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## **Lerude pens biography on Robert Laxalt**

***“Robert Laxalt: Story of a Storyteller” sheds light into the less illuminated corners of Laxalt’s personal and career sagas***

RENO, Nev. –[The Donald W. Reynolds School of Journalism](#) at the [University of Nevada, Reno, University Libraries Special Collections](#) and UNR’s [Center for Basque Studies](#) recently hosted a release party for Warren Lerude’s book [“Robert Laxalt: Story of a Storyteller”](#) at the [Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center](#).

In this new biography, Lerude, professor emeritus of journalism, focuses on Laxalt’s development as a writer, especially through his formative days as a journalist in Reno and Carson City, and on to Laxalt the family man, teacher, publisher, and much more.

Lerude said, “The odyssey of this book began with an idea from my long-time friend and colleague Bruce Bledsoe. Bruce brought it to my attention that of the 17 books Laxalt wrote, none of them were biographical in nature. With a little nudging from Joyce, Bob’s wife of 52 years; and their daughters Monique, an attorney and novelist; and Kristin, a physician, I decided to take on the project.”

Robert Laxalt, whose journalism, creative nonfiction, and fiction made him a national and international literary figure, is the most acclaimed writer to hail from the state of Nevada in modern times. His 1957 classic [Sweet Promised Land](#) not only brought to life the immigrant experience of the Basques who had come to the United States as shepherders, it served as an exemplary story for all immigrants to the United States.

Laxalt, who died in 2001 at seventy-seven, left a legacy of evidence about his writing life in the Nevada Archives and Special Collections Department at the University’s Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center. Special Collections is home to 26.5 cubic feet of Laxalt’s papers spread through 33 rectangular boxes.

“So much of what Laxalt was known for is contained in our collection,” said Jacquelyn Sundstrand, manuscripts and archives librarian, Special Collections Department. “Warren reviewed numerous drafts of his various novels, manuscripts, and correspondence and more to help bring his professional history to life.”

The book is published by the Center for Basque Studies, which publishes high-quality books in English on Basque-related topics. The Laxalt biography is the inaugural book in a new series, Basque Originals, which presents lively, entertaining, and informative books on a variety of subjects relating to the experience of being Basque and Basques around the world.

“Robert Laxalt is a father figure for many Basque-related initiatives,” said Dan Montero, publications editor for the Center for Basque Studies. “He was a key person who helped create the Basque Studies program at the University; the Basque library; served as the first director of the University of Nevada Press; and was an extremely important writer in the Basque community. As a result, it is no surprise he was largely responsible for the creation of the Basque identity in the United States.”

“There is no one better suited to tell the story of a great storyteller than someone who fits that description himself,” said Joe Crowley, president emeritus of the University of Nevada, Reno. “Warren has given us a remarkable chronicle of the life of Nevada legend Robert Laxalt. It is a

book that is thoroughly researched, crisply written and honest to a fault. This is a biography about a man, Bob Laxalt, who richly deserves one. It will surely stand the test of time.”

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*Founded in 1874 as Nevada's land-grant university, the University of Nevada, Reno ranks in the top tier of best national universities. With nearly 19,000 students, the University is driven to contribute a culture of student success, world-improving research and outreach that enhances communities and business. Part of the Nevada System of Higher Education, the University has the system's largest research program and is home to the state's medical school. With outreach and education programs in all Nevada counties and home to one of the largest study-abroad consortiums, the University extends across the state and around the world. For more information, visit [www.unr.edu](http://www.unr.edu).*

About **Warren Lerude**:

Warren Lerude is a professor emeritus of the University of Nevada's Reynolds School of Journalism and a longtime Reno newspaper editor and publisher. In 1977 he led a team of journalists to win the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing. He is the co-author of the best-seller *American Commander in Spain: Robert Hale Merriman and the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* and author of the text of another best-seller *Robert Cameron's Above Tahoe and Reno*. He was a professor of media law, management, and professional internships for thirty-two years at the journalism school.

About **Special Collections**:

The Special Collections and University Archives Department houses, preserves, and provides access to unique, specialized, and historically significant resources to support research, teaching and learning at the University of Nevada, Reno. Members of the public are welcome to use the collections.

About the **Center for Basque Studies**:

The Center for Basque Studies is an international study center dedicated to research into and publishing on Basque topics. In addition to our research mission, we provide basic Basque language instruction, give undergraduate and graduate classes on many Basque topics, host international scholars and conferences, promote research, offer a Ph.D. and an undergraduate minor, and publish a wide variety of books.

**To purchase the book visit:**

<http://basquebooks.myshopify.com/collections/frontpage/products/robert-laxalt-the-story-of-a-storyteller>

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