

Award-Winning Nevada Author To Publish Debut Novel

Third Wheel is a debut novel about belonging, betrayal, and breaking away from paths laid out by others, even when it means grasping at an uncertain future.

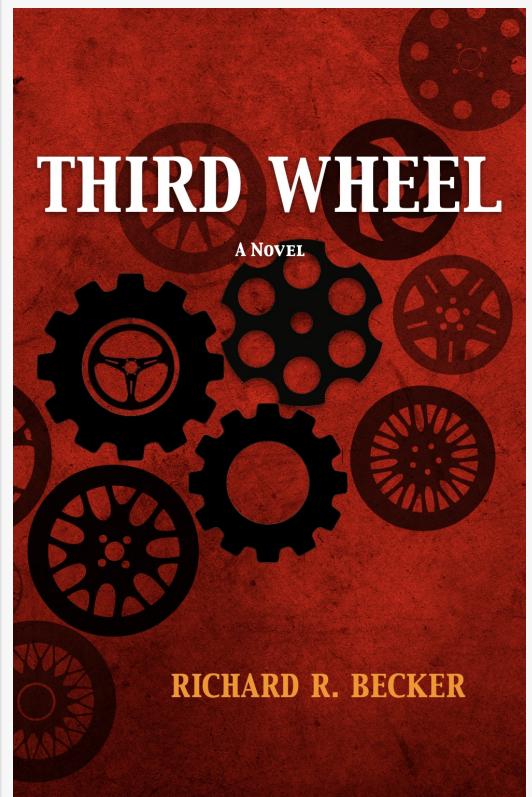
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, UNITED STATES, May 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Award-winning Nevada author [Richard R. Becker](#) will release his debut novel, [Third Wheel](#), on Aug. 21, 2023. The novel is a coming-of-age story about a boy trying to find his identity by taking chances on random and fragile relationships forged in the early boomtown years of Las Vegas, 1982.

Despite being an outcast as a Midwest transplant, teenage protagonist Brady Wilks forges a brotherly bond with an older teenage neighbor, Mick, and his friend, Brett. When Brett unexpectedly moves away, Mick invites a new kid into their pack, squeezing out the last remnants of their childhood in favor of a new world laced with cartel-supplied drugs and the deal of a lifetime. The path brings Brady face to face with the darker side of Las Vegas at a time when cartels, corporations, and the mob were in the midst of a power struggle.

"While the protagonist brushes up against organized crime, I've been very careful not to describe it as a mob story," says Becker. "The novel is more about belonging, betrayal, and breaking away from the paths laid before us, rather than some of its grittier elements."

The novel is fictitious, but Becker says he and the protagonist do share some similar experiences. Becker's family moved to Las Vegas from the Midwest in the late 70s/early 80s. He had similar challenges at home and struggled to adapt to life on the fringe of a transient town known for adult entertainment.

"Living in Las Vegas was paradoxical," he says. "The town was much smaller, maybe 200,000 people, who mostly lived in a California-esque suburbia, but with slot machines in their grocery



Third Wheel by Richard R. Becker

stores and minimal family activities outside of what kids could come up with on their own. For teens, The Strip and Downtown Las Vegas were more akin to a drive-by experience. We would cruise Downtown Las Vegas and The Strip, stopping only long enough to eat at a buffet, see a show, or visit the carnival midway at Circus Circus or Omnimax at Caesars Palace. Those locales are barely blips in my book, but provide a foundation for what life was like in a small town stuffed into a big city envelope. Everybody knew who ran it."

Third Wheel is Becker's debut novel, but not his first book. His first book, 50 States, is a best-selling, award-winning collection of short stories. It won first place for short stories in the Spring 2022 BookFest Awards; first place in the 2023 Book Excellence Awards; first place in the ABR Book Excellence Award for literary fiction, psychological thriller, and short stories; and was named a finalist in the IAN Book Of The Year Award. The collection consists of 50 short stories, with each story set in a different state.

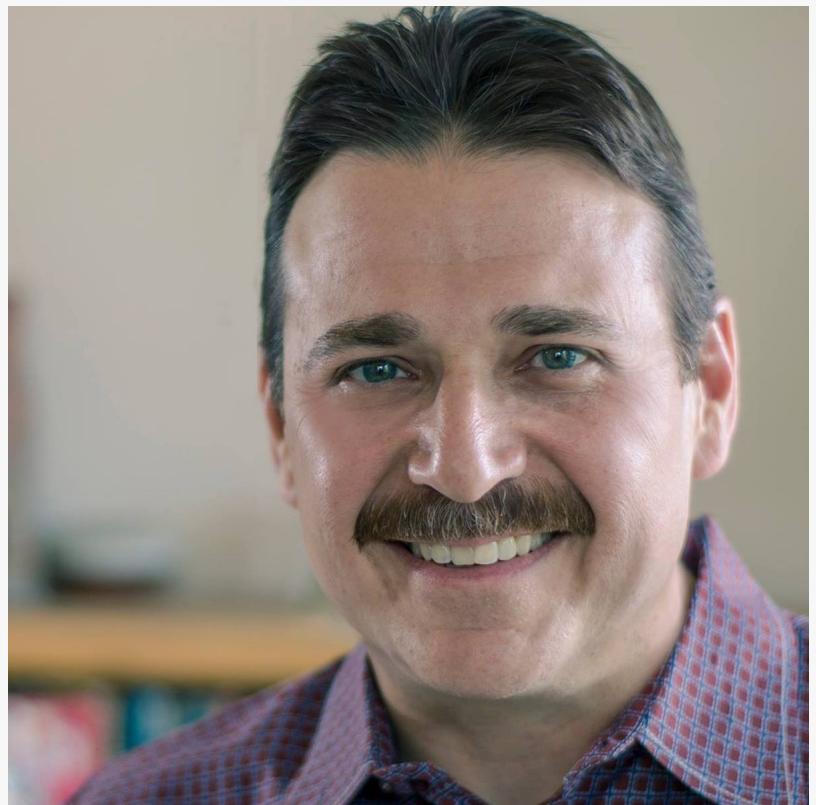
"The Nevada story in 50 States is a sardonic view on modern life in Las Vegas," said Becker. "But in my ten-story companion piece to 50 States, Ten Threads, I settled on the 1980s and wrote a short story called 'Third Wheel,' which became the first chapter of this novel."

Third Wheel is scheduled to be published on Aug. 21, 2023 by [Copywrite, Ink](#). Although preorders are only available via Amazon Kindle (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0C2MZ737L>), Third Wheel will be available wherever books are sold and in public libraries upon publication.

Richard R. Becker was born in Milwaukee and raised by his grandparents during his early years. He worked his way through school, attending Whittier College and the University of Nevada, Reno. After graduation, Becker worked as a journalist, copywriter, creative strategist, publisher, university instructor, and entrepreneur.

When he isn't writing, Becker has a broad range of interests, including travel, fitness, and spending time with his wife and two children. Find him online at bio.site/RichardRBecker.

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