

Society for Military History  
Policies and Procedures  
Coffman First Manuscript Prize Guidelines

**Purpose.** To explain the procedures for selecting the recipient of the Coffman Award

**Description.** The Coffman Award recognizes the best first manuscript on a topic in military history. The winner receives a plaque and \$1000.00, which is presented at the Annual Meeting prior to the keynote address. Winners are also recognized at the SMH Awards Dinner.

**Committee Composition.** The committee consists of a chair and two members. Members serve three-year terms. Selection should be staggered to ensure continuity.

**Process.** The committee chair will advertise a call for submissions on relevant Listserves and online forums. Along with the other committee members, the chair will also contact faculty in programs with PhD students in military history. The call for submissions will ideally be circulated 8-10 weeks before the advertised application deadline. The committee chair will receive applications, then upload all materials to a shared folder on Google Drive.

The committee members will have access to this drive provided to them by the committee chair. After the application deadline, committee members will review all applications and keep notes of their assessment of each application.

By a date based on the dates of the Annual Meeting, each member of the committee will send to the committee chair a ranking of the top 3 dissertations. Committee rankings will be based on research quality, historiographical significance, originality, and the quality and clarity of the writing. Over the next few days, the committee will deliberate either via email or phone/video conference to arrive at an award winner. The committee may also choose to recognize up to two submissions with the designation of Honorable Mention.

In the event that the committee does not arrive at consensus, a vote will determine the winner.

The committee chair will notify the award winner, and will notify the other applicants of the committee's decision only after the winner has accepted the award.

The committee chair will notify the SMH president and vice president of the committee's decision, and will upload all pertinent communication regarding the deliberations to the Coffman team drive.