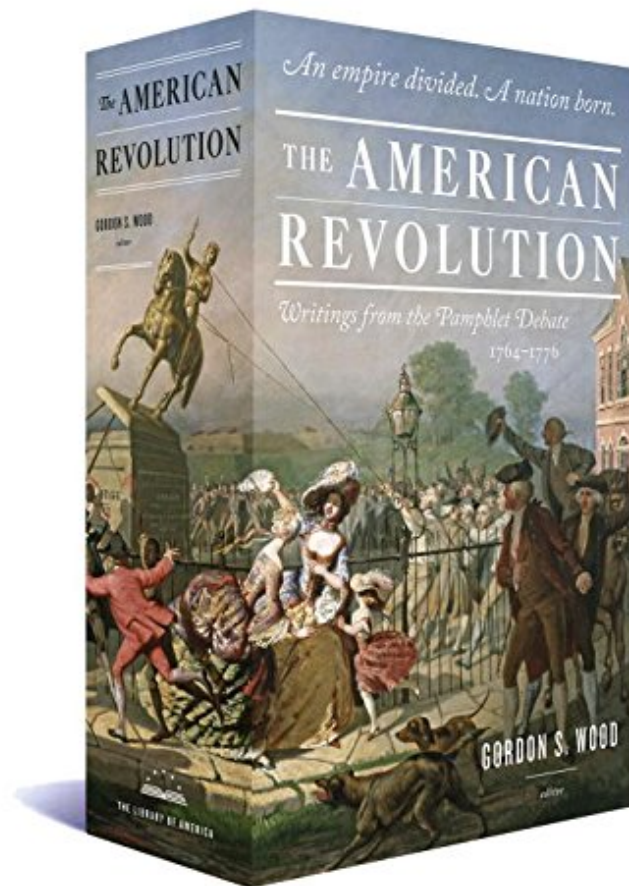


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The American Revolution: Writings from the Pamphlet Debate 1764-1776

Gordon S. Wood, Various
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For the 250th anniversary of the start of the American Revolution, acclaimed historian Gordon S. Wood presents a landmark collection of British and American pamphlets from the political debate that divided an empire and created a nation: In 1764, in the wake of its triumph in the Seven Years War, Great Britain possessed the largest and most powerful empire the world had seen since the fall of Rome and its North American colonists were justly proud of their

vital place within this global colossus. Just twelve short years later the empire was in tatters, and the thirteen colonies proclaimed themselves the free and independent United States of America. Now, for the 250th anniversary of the Stamp Act Crisis, the momentous upheaval that marked the beginning of the American Revolution, Pulitzer Prizewinning historian Gordon S. Wood presents a landmark two-volume edition of the political debate that led to the Declaration of Independence. This unprecedented collection gathers in two authoritative Library of America volumes the complete texts of thirty-nine of the most fascinating and influential British and American pamphlets of the period: inexpensive, widely circulated works that were the instant media of their day, ideal for the rapid exchange of ideas. In the first volume a controversy about the origin and function of colonies quickly becomes a deeper dispute over the nature of political liberty itself, in which Massachusetts lawyer James Otis boldly asserts the colonists natural rights; Benjamin Franklin gives dramatic testimony against the Stamp Act before the House of Commons; John Dickinson calls for collective action in the famous Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania; and the so-called Boston Pamphlet, written by Samuel Adams and others, turns the focus of debate to the question of sovereignty, setting the stage for the final crisis to come. In the second volume Thomas Jefferson advances a vision of a radically new kind of empire in the work that first made him famous; Joseph Galloway presents an ingenious but ill-fated plan for preserving union with Great Britain; Samuel Johnson gives vent to his deep animus for the Americans and their pretensions to liberty; Edmund Burke makes an eloquent case for reconciliation before its too late; and Thomas Paine, in the truly revolutionary Common Sense, proclaims that the birthday of a new world is at hand. Prepared by the nations leading historian of the American Revolution, each volume includes an introduction, headnotes, biographical notes about the writers, a chronology charting the rise and fall of the first British empire, a textual essay describing the production, reception, and influence of each work, and detailed explanatory notes. As a special feature, the set also features typographic reproductions of the pamphlets original title pages.