

new publication. For example, his footnotes in several chapters refer to his “forthcoming” biography or “unpublished” work on Dickinson (166, 187, 209, 229), and the tables in chapter 6 bear the chapter number of their previous publication (Table 10.1, 10.2, etc.). But these are minor details. While many readers of this journal will have a few of these essays on their bookshelves already (this reviewer had four), few are likely to own copies of all of them. Scholars of Pennsylvania history and of the Civil War era will thus find this collection a useful addition to their libraries.

Christopher Newport University

JONATHAN W. WHITE

Thomas Eakins and the Uses of History. By AKELA REASON. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010. 232 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$55.)

Thomas Eakins created images of the past throughout his career. Akela Reason contends that Eakins valued these historical works as much or more than the paintings commonly regarded as his masterpieces (works such as *The Champion Single Sculls* [1871] and *The Gross Clinic* [1875]), and that through his historical works Eakins sought to showcase his professional beliefs, to link his work to the great art of the past, and to establish his artistic legacy.

The book is a series of five case studies arranged in chronological order. The first chapter, on *William Rush Carving His Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill River* (1876–77), argues that the portrayal of the sculptor and his model affirms the professional and moral integrity of Eakins’s vocation. The second chapter, which deals with a series of colonial revival paintings and sculptures that Eakins produced between 1876 and 1883, claims that these works were not simply inspired by the widespread nostalgia surrounding the Centennial Exhibition, but served as a way for Eakins to work through his ambivalence about professional education for women in light of contemporary notions of neurasthenia, the mental and physical breakdowns of several women close to him, and the large number of women among his students at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The third chapter considers Eakins’s classicizing sculptures, paintings, and photographic studies of the mid-1880s, especially the 1885 painting *Swimming*. Here Reason makes an extended comparison between Eakins’s artistic practices and the theories of the French art teacher Horace Lecoq de Boisbaudran, who held that through memory-training exercises and outdoor study of nude models in motion contemporary artists could replicate classical Greek artistic methods. The fourth chapter makes a case that *Crucifixion* (1880) was an attempt by Eakins to insert his work into a tradition of great art, but also an expression of his religious convictions. Reason discusses this painting earlier in her book than its date of execution would warrant on the grounds

that its most important exhibition history occurred later. She argues that following his dismissal from the Pennsylvania Academy in 1886 Eakins drew parallels between the life of Jesus and his own unorthodox teachings, betrayal by his students, and professional persecution. The final chapter examines Eakins's less-well-known sculptural collaborations in the early 1890s on the *Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch* in Brooklyn and the *Trenton Battle Monument*. Reason asserts that rather than trying to meet the aesthetic and professional expectations of his patrons and partners, Eakins prioritized placing himself within a tradition of great artists, exemplified for him by Phidias and Ghiberti, and thus sabotaged his prospects for more public sculpture commissions.

Among the significant contributions of Reason's book are sustained attention to the underappreciated importance of sculpture in Eakins's artistic endeavor and a better understanding of his overall aspirations for his work. The phrase "uses of history" in the title thus refers not just to the various ways in which Eakins interpreted historical subject matter as a means of stating his artistic principles, but also to his ongoing commitment to measuring his work against the great art of the past, from the Parthenon friezes to Renaissance relief sculpture to Baroque altarpieces to early American masters, even if this meant disregarding contemporary standards and thereby failing to achieve the degree of critical and professional success that he could have.

Though she cites Elizabeth Johns's classic 1983 study of Eakins as a model, Reason's book is based in biography more than in social history. Contemporary debates about, for instance, nervous illness or religious doctrine periodically play an important role in her account, but the basic questions she asks have to do with Eakins's motivations and intentions, and she construes her findings largely in personal rather than social terms. She concentrates more on an artist than on his art or the larger culture. As we continue to ponder the aesthetic and historical significance of what Eakins did it is worth paying attention, like Reason, to what he was trying to do.

Franklin & Marshall College

MICHAEL CLAPPER

Raymond Pace Alexander: A New Negro Lawyer Fights for Civil Rights in Philadelphia. By DAVID A. CANTON. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010. 272 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$50.)

Canton's engaging narrative tells the story of Raymond Pace Alexander (1897–1974), a prominent Philadelphia African American attorney who has been overlooked and perhaps forgotten compared to his fellow "New Negro" lawyers such as Charles Hamilton Houston, William Hastie, and Thurgood Marshall. It is a valuable contribution to the fields of legal history, civil rights his-