

For Immediate Release

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### Gilder Lehrman Center at Yale Announces Winner of Douglass Book Prize

September 20, 2006. New Haven, CT - The Gilder Lehrman Center (GLC) for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at the MacMillan Center has announced that Rebecca J. Scott, the Charles Gibson Distinguished University Professor of History and Professor of Law at the University of Michigan, has won the \$25,000 Frederick Douglass Prize for the best book on slavery or abolition of 2006.

Scott received the prestigious book prize for *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba after Slavery* (Harvard University Press). The book examines the path to freedom taken by two slave societies and their construction of post-emancipation communities. The prize is awarded by Yale GLC, which is sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

The other two finalists for the prize were Steven Deyle for *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (Oxford University Press) and Richard Follett for *The Sugar Masters: Planters and Slaves in Louisiana's Cane World, 1820-1860* (Louisiana State University Press).

The \$25,000 annual award is the most generous history prize in the field. The prize will be presented to Scott at a dinner in New York City in February 2007.

This year's three finalists were selected from nearly 80 entries by a jury of scholars that included Mia Bay (Rutgers University), Larry E. Hudson, Jr. (University of Rochester) and Jane Landers (Vanderbilt University). The winner was selected by a review committee of representatives from the GLC, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and Yale University.

"Rebecca Scott's *Degrees of Freedom: Louisiana and Cuba after Slavery* is a worthy recipient of the Frederick Douglass Prize," said Hudson, associate professor of history. "Its examination of the political obstacles to black freedom in post-emancipation Cuba and Louisiana provides an innovative and exciting approach to comparative history that will influence the study of the black experience for decades to come."

The Frederick Douglass Book Prize was established in 1999 to stimulate scholarship in the field of slavery and abolition by honoring outstanding books. Previous winners were Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan in 1999; David Eltis, 2000; David Blight, 2001; Robert Harms and John Stauffer, 2002; James F. Brooks and Seymour Drescher, 2003; Jean Fagan Yellin, 2004; and Laurent Dubois, 2005.

The award is named for Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), the slave who escaped bondage to emerge as one of the great American abolitionists, reformers, writers and orators of the 19th century.

The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance and Abolition, a part of the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale, was launched in November 1998 through a generous donation by philanthropists Richard Gilder and Lewis Lehrman and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Its mission is to promote the study of all aspects of slavery, in particular the chattel slave system, including African and African-American resistance to enslavement, abolitionist movements and the ways in which chattel slavery finally became outlawed.

In addition to encouraging the highest standards of new scholarship, the GLC is dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge through publications, conferences, educational outreach and other activities. For further information on events and programming, contact the center by phone (203) 432-3339, fax (203) 432-6943, or e-mail [gilder.lehrman.center@yale.edu](mailto:gilder.lehrman.center@yale.edu).

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