

Selma Moidel Smith Student Writing Competition in California Legal History



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The California Supreme Court Historical Society (CSCHS) encourages all students working on California legal history (NOT just the history of California courts) to apply for this prize. Papers may include elements of digital humanities and may also be co-authored. This is a GREAT WAY to get attention for your hard work!

\$5,000 first-place, \$2,500 second-place, and \$1,000 third-place prizes will be awarded to the best papers on California state or colonial history, broadly considered. Recent winners include a study of the death penalty in California, the evolution of California land law, the desegregation of Stanford Law School, and disability law and the campaign for independent living, as well as a jointly authored paper on Chinese adoption practices and their role in immigration decisions after the Chinese Exclusion Act.

We accept papers of at least 7,500 and not more than 15,000 words, including notes and other explanatory matter. The competition is open to students and recent graduates in history and/or law, provided that they did not have full-time academic employment at the time the paper was written. The paper should also be unpublished; prize winners will likely receive an offer to publish in *California Legal History*, CSCHS's journal.

Papers may be self-nominated or sent in by a professor or supervisor. To ensure anonymity, the author's name should appear only on a separate cover page, along with the author's mailing address, telephone number, email address, and the name of their school.

Submissions are due by **July 1, 2026** and should be sent to director@cschs.org with the subject line "Smith Prize." The winners will be announced in August 2026, and an award ceremony (likely over Zoom) will be held in August or September.

For the Prize Committee: Sarah Barringer Gordon, Laura Kalman, Stuart Banner

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT HISTORICAL SOCIETY