



**The American Revolution: Writings from the
Pamphlet Debate 1764-1772: (Library of America
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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. In between, there occurred an extraordinary contest of words between American and Britons, and among Americans themselves, which addressed all of the most fundamental issues of politics: the nature of power, liberty, representation, rights and constitutions, and sovereignty. This debate was carried on largely in pamphlets and from the more than a thousand published on both sides of the Atlantic during the period Gordon S. Wood has selected thirty-nine of the most interesting and important to reveal as never before how this momentous revolution unfolded. This first of two volumes traces the debate from its first crisis—Parliament's passage of the Stamp Act, which in the summer of 1765 triggered riots in American ports from Charleston, South Carolina, to Portsmouth, New Hampshire—to its crucial turning point in 1772, when the Boston Town Meeting produces a pamphlet that announces their defiance to the world and changes everything. Here in its entirety is John Dickinson's justly famous *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, considered the most significant political tract in America prior to Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. Here too is the dramatic transcript of Benjamin Franklin's testimony before Parliament as it debated repeal of the Stamp Act, among other fascinating works. The volume includes an introduction, headnotes, a chronology of events, biographical notes about the writers, and detailed explanatory notes, all prepared by our leading expert on the American Revolution. As a special feature, each pamphlet is preceded by a typographic reproduction of its original title page.

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