



CALIFORNIA
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY since 1871



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Jason Herrington
415-357-1848, ext. 209 jherrington@calhist.org

MANUSCRIPT REVEALING THE LITTLE-KNOWN STORY OF A WORLD WAR II HERO FOR JAPANESE AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS ANNOUNCED AS WINNER OF 2017 CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOOK AWARD

- ***Author to receive \$5,000 advance and publication of his manuscript in both print and e-book format by the California Historical Society and Heyday***

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. September 15, 2017 – The California Historical Society (CHS) and Heyday have announced the winner of the 2017 California Historical Society Book Award: *Rebel Lawyer: Wayne Collins and the Defense of Japanese American Rights*, the little-known story of ACLU lawyer Wayne Collins and his role in the defense of Japanese and Japanese American civil liberties during World War II.

The author, Charles Wollenberg, is Chair of Social Sciences and Professor of History at Berkeley City College. He will receive a \$5,000 advance, and his manuscript will be published in both print and e-book format by the California Historical Society and Heyday.

“I am honored to receive the California Historical Society Book Award for my work on Wayne Collins and his defense of Japanese American rights. Heyday and CHS are two of the most distinguished institutions promoting the serious study and understanding of California history. The award is a recognition of the importance of Collins’s historic fight for justice and its relevance to both past and present California,” says Charles Wollenberg.

Rebel Lawyer: Wayne Collins and the Defense of Japanese American Rights is the story of four key cases pertaining to the World War II incarceration of 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry—the majority of them American citizens—and the trial attorney who defended them. Collins’s passionate commitment to the nation’s constitutional principles put him in opposition to the U.S. government and groups that acquiesced to its internment policy. He came to be the most effective defender of the rights and liberties of the West Coast’s Japanese/Japanese American population and his battles on their behalf gave them the foundation on which to construct their own powerful campaigns for redress.

“All of us at CHS are thrilled that this year’s Book Award goes to Charles Wollenberg, who in *Rebel Lawyer* brings forth a well-researched, poignant, and timely work of new and powerful scholarship. *Rebel Lawyer* addresses the limitations of a democracy in a time of war and the men, women, and organizations—in this case the ACLU of Northern California—that confront them,” say Dr. Anthea Hartig, Executive Director and CEO of the California Historical Society.

Steve Wasserman, Publisher and Executive Director of Heyday, adds, “Heyday is enormously pleased that one of California’s most distinguished historians, Chuck Wollenberg, is this year’s recipient of the California Historical Society Book Award. Wollenberg is the author of numerous books, including a work on Dorothea Lange’s photographs of the Bay Area during World War II, which Heyday had the privilege of publishing. His new book will add to the scholarship of the tragedy that befell Japanese Americans during a shameful period in our state and nation’s history by telling the story of the remarkable civil-rights pioneer and lawyer, Wayne Collins.”

The California Historical Society Book Award is awarded annually for a book-length manuscript that makes an important contribution to scholarship and deepens public understanding of some aspect of California history. The work must adhere to high scholarly standards and must be lively and engaging to general readers as well. In addition to conventional works of historical scholarship, other genres that are considered include: biographies, collections of letters or essays, photographic or artistic studies, creative nonfiction, and other ways of informing the mind and engaging the imagination in an understanding of California’s past.

Finalists for the 2017 California Historical Society Book Award included: *It Was Here: San Francisco’s Lost Art Gem*, by Hiya Swanhuysen; *The City Beneath: A Century of Los Angeles Graffiti*, by Susan A. Phillips; and Warren Hinckle’s *Ransoming Pagan Babies: Selected Writings of Warren Hinckle*.

The California Historical Society Book Award allows CHS to continue its rich publishing tradition, which began in 1874. Heyday, founded in 1974, continues to be an important partner and collaborator with CHS. Together the organizations publish books on topics of California history that strive to transform California’s understanding of itself and shape its future.

About the Author: Charles Wollenberg is coeditor, with Marcia A. Eymann, of *What’s Going On? California and the Vietnam Era* (University of California Press, 2004) and author of *Marinship at War: Shipbuilding and Social Change in Wartime Sausalito* (Western Heritage, 1990) and *Berkeley: A City in History* (University of California Press, 2008).

About the California Historical Society: California Historical Society’s mission is to inspire and empower people to make California’s richly diverse past a meaningful part of their contemporary lives to create a more just and informed future. We hold one of the state’s top historical collections, revealing California’s social, cultural, economic, and political history and development through manuscripts, periodicals, photographs, fine arts, costumes, prints, drawings, maps, and ephemera—including some of the most cherished and valuable documents and images of California’s past. Through high-quality exhibitions, public programs, publications, research, and preservation, CHS keeps history alive through extensive public engagement. In opening up our vast and diverse collections to ever wider audiences, we invite meaning, encourage exchange, and enrich understanding. Learn more at californiahistoricalsociety.org.

About Heyday: Heyday is an independent, nonprofit publisher founded in 1974 in Berkeley, California. It promotes civic engagement and social justice and celebrates California’s natural beauty. Through books, public events, and outreach programs, Heyday works to give voice to the voiceless and to realize the California dream of diversity and enfranchisement. In 2017, Heyday marked thirty years of publishing *News from Native California*, the state’s leading magazine of Indian affairs. Heyday seeks to build a vibrant community of writers and readers, activists and thinkers. Learn more at www.heydaybooks.com.

###