

Lauren Small
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Speaking Proposal

School:

Date:

Contact:

Lauren Small has been invited to speak at _____ about her new YA novel *Choke Creek*. *Choke Creek* tells the story of a girl who falls in love with a soldier who deserts from Vietnam. In her quest to save him, she uncovers the secrets that have haunted both their families for generations, dating back to the Indian Wars.

The novel is based on the Sand Creek Massacre, which took place in southeastern Colorado in 1864. In presentations to American history or social studies classes, Small gives a brief introduction to her novel and to the history of Sand Creek. She has a PowerPoint presentation that contains photographs and documents from the Sand Creek era. She discusses the historical controversy surrounding Sand Creek, how it developed, and how it continues to reverberate today. She also reads from her novel and talks to the students about how she came to write a book about Sand Creek, giving them a glimpse of an historical novelist at work.

With English and/or Creative Writing classes, Small focuses on her research and writing process, and also conducts brief writing exercises with the students. The purpose of her presentation will be to show students how following your passion leads to the most effective writing, whether fiction or non-fiction, and how to ground writing in real life. In Small's case, her passion for social justice led her to write *Choke Creek*.

Small is also available to speak to Journalism classes. She highlights newspaper accounts from Sand Creek, which are also contained in her novel, and asks students to consider questions of truth and responsibility in reporting.

Denver native Lauren Small earned a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature. Her scholarly work has appeared in academic journals such as *Statement: The Journal of the Colorado Language Arts Society*, *MLN*, and *German Quarterly*, and she has published fiction in literary magazines such as *Fiction*, *StoryQuarterly*, and *Partisan Review*. Her short story "Livia" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Small has spoken at numerous schools around the country and has presented at the Miami Book Fair International, the Sanibel Island Writers Conference, Florida Gulf Coast University, and the annual conference of the Colorado Language Arts Society. She is an Adjunct Professor of Creative Writing at the Community College of Baltimore County. *Choke Creek* (Bridle Path Press 2009), her first novel, has been taught in high schools across the nation.