



The Jefferson Image in the American Mind

Merrill D. Peterson

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Since its publication in 1960, *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* has become a classic of historical scholarship. In it Merrill D. Peterson charts Thomas Jefferson's influence upon American thought and imagination since his death in 1826. Peterson's focus is "not primarily with the truth or falsity of the image either as a whole or in its parts, but rather with its illuminations of the evolving culture and its shaping power. It is posterity's configuration of Jefferson. Even more, however, it is a sensitive reflector, through several generations, of America's troubled search of the image of itself."

In a new Introduction Peterson discusses the publication of his book and remarks in the directions of new scholarship. He also draws attention to the continuing interest in Jefferson as shown by recent historical fiction, motion pictures and documentaries, by the remanaging of the Library of Congress main building and the National Gallery of Art's exhibition, *The Eye of Thomas Jefferson*, by President William Jefferson Clinton's preinaugural pilgrimage to Monticello, and by the Sotheby's auction of a Jefferson letter that commanded the highest auction price ever paid for such a manuscript.

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