosse some of whom are underrepresented in our history such as the LGBTQ* community, the Hmong community, the Ho Chunk Nation, and the homeless/semi homed community.

2. Present the findings of my Phase II study at the National Conference on Public History in Baltimore, April 2016.
3. Write up the results of the study for a peer reviewed article in the top-ranked journal of my field: *The Public Historian*.

3-Research Methods for Phase II:

The research methods for this project will be both qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative responses will include:

- Obtain peer review by Shawn Micallef, project director of [murmur] on which this project is based;
- Ask for feedback on Facebook and the website;
- Monitor the local print, radio, and television reports about *Hear, Here* and responses to these by the public;
- Have booth at downtown events with a survey asking what stories people like from the project, and what type of story they would like to see more of;
- In cooperation with local associations, survey minority populations for their responses to the project.

Quantitative responses will include:

- Keep a detailed map of the locations of signs/stories and the type of space they are situated in (alley, parking lot, in front of business, etc.) and do GIS mapping of that location to see how many people go through those spaces;
- Work with downtown businesses who have a sign near their store and measure their attendance and compare with previous years;
- Process data from phone system. Phone system will count the number of participants, and record the phone messages left at each location. It will also make note of the day of the week and the time of the day that the system is being used. This will allow me to analyze which stories are being listened to most frequently and, through the GIS mapping and qualitative responses, we hope to ascertain the reason for this.

The timeline for completing the work will be as follows:

- April 2015-June 2016—monitor phone lines, discussion in press, send out website and facebook surveys to the public.
- May 2015—Peer review by Shawn Micallef.

- June 2015—Establish an Executive Council for the *Hear, Here* project that will meet monthly to assess new stories and choose which will be included in the project (made up of myself as a UW-L faculty member, a Downtown Main Street, Inc. representative, humanities experts from the public library and the Preservation Alliance of La Crosse, Undergraduate Research Grant (URG) students, and community members).
- May-October 2015—I, along with URG students, will attend downtown events to ask for feedback about the project. These events include: Spring Fling, Artspire, Downtown Historic La Crosse Day, Krazy Days, Trend Showcase. For this event we will need a 10X10 white tent, fliers, and buttons to hand out.
- June 2015-Ongoing—I will collect and assess the data collected from peer review, phone lines, community feedback etc.
- April 2016—I will present her findings at the National Conference on Public History.
- April-June 2016—I will write an article summarizing the project and the findings for *The Public Historian*.

4-Past Faculty Research Grant and/or International Development Fund Awards:

- No previous applications for FRG or IDF have been made by or awarded to this applicant.
- Phase I of this project has been sponsored by state and local granting agencies including: Wisconsin Humanities Council, College of Liberal Studies, Department of History, La Crosse Community Foundation, Preservation Alliance of La Crosse, and UW-L Foundation Small Grant.

ARIEL BEAUJOT, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin La Crosse
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EDUCATION

2008 **Ph.D., History, University of Toronto**

2001 **B.A. Honors, University of Western Ontario**

EMPLOYMENT

2012-Present **Assistant Professor** (Public History)
University of Wisconsin La Crosse

2010-2012 **Postdoctoral Fellow and Visiting Scholar** (British History, SSHRC)
The University of Vermont

2010 **Postdoctoral Fellow** (European History)
The Abbey Program, University of Southern Mississippi

2008-2009 **Visiting Assistant Professor** (Women/Gender History)
Department of History, Laurentian University

PUBLICATIONS

Books

2012 *Victorian Fashion Accessories: The Material Culture of Objects in Victorian and Edwardian Britain.* Oxford: Berg Publications.

Journal Articles & Book Chapters

2015 (forthcoming) “Balade Blanche: Putting New Museum Theory into Practice.” *Curator: The Museum Journal* 58.1 (January, 2015).

2015 (forthcoming) “Gender and Sexuality and its relation to Fashion and Dress,” *Age of Empire, 1800-1920* (London: Bloomsbury Academic).

2014 under review “If you want to get ahead, get a Hat: Manliness, Power, and Politics as seen through the Top Hat.” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association.*

- 2009 “‘The Beauty of Her Hands’: The Glove and the Making of the Middle-Class Body.” In *Material Women: Consuming Desires and Consuming Objects, 1750-1950*, edited by Maureen Daly Giggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin, 167-184. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company.
- 2007 “Coiffing Vanity: A Study of the Manufacture, Design, and Meaning of the Celluloid Hairbrush in America, 1900-1930.” In *Producing Fashion: Commerce, Culture, and Consumers*, edited by Reggie Balszczyk, 229-254. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.
- 2002 “The First Decade of the John Gordon Home: Learning How to House HIV and AIDS.” *Oral History Forum*, 21-22 (2001-2002): 75-86.

Encyclopedia Entries

- 2011 “Tea.” In *The Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*, edited by Dale Southerton. London: Sage, 2011, (6 pages).
- 2011 “Consumer Revolution in Eighteenth Century Britain.” In *The Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*, edited by Dale Southerton. London: Sage, 2011, (12 pages).

Exhibitions

- 2016 (forthcoming) [art]ifact. Pump House Regional Arts Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin, March-April 2016.
- 2015 (forthcoming) “*Hear, Here: Voices of Downtown La Crosse.*” La Crosse, Wisconsin, April 2015-January 2020.
- 2011 “Music to our ears: The history of sound and instruments in Simcoe County.” Simcoe County Museum, Minesing, Ontario, August 10-September 6, 2011 (Curator).
- 2010 “Balade Blanche/Ghost Walk.” Pontlevoy France, April 24, 2010 (Project Director). Short film: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BwHcazmWc0>
- 2009 “If You Can't Stand The Heat: The History of the Kitchen.” Archives of J. N. Desmarais Library, Sudbury Ontario, May 27-April 9, 2009 (Project Director).

Current Research/Writing in Progress

- Book-length study *Adorning the Male: Material Culture and Masculine Identity in Victorian Britain.*
- Article “Using Exhibition Design as a Teaching Tool” (In preparation for submission to *Material Culture Review*)

GRANT PROGRAM Faculty Research Grant					REFER TO RFP FOR ALLOWABLE CATEGORIES			
PROPOSAL TITLE Hear, Here Phase II: Analyzing Voices of La Crosse					Fiscal Year		Total Funds	
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/PROJECT DIRECTOR Ariel F. Beaujot							Proposed	Granted
A. PI/PPD and Co-Pis (List each separately with title)					Funds		Revised	
First Name M Last Name Title					Requested		Budget	
1.	Ariel	F.	Beaujot	Assistant Professor	\$5,000.00			
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
OTHER UW-L PERSONNEL								
First Name M Last Name Title								
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
TOTAL PI/PPD and Co-Pis (1-6) and Other Personnel (1-4)					\$5,000.00		\$ -	
B. REPLACEMENT COSTS (contact dean's office for current per credit amount)								
1.	(0) Credits				\$0.00			
C. STUDENT WORKERS (SHOW NUMBERS IN BRACKETS)								
1.	(0) RESEARCH/GRADUATE STUDENTS				\$0.00			
2.	(1) UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS							
TOTAL STUDENT WORKERS					\$0.00		\$ -	
TOTAL SALARIES AND WAGES (A+B+C)					\$5,000.00		\$ -	
D. EQUIPMENT (LIST ITEM AND DOLLAR AMOUNT FOR EACH ITEM EXCEEDING \$1,000)								
1					\$0.00			
2					\$0.00			
3					\$0.00			
TOTAL EQUIPMENT					\$0.00		\$ -	
E. TRAVEL								
1	DOMESTIC (INCL. CANADA, MEXICO AND U.S. POSSESSIONS)				\$0.00			
2	INTERNATIONAL				\$0.00			
TOTAL TRAVEL					\$0.00		\$ -	
F. OTHER COSTS								
1.	MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT LESS THAN \$1,000, AND SUPPLIES (fliers, buttons)				\$1,450.00			
2.	PUBLICATION COSTS/DOCUMENTATION/DISSEMINATION				\$0.00			
3.	SERVICES - EXTERNAL				\$0.00			
4.	SERVICES - INTERNAL				\$0.00			
5.	OTHER (10X10 white tent)				\$75.00			
TOTAL OTHER COSTS					\$1,525.00		\$ -	
G. TOTAL COSTS (A THROUGH F)					\$6,525.00		\$ -	
H. FUNDS FROM OTHER SOURCES TO SUPPORT THIS PROJECT								
1					\$0.00			
I. AMOUNT OF THIS REQUEST (G) OR (G MINUS H)					\$6,525.00		\$ -	

Note: Budget justification/narrative must be submitted with this budget sheet.

Budget Narrative/Justification
Ariel Beaujot
***Hear Here* Phase II: Analyzing the Voices of La Crosse**

A. Principal Investigator, Ariel Beaujot, requests a summer stipend of **\$5000**.

F. Other Costs:

Material, Equipment Less than \$1000, and Supplies (fliers and buttons):

Fliers: Request for fliers to be handed out at five downtown La Crosse open air events that will survey the community about the effectiveness of *Hear, Here*. The five events are Spring Fling, Artspire, Downtown Historic La Crosse Day, Krazy Days, Trend Showcase. I plan to hand out 500 fliers at each event X 5 = 2500 fliers. Supreme Graphics has priced the fliers out at \$0.19/unit X 2500 fliers = **TOTAL: \$475**.

Buttons: Request for buttons to be handed out as an incentive for community members to fill out surveys about the effectiveness of the *Hear, Here* project. I plan to hand out 300 buttons at five events = 1500 buttons. Rapit Printing has priced the buttons out at \$0.65/unit X 1500 buttons = **TOTAL: \$975**.

Other:

Tent: Request for a 10 X 10 white tent for display at open air events. Priced by Wal-Mart at **\$75**.

TOTAL: \$6525.00