



Russell Rowland is a critically-acclaimed author of six books, a literary podcast host, writer and host of an NPR radio program, and a mentor to fledgling writers. From the written to the spoken word, he is a true voice of The Big Sky Country. A fourth-generation Montanan, Rowland was born in Bozeman in 1957, inheriting the experiential legacies of his father's blue-collar Wyoming roots and mother's 100+ year ranch family history. He earned an MA in Creative Writing from Boston University where he finished his first novel.

Rowland's debut work of fiction, *"In Open Spaces,"* received a starred review from Publisher's Weekly, was reviewed in the New York Times, and reached the San Francisco Chronicle's bestseller list. His second and third novels, *"The Watershed Years"* and *"High and Inside,"* were both named finalists for the High Plains Book Award for fiction. Celebrated author Ivan Doig said of Rowland's first book, "Russell Rowland has given us a vivid and distinctive piece of homespun to take its proper place in the literary quilt of the West."

Rowland also co-edited, along with Lynn Stegner, an anthology of essays by writers from the West, called *"West of 98."* He co-hosts the monthly podcast series "Breakfast in Montana," which explores and celebrates the commonalities of contemporary and classic Montana literature through interviews with regional writers.

His narratives honor the full reality of life for Montanans: their struggles, grit, and stoicism, and their connections to family and place. He writes with an honest perspective, faithful to the emotion at the heart of each story, culling cultural hyperbole and stereotypes in favor of plain truth. Award-winning author Laura Pritchett said, "In a voice all his own, Rowland proves to be warm and personable, and yet cutting and real—basically, one couldn't wish for a better guide to the state of Montana."

Of his most popular book, non-fiction narrative *"Fifty-Six Counties,"* Butte author David Abrams wrote, "If you have room for only one book about Montana, it should be this book." *Fifty-Six Counties* debuted as a radio program on NPR on July 1st, 2019. The program continues Rowland's conversations with Montanans begun in the book, exploring the ways in which this state and its people shape one another.

Russell Rowland teaches online writing workshops and works privately with emerging writers. He lives in Billings, Montana.