

# Oregon author to read works

Story by Amanda Eggert | February 27, 2009

*Montana Kaimin*

Things are coming full circle for UM creative writing professor Robert Stubblefield, who will be hosting his former creative writing professor at a reading on campus tonight.

Craig Lesley, an Oregon author and winner of several book awards, is known for writing about Western themes and treating his characters with great compassion by utilizing what a Boston Globe review called "prose as clear as morning air" in a recent review.

Lesley taught the first creative writing course that Stubblefield ever took at **Clackamas Community College** in Oregon.

"He has a really compassionate and engaging teaching style, but he's really rigorous, too," Stubblefield said. "He was the perfect first teacher for me.

"There have been a number of people at Craig's workshop at Clackamas who have gone on to publish."

He said that "Paranoid Park," a novel written by Blake Nelson that was adapted into a Gus Van Sant film, was critiqued at one of Lesley's workshops.

Lesley has written four novels and a memoir in addition to editing two anthologies of short stories. Two of his novels, "Storm Riders" and "The Sky Fisherman," were nominated for Pulitzer Prizes. Awards that Lesley has won include the Oregon Book Award and the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Award.

"Craig (Lesley) writes with clear-eyed compassion and honesty about working people who are too-often forgotten in contemporary literature," Stubblefield said.

His work has been well-received by a long list of well-known authors, including Richard Ford, William Kittredge, Raymond Carver and Ivan Doig.

One of Lesley's novels, "River Song" addresses the controversy about salmon fishing rights on tribal lands in the Northwest.

"There was incredible foresight in the attention that he gave to that issue and the people affected by it," Stubblefield said.

The reading is sponsored by UM's Department of English, the Mansfield Library and the Oval, UM's undergraduate literary publication. Jesse DeLong, the Oval's fiction editor, will introduce Lesley, who will read from his work and hold a question-and-answer period afterwards.

The free reading starts at 7 p.m. tonight in Room 11 of the Liberal Arts Building.

[amanda.eggert@umontana.edu](mailto:amanda.eggert@umontana.edu)

University of Montana