

# The LINCOLN PRIZE

at Gettysburg College

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## **BOOKS EXPLORING LINCOLN'S GENIUS AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF SHARE 2009 LINCOLN PRIZE**

(Gettysburg, PA, February 12, 2009)—Books by two leading historians that together re-define Abraham Lincoln's momentous achievements as commander-in-chief of what became the largest army and mightiest navy of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century world, will share the \$50,000 Lincoln Prize for 2009 (for scholarship published in 2008), it was announced today. The winners of the Bicentennial Year Lincoln Prize, long the most generous and prestigious award in the field of American history, are: James M. McPherson for *Tried by War: Abraham Lincoln as Commander in Chief* (Penguin Press), and Craig L. Symonds for *Lincoln and His Admirals: Abraham Lincoln, the U.S. Navy, and the Civil War* (Oxford University Press).

McPherson—who previously earned the Lincoln Prize in 1998—is the George Henry Davis Professor of American History Emeritus at Princeton University. Symonds, who was a finalist for the 1993 prize, is Professor of American History Emeritus at the United States Naval Academy. Each author will receive a \$25,000 cash award along with a bronze cast of Augustus St. Gaudens' portrait sculpture of Abraham Lincoln.

Honorable mention will go to three additional books—selected from among the record-shattering 172 volumes submitted for the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Lincoln Prize: Jacqueline Jones of University of Texas at Austin, for *Saving Savannah: The City and the Civil War* (Knopf); Fred Kaplan of the City University of New York Graduate Center, for *Lincoln: The Biography of a Writer* (Harper Collins); and William Lee Miller of the University of Virginia, for *President Lincoln: The Duty of a Statesman* (Knopf).

Announcement of the Lincoln Prize winners for the year's best books on Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War was made by the Lincoln & Soldiers Institute at Gettysburg College, which administers the awards. The \$50,000 annual prize was co-founded and endowed by businessmen and philanthropists Richard Gilder and Lewis Lehrman, principals of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in New York and co-creators of the Gilder Lehrman Collection, one of the largest private archives of documents and artifacts in the nation. The Institute devotes itself to history education by supporting

magnet schools, teacher training, curriculum development, exhibitions, and publications, as well as endowing several major history awards. Mr. Gilder and Mr. Lehrman established the Lincoln Prize in 1990, together with Professor Gabor Boritt, Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College. Since founding the Lincoln Prize in 1990, Mr. Gilder and Mr. Lehrman have bestowed some \$1 million on the annual winners, including special prizes.

Commented Mr. Gilder and Mr. Lehrman: “At a time in which current commanders-in-chief face potential military challenges that even Lincoln could never have imagined, it is particularly fitting and proper that the Lincoln Prize should honor contributions to the Lincoln literature that so vividly and persuasively acknowledge Lincoln’s manifest achievements in this realm. Lincoln was not only the first modern commander-in-chief, he moreover grasped strategy and tactics with an intuitive understanding that even his trained officers sometimes lacked. During a presidency entirely circumscribed by war, he embraced new technologies, created a modern chain of command, took prescient advantage of improved means of communication and transportation, made sure to visit troops and the wounded personally to boost morale, advocated joint operations between land and sea forces, and once, briefly, even directed an expedition himself. The two books honored with this year’s Lincoln Prize not only recount these important American stories with style and authority; they offer what should stand as the final words on the subject of Lincoln as commander-in-chief of the army and navy—a fighting force that not only won a war, but preserved the Union, and helped restore it without the stain of slavery.”

Added Mr. Gilder and Mr. Lehrman: “This has been a remarkable year for Lincoln research and publication, and it is important to acknowledge that the field has been enormously enriched not only by the titles we have singled out this year, but by a virtual shelf of publications that have helped to excite, engage, and inform the public about Abraham Lincoln on the eve of his milestone two hundredth birthday, making enormous and permanent contributions to our understanding of the greatest president’s life and times. This is the first year in the history of the Lincoln Prize that all finalists were cited for awards or honorable mention—a testament to the remarkable quality of this year’s contributions to the field.”

Gabor Boritt, who has served as Chairman of the Lincoln Prize since its founding twenty years ago, noted: “It is a special privilege this year to honor scholarly contributions that certainly inflect the way professional historians understand and interpret the Lincoln era, yet also appeal as well to broad and enthusiastic general audiences. James McPherson and Craig Symonds have devoted their entire careers to teaching young people, conducting extensive and original research, and developing narrative styles that delight modern readers. They richly deserve the award they share.”

After two decades in his role as founding chair, Professor Boritt further announced his intention to retire from this post effective with this year’s Lincoln Prize. He will be succeeded as Chairman by its co-founder, Lewis Lehrman.

Co-winner James M. McPherson is universally considered the dean of Civil War scholars. The winner of the Pulitzer Prize for his classic *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (1988), he earned his first Lincoln Prize in 1998 for his book, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*. A member of the Princeton faculty for more than 40 years, his many other books include *Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution*, and volumes on Gettysburg, Antietam, and black freedom, as well as a new, brief biography recently published by Oxford, *Abraham Lincoln*. The

Lincoln Prize jury called his *Tried by War* “a careful and insightful analysis,” and “a useful corrective to recent scholarship that has rightly emphasized the vast social changes unleashed by the war (first among them, emancipation), but in the process, has sometimes neglected the military story itself.” Professor McPherson lives in Princeton, New Jersey.

Craig L. Symonds has authored or edited seventeen books on the Civil War era, including widely acclaimed biographies of General Joseph E. Johnston, Confederate Admiral Franklin Buchanan, and the “Stonewall of the West,” Patrick Cleburne. His previous book, *Decision at Sea: Five Naval Battles that Shaped American History*, earned the Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt Prize for Naval History. During his long career on the faculty at Annapolis, Professor Symonds became the first person ever to win both the Naval Academy’s “Excellence in Teaching” award (1988) and its “Excellence in Research” award (1998). The jury cited *Lincoln and His Admirals* for its “fluent” and “deft” writing, “careful analysis,” “pathbreaking” research into the escape of so-called “contraband slaves (hitherto treated only with reference to the army),” and for his “vivid portraits of naval figures less well known than the generals.” Professor Symonds lives in Annapolis, Maryland.

The three-member 2009 Lincoln Prize jury—Eric Foner (chair), DeWitt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University, Lucas Morel, Garwood Visiting Fellow at Princeton University, and Carol Bundy, an author of film and art publications both in Great Britain and the U.S., whose first book traced the life of her great-great-great uncle, Charles Russell Lowell—considered a record-setting number of submissions for the 2009 award before recommending the finalists to the Lincoln Prize board, which makes the final decision.

The Lincoln Prize will be formally awarded at a dinner at the Union League of New York on Tuesday, April 7.

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*More...*

#### Lincoln Prize Winners To Date

**2008** Laureate: Elizabeth Brown Pryor, *Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through his Private Letters*  
James Oakes, *the Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics*  
Honorable Mention: Chandra Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War*

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**2007** Laureate: Douglas L. Wilson, *Lincoln's Sword: The Presidency and the Power of Words*  
Finalists: Martha Hodes, *The Sea Captain's Wife: A True Story of Love, Race, and War in the Nineteenth Century*  
Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War*

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Electronic Lincoln Prize: Drew Vandecreek, *Lincoln/Net*  
( [www.lincoln.lib.niu.edu/](http://www.lincoln.lib.niu.edu/) )

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- 2006** Laureate: Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*  
Honorable Mention: Carol Bundy, *The Nature of Sacrifice: A Biography of Charles Russell Lowell, Jr.*  
Margaret Creighton, *The Color of Courage: Gettysburg's Forgotten History-Immigrants, Women and African Americans in the Civil War's Defining Battle*  
Richard F. Miller, *Harvard's Civil War: A History of the Twentieth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry*

Electronic Lincoln Prize: University Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South*  
( [www.docsouth.unc.edu](http://www.docsouth.unc.edu) )

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- 2005** Laureate: Allen C. Guelzo, *Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation: The End of Slavery in America*  
Second: Harold Holzer, *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech That Made Abraham Lincoln President*  
Finalists: Jonathan D. Martin, *Divided Mastery: Slave Hiring in the American South*  
Jane E. Schultz, *Women at the Front: Hospital Workers in Civil War America*
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- 2004** Laureate: Richard J. Carwardine, *Lincoln*  
Special Achievement: John Y. Simon for editing 26 volumes of *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*  
Honorable Mention: Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration*
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- 2003** Laureate: George C. Rable, *Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg!*  
Second: John Stauffer, *The Black Hearts of Men: Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race*  
Honorable Mention: Michael W. Fitzgerald, *Urban Emancipation: Popular Politics in Reconstruction Mobile, 1860-1890*

Electronic Lincoln Prize: John Adler, HarpWeek Presents Lincoln and the Civil War.com  
( [www.lincolnandthecivilwar.com](http://www.lincolnandthecivilwar.com) )

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- 2002** Laureate: David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*

Honorable Mention: Alice Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North & South, 1861-1865*  
Kenneth J. Winkle, *The Young Eagle: The Rise of Abraham Lincoln*  
Finalists: Michael Vorenberg, *Final Freedom: The Civil War, The Abolition of Slavery the Thirteenth Amendment*  
Harry Pfanz, *Gettysburg – The First Day* and his prior volumes in the trilogy of the Battle of Gettysburg

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**2001** Laureate: Russell F. Weigley, *A Great Civil War*  
Second: Leonard L. Richards, *The Slave Power*  
Honorable Mention: Michael Burlingame, for editing a series of volumes on Lincoln's White House Private Secretaries  
Finalist: Mark L. Bradley, *This Astounding Close*

Electronic Lincoln Prize: Edward L. Ayers, Anne S. Rubin, and William G. Thomas, *Valley of the Shadow: The Eve of War* ( <http://valley.vcdh.virginia.edu> )  
Second: Stephen Railton, *Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture* ( [www.iath.virginia.edu/utc/](http://www.iath.virginia.edu/utc/) )  
Finalist: Martha L. Benner, Cullom Davis, Daniel Stowell, *The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln* ( [www.press.uillinois.edu/s00/benner.html](http://www.press.uillinois.edu/s00/benner.html) )

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**2000** Laureate: John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves*  
Allen Guelzo, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President*  
Second: Michael Holt, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party*  
Lifetime Achievement: Richard N. Current

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**1999** Laureate: Douglas L. Wilson, *Honor's Voice*  
Second: J. Tracy Power, *Lee's Miserables*

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**1998** Laureate: James McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*  
Second: William C. Harris, *With Charity For All*  
Honorable Mention: Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War*  
James I. Robertson, Jr., *Stonewall Jackson*

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**1997** Lifetime Achievement: Don E. Fehrenbacher

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**1996** Laureate: David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln*  
Second: Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War*  
Finalist: Michael Fellman, *Citizen Sherman*

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**1995** Laureate: Phillip S. Paludan, *The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln*  
Second: William Marvel, *Andersonville: The Last Depot*  
Finalist: Charles B. Dew, *Bond of Iron*

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**1994** Laureate: Ira Berlin, Barbara Fields, Seven Miller, Joseph Reidy, Leslie Rowland, *Free at Last*  
Second: Reid Mitchell, *The Vacant Chair*  
Finalists: Winthrop D. Jordan, *Tumult and Silence at Second Creek*  
John Evangelist Walsh, *The Shadows Rise*

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**1993** Lifetime Achievement Award: Kenneth M. Stamp  
Second: Albert Castel, *Decision in the West*  
Finalists: John F. Marszalek, *Sherman*  
Craig L. Symonds, *Joseph E. Johnston*

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**1992** Laureate: William S. McFeely, *Frederick Douglass*  
Charles Royster, *The Destructive War*  
Finalist: Ira Berlin, et al., *Freedom*

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**1991** Laureate: Ken Burns, *The Civil War*  
Finalists: Mark E. Neely, Jr., *The Fate of Liberty*  
Warren Wilkinson, *Mother May You Never See the Sights I Have Seen*