

2025 Gilder Lehrman Lincoln Prize Laureate Announced

Edda L. Fields-Black, author of COMBEE: Harriet Tubman, the Combahee River Raid, and Black Freedom During the Civil War, is this year's Lincoln Prize recipient

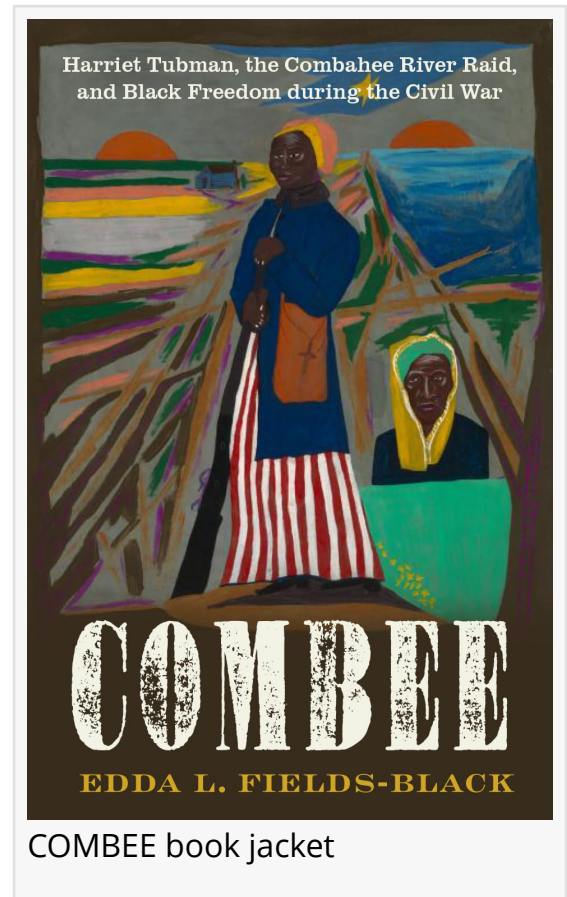
NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, March 5, 2025

/EINPresswire.com/ -- On the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's 1861 inauguration, the [Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History](#) announced that Edda L. Fields-Black, author of *COMBEE: Harriet Tubman, the Combahee River Raid, and Black Freedom During the Civil War* (Oxford University Press), is the recipient of the 2025 [Gilder Lehrman Lincoln Prize](#).

COMBEE offers readers an untold story about the Civil War and Civil War soldiers. Most readers know Harriet Tubman as the abolitionist who worked tirelessly to liberate enslaved people. Yet Tubman's work as a spy and scout for the Union Army during the Civil War has been little explored, including her role in the 1863 Combahee River Raid. The 2nd US South Carolina, a regiment of formerly enslaved men, destroyed the region's rice plantations, while nearly 800 enslaved people boarded Union ships.

Dr. Fields-Black is a professor of history and director of the Dietrich College Humanities Center at Carnegie Mellon University. Fields-Black has worked as a consultant at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, the International African American Museum, and the Senator John Heinz History Center. She is a direct descendant of a formerly enslaved man who liberated himself after the Battle of Port Royal, joined the 2nd South Carolina Volunteers, and fought in the Combahee River Raid and of Africans enslaved on rice plantations in Colleton County, SC.

Upon learning of the award, Fields-Black said, "I am thrilled to receive this award and honored to be the vehicle through which the story of Harriet Tubman's Civil War service and the Combahee River Raid are told. I came to the history of the Combahee River Raid through my many years of work on rice-growing technology, rice fields, and rice laborers (free and enslaved) on both sides of the Atlantic and my passion for uncovering new sources and methods, which reveal the voices





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James Basker, President and CEO, The Gilder Lehrman Institute

of Africans and people of African descent who did not author written sources.

Fields-Black will be recognized during an award ceremony to be held at the Harvard Club in New York City on April 8. The award includes a \$50,000 prize and a bronze replica of Augustus Saint-Gaudens's life-sized bust Lincoln the Man.

James G. Basker, president and CEO of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, said, "Edda Fields-Black's prize-winning book COMBEE tells an epic story about

Harriet Tubman and the struggle for freedom in the Civil War. Her deeply researched and beautifully written book restores to view hundreds of Black lives that would otherwise have been lost forever, in a story that should be made into a blockbuster film. Everyone should know about these heroic people!"

The five other finalists that the jury selected from seventy-one nominations are Robert K. D. Colby, *An Unholy Traffic: Slave Trading in the Civil War South* (Oxford University Press); Lesley J. Gordon, *Dread Danger: Cowardice and Combat in the American Civil War* (Cambridge University Press); Jon Grinspan, *Wide Awake: The Forgotten Force That Elected Lincoln and Spurred the Civil War* (Bloomsbury Publishing); Allen C. Guelzo, *Our Ancient Faith: Lincoln, Democracy, and the American Experiment* (Knopf); and Nigel Hamilton, *Lincoln vs. Davis: The War of the Presidents* (Little, Brown and Company).

About the Gilder Lehrman Lincoln Prize

The Gilder Lehrman Lincoln Prize is awarded annually to a work that enhances the general public's understanding of Abraham Lincoln, the American Civil War soldier, or the American Civil War era. The \$50,000 prize was established in 1990 by businessmen and philanthropists Lewis E. Lehrman and the late Richard Gilder, in partnership with Gettysburg College and Professor Gabor Boritt, director emeritus of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College.

About the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

Founded in 1994, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is the nation's leading K-12 American history organization. The Institute's mission is to promote the knowledge and understanding of American history through educational programs and interactive resources for teachers, students, and the general public. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is supported through the generosity of individuals, corporations, and foundations.

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