



Let's Talk About It Program Scholars 2023-2024



Alexandra Teague

Alexandra Teague is most recently the author of *Spinning Tea Cups: A Mythical American Memoir* (Oregon State University Press, 2023). She's previously the author of three books of poetry—*Or What We'll Call Desire*, *The Wise and Foolish Builders*, and *Mortal Geography*, winner of the 2009 Lexi Rudnitsky Prize and 2010 California Book Award—and the novel *The Principles Behind Flotation*, as well as co-editor of the anthology *Bullets into Bells: Poets & Citizens Respond to Gun Violence*. The recipient of a 2019 Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship, the 2014 *Missouri Review* Jeffrey E. Smith Editors' Prize, a 2011 National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, and a

2006-2008 Stegner Fellowship, Alexandra is a Professor in the BA in English and MFA in Creative Writing programs, Co-Director of the MFA program, and Co-Director of Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at University of Idaho.



Carlen Donovan

Carlen Donovan is a teacher, writer, and hobby photographer. She earned an MA in English from Idaho State University, where she currently teaches writing and film studies courses. She lives in Pocatello with one tall man and two short dogs. Carlen has been a Let's Talk About It visiting scholar since 2014.



Carrie Seymour

Carrie Seymour has been a farmer in the Sunnyslope fruit-growing region of southwestern Idaho for thirty years, a teacher of literature and writing at Boise State University for twenty-one years, and a writer for as long as she can remember. When she is not doing one of those things, she can be found in the mountains - camping or snowshoeing or looking at the sky. Her essays, interviews, and poems have been published in a variety of local and regional publications as well as *Creative Nonfiction*, *Bellingham Review*, *Mid-American Review*, and *Educe Literary Journal*. Her essay "Strands" was a finalist and editor's choice for the Mid-American Creative Nonfiction Prize. She is a co-editor and contributor to the anthology *Archives of a Fantastic*

Small History: Writings from the Gamekeeper Salon, forthcoming from Educe Press. Her book, *The Distance Between Things*, a collection of essays, is in the final editing stage. She feels weird talking about herself in third person.



Clark Draney

Clark Draney is a transplanted Idahoan, but with deep Idaho roots. His great-grandfather, Samuel Ebenezer Draney, homesteaded in the Tygee Valley, Caribou County, Idaho and Clark spent many happy summers there riding motorcycles, shooting varmints, and avoiding ranch work. He learned from his grandmother that raw cream is a good salve for sunburn, and that trout is, in fact, for breakfast.

Dr. Draney received a Doctor of Arts degree from Idaho State University in 2004. He came to CSI that same year and has enjoyed an unexpectedly long stay in Twin Falls, raising—together with his love, Keri—a family of four boys and one girl. He teaches writing, literature, and graphic novels (including the making of graphic novels).

Clark enjoys the smell of freshly cut alfalfa, the song of the Western Meadowlark, and the taste of a watercress sandwich on Grandma's fresh bread. He loves hearing what you're reading and telling you what he's reading.



Elizabeth Sloan

Elizabeth Sloan lives in Moscow, Idaho where she focuses on writing and mixed media. She leads workshops with Blue Sage Writing out of Longmont, CO., as well as giving and receiving prompts and word play through a blend of other virtual venues. Her historical nonfiction, *When Songbirds Returned to Paris* (Fawkes Press), is set in the European theatre of WWII. Her current work is a collection of essays and stories that might be true, as well as an upcoming revived and revised anthology on breastfeeding titled *The Dairy Bar is Always Open*. She has essays in *Idaho Magazine*, *High Desert Journal*, and drawings published in a number of literary journals over the years. You can follow her author page (E.M. Sloan) at facebook.com/lizziebzArt.



Heike Henderson

Heike Henderson is Professor of German and Associate Chair of the Department of World Languages at Boise State University. Originally from Germany, she has now spent more than half of her life in the US, most of it in Idaho where she has lived since 1997. At Boise State, she has taught a wide variety of literature and culture classes. She has published on Turkish-German women writers, on food in literature, and on transnational crime fiction. Her newest research interests are the intersections of artificial intelligence and humanity.



Janis Johnson

Janis (Jan) Johnson teaches ethnic American literature and film courses at the University of Idaho and directs the Black Studies Program there. She also works with a non-profit group in Lewiston raising money to renovate and reopen a historic movie theater on Main Street as an arts & culture center. In her spare time, she loves swimming in the Snake River and walking with her dogs.



Jennifer Black

Dr. Jennifer Black is a Lecturer in English Literature at Boise State University. She has BA and MA degrees in Humanities and Comparative Literature from Brigham Young University, as well as a PhD in Renaissance Studies from Boston University. She teaches courses in British Literature, World Literature, Shakespeare, Milton, and English Composition. Her primary research interests include Shakespeare's plays, online pedagogy, epic poetry, and women's autobiography. She has lived in the Boise area since 2000 and has two grown children, a supportive husband, and a poorly-trained but lovable miniature schnauzer.



Justin Vipperman

Justin L. Vipperman was born and raised in Wendell, Idaho. He attended the College of Southern Idaho before pursuing a bachelor's degree in history at Idaho State University. Vipperman attended Portland State University where he received a dual master's degree in history and public history. His thesis recounted the African American experience in Portland, Oregon prior to World War II. Vipperman now teaches at the College of Southern Idaho and Idaho State University and is also working on an interdisciplinary doctorate. He is an American West historian specializing in African American history. Vipperman currently resides in Wendell and is the father of three wonderful children and husband to his beautiful wife Rebecca.



Kimberly Madsen Dill

Kimberly Madsen Dill is Professor Emerita of English at the College of Southern Idaho. She taught high school English and Spanish for five years prior to teaching twenty years at the College of Southern Idaho.

Inspired by the pleasure she receives in Let's Talk About It book discussions, Kim started a book/dinner club with friends that is now over five years and fifteen members strong. Kim loves to read travel writing, biography, science fiction, history, memoir, fiction, and poetry. Kim enjoys traveling, camping, hiking, and long walks with her husband and dog Golda. She especially loves road biking, gardening, and playing her guitar.



Margaret Pettis

Margaret Pettis worked as a wrangler on a Kooskia, Idaho ranch before packing mules as a wilderness ranger for the U.S. Forest Service in the Sawtooth Wilderness. Settling in Cache County, Utah, she taught middle and high school art and English for 40 years. She has been a Rural Scholar for Let's Talk About It since 1990.

A wilderness and wildlife activist, she has written and illustrated natural history articles for newspapers, conservation publications and books. She has received many awards for her teaching, writing and conservation work. Named Utah Poet of the Year for her book, *Chokecherry Rain*, Margaret has more recently published three poetry collections: *In the Temple of the Stars* (2021); *Searching for Circe* (2023), which follows her tracing of the

mythical path of Odysseus across the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas; and *Phalarope* (2023), poems and haiku focused on the West's wild places. In addition to creating *Back Roads of Utah* (2021), a unique collection of 300 ink drawings in 200 pages featuring the beauty and idiosyncrasies of Utah, Margaret is the author of the five-part Marti Bruhn series of outdoor adventure/ mystery novels set in the remote American West: *Turquoise Bear*, *Wyoming Gold*, *The Crimson Trail*, *The Bronze Rim of Baja*, and *The Wine-Dark Spell*.



Nancy Casey

[Nancy Casey](#) has been reading and writing in Idaho for 35 years. She [blogs](#) about writing for the [Latah Recovery Center](#) in Moscow, where she also teaches. [All the Way to Second Street](#), her memoir of the back-to-the-land movement was published in 2011. For years she was a morning news host for KRFP in Moscow where she also wrote and produced [The View from Planet Nancy](#). She received an MFA from the University of Idaho and lives in rural Latah County. Nancy enjoys camping and hiking in the wilds of Idaho and is a wintertime caretaker for Forest Service properties in Hells Canyon.



Ron McFarland

In July 2017 Ron McFarland hung up his cleats (he played soccer for the University of Idaho club team for 23 years) after 50+ years teaching at the college level, 47 of them at UI. He is author or editor of more than 30 books ranging in nature from booklets on Northwest writers including Norman Maclean and Tess Gallagher and a critical study of Blackfeet novelist James Welch to *Idaho's Poetry: A Centennial Anthology* (1988), edited with his friend and fellow poet William Studebaker, and most recently *Professor McFarland in Reel Time: Prose & Poems of an Angler* (2020). Of the latter volume, McFarland promises absolutely no useful angling advice. Among his personal favorites among his published books, he lists *The Rockies in First Person*

(2008), *Appropriating Hemingway* (2015), and a biography of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel E.J. Steptoe (1815-1865), *Edward J. Steptoe and the Indian Wars* (2016). His most recent full-length book of poems, *Subtle Thieves*, appeared in 2012. His critical study of prolific Chicana writer Gary Soto will appear later this year (2021). His current project is a collection of short stories featuring the quirky English prof, T. Roland Wibbles.



Scott Knickerbocker

Scott Knickerbocker is a Professor of English and Environmental Studies at The College of Idaho, where he teaches classes in American literature, songwriting, and outdoor education. His book *Ecopoetics: The Language of Nature, the Nature of Language* was published by the University of Massachusetts Press in 2012. Scott is also a professional musician; he plays guitar, banjo, and fiddle and regularly performs original and traditional songs with his trio The Knickerbocker Band.



Shelley McEuen

Shelley McEuen is the Department Chair for Social Science and Communication at College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls where she also teaches English.

Shelley earned her PhD from Idaho State University where her work focused on the intersection between the urban wild and historical narratives still working to shape these spaces.

An avid reader, gardener, and aspiring knitter, Shelley enjoys cycling with her husband and spending time with their daughter and two dogs, Dottie and Doug.

She loves being a facilitator for Let's Talk About It because the discussions never disappoint, and it provides an opportunity to talk about books with fascinating people.



Stacy Boe Miller

Stacy Boe Miller is an essayist and poet. Her work can be found or is forthcoming in *The Sun*, *Copper Nickel*, *Mid-American Review*, *Terrain.org* where she recently won the Editor's Prize in Poetry, and other journals. Her poetry manuscript has been a finalist for publication three times in the last year. She is the current Poet Laureate of Moscow, Idaho and teaches workshops locally throughout the year. She is currently working on a memoir. Find more of her work at stacyboemiller.com.



Steven Hall

Steven Hall received his PhD in English and the Teaching of English from Idaho State University in 2014. His research and dissertation explored themes related to agriculture and the natural environment found in contemporary literature. Currently Dr. Hall is a Clinical Assistant Professor for the Bengal Bridge program at ISU (a transitional academic program designed to increase college access and opportunity for recently graduated high school seniors) and teaches courses in academic skills as well as courses for the English Department and Honors program.



Susan Bailey

Susan Bailey taught American literature, English literature and composition at the College of Southern Idaho as an adjunct for nine years. Adult students were in the majority although she also taught Wood River High School seniors in the dual credit program for three semesters, bringing to life the best in American literature written after the Civil War. Most of her professional life was spent writing news or arts stories for newspapers in Blaine County and Twin Falls, or in New Hampshire near Boston. As a writer, she won many awards and was nominated for the Pushcart Prize for her short story published in TriQuarterly. She spent seven years as news director for a radio station and wrote the weekly humor column "Bailey's Bailiwick" for an equal

amount of time. She holds Master's degrees in Creative Writing and English literature from the University of New Hampshire and Syracuse University and has recently retired to write a novel under the inspiration of her former teacher, Tobias Wolff.



Thomas Klein

Thomas Klein grew up in Ohio and moved to Idaho in 2000 to teach in the English department at Idaho State University. He received his Ph.D. in 1998 from the University of Toronto; his specialty is Old English and medieval literature, but he teaches a range of courses from Introduction to Literature to Medieval Visionaries. Outside of teaching, his passions are trail running, camping, and being outdoors. He and his wife Lucinda, a champion knitter, live in the Old Town neighborhood of Pocatello.