

## **Novel Murder on Skid Row Offers Rare Glimpse of Forgotten Chicago History**

*Based on a true story, Murder on Skid Row is a novel by Chicagoan Charlene Wexler. It takes the reader back to a place that was an integral part of Chicago for decades—but one today's city-beautiful boosters would rather have us forget.*

**May 8, 2010** - [PRLog](#) -- "Spare any change?" and "I don't know nothing" were the watchwords on Chicago's Skid Row in the 1960s. Located on Madison Street, a little west of the city's bustling and prosperous downtown, Skid Row was home to hustlers, winos, addicts, bums, lost souls, ripoffs, and kickbacks. Everyone, it seemed, had a secret.

Into this shady society steps Dr. Mel Greenberg, who describes himself as "fresh out of dental school, very idealistic, and very poor." He opens his new dental office "to help the downtrodden," he says. Instead, he finds himself in a world for which his working-class upbringing never prepared him, where a day might bring anything from a philosophy-quoting patient to a knife held at his neck. Eventually, he finds himself a suspect in murder.

Based on a true story, Murder on Skid Row is the first novel by Chicagoan Charlene Wexler. Told from Dr. Greenberg's point of view, Murder on Skid Row takes the reader back to a place that was an integral part of Chicago for decades—but one today's public officials and city-beautiful boosters would rather have us believe never existed.

In the pages of Murder on Skid Row, you'll meet:

Ace, who "could flick a billfold from a pocket faster than a squirrel could pluck a nut from a tree."

Darlene, a ghetto girl torn between the better life working in Mel's office can provide and her boyfriend's world of gangs and drugs.

Tyrone, Mel's "bodyguard" and more dangerous than Skid Row itself.

Jim Bones, a Vietnam vet forever scarred by the horrors of war.

Abe, whose pharmacy was one of the last thriving businesses left on Skid Row—but whose secrets held fatal consequences.

Plus a host of other characters who made up the tattered tapestry of Skid Row life. Toss in humor, pathos, and a murder mystery, and you have a gripping historical thriller. Chicago's Skid Row is long gone, but Wexler brings it back in Murder on Skid Row.

Murder on Skid Row is available through Amazon.com and bookstores everywhere. Published in 2010 by Author House, the book sells for \$21.49 hardcover and \$10.99 paperback.

### About the author

Native Chicagoan Charlene Wexler is a graduate of the University of Illinois. She has worked as a teacher and dental office bookkeeper and as "a wife, mom, and grandmother," she said. In recent years, Wexler's lifelong passion for writing has led her to create numerous essays as well as fiction.

Her work has appeared in several publications, including North Shore Magazine, the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry's Vision magazine, Alpha Omegan magazine, and the Gazette newspaper of Chicago.

"I have always used writing as therapy," Wexler said. "Now I have the time and opportunity to pursue it as

a career.”

Wexler has dedicated *Murder on Skid Row* “to the three dentists in my life,” she said—her husband, Sam; son Mike; and Sam’s business partner, Lew.

Wexler is active with the Alpha Omega Dental Fraternity, Children’s Memorial Hospital philanthropy, Lungevity (an organization that fights lung cancer), the McHenry Bicycle Club, the National Council of Jewish Women, the Jewish United Fund, and the University of Illinois Alumni Association.

Her advice for other aspiring writers—even grandmothers like herself—is to “follow your dream. You can do it, and it’s never too late.”

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Note: Wexler is available for media interviews. Media copies of *Murder on Skid Row* are available upon request. E-mail [billbike@anbcommunications.com](mailto:billbike@anbcommunications.com). See also [www.charlenewexler.com](http://www.charlenewexler.com).

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