

M. Andrew Holowchak

# Thomas Jefferson on Taste and the Fine Arts

SERIES IN AMERICAN HISTORY

## Summary

Jefferson tended to classify the books of his libraries under the Baconian headings of memory, reason, and imagination, which corresponded to history, philosophy, and the fine arts. Thus, education in the Fine Arts, which Jefferson listed as eight, was considered an indispensable part of the life of an educated person—especially a Virginian. An educated person needed knowledge of architecture, gardening, painting, sculpture, rhetoric, belle lettres, poetry music, and criticism, considered as a sort of meta-art. Knowledge of such arts was indispensable because each person, thought Jefferson, was equipped with a faculty of taste as well as ratiocination and a moral-sense faculty—each of which required cultivation for human thriving. An uncultivated imagination would severely impair ratiocination and moral sensitivity. This book is the first book-length attempt to flesh out and critically assess Jefferson's views on taste and the Fine Arts. It is a must read for any serious biographer of Jefferson.

## About the author

**M. Andrew Holowchak**, Ph.D. is a professor of philosophy and history, who taught at institutions such as University of Pittsburgh, University of Michigan, and Rutgers University, Camden. He is editor of 'Journal of Thomas Jefferson and His Time' and author/editor of over 50 books and over 200 published essays on topics such as ethics, ancient philosophy, science, psychoanalysis, and critical thinking. His current research is on Thomas Jefferson—he is acknowledged by many scholars to be the world's foremost authority—and he has published nearly 150 essays and 21 books on Jefferson. Holowchak has a B.A. in Psychology and Philosophy (Wayne State University), an M.A. in Philosophy (Wayne State), an M.A. in History and Philosophy of Science (University of Pittsburgh), and a Ph.D. in History and Philosophy of Science (University of Pittsburgh).

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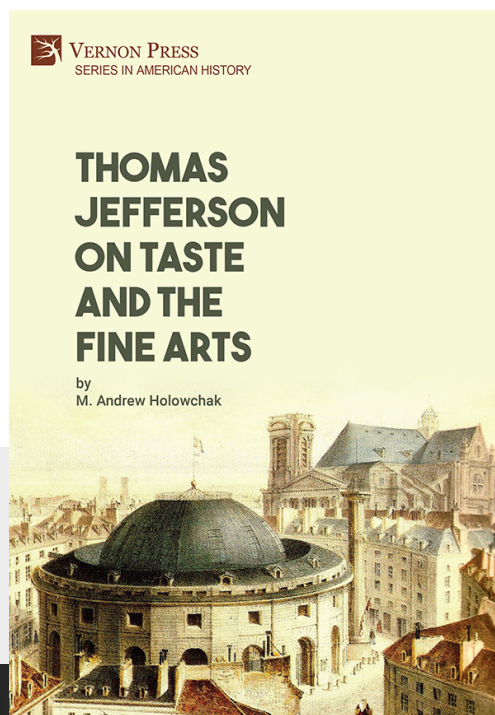
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