

This English debate about the Revolution was initiated by Richard Price's sermon, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*, which he delivered a month after the imprisonment of the French king and queen. When a year later Edmund Burke published a rebuttal to Price, his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, the controversy heated up. *Reflections* drew more than fifty further responses, from Mary Wollstonecraft, in her *Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790), and Thomas Paine, in his *Rights Of Man* (1791), most famously. The extracts we have chosen convey the wildly divergent tones those four writers brought to their debating: euphoric in Price; declamatory and sometimes blatantly sensationalist in Burke; forthrightly contemptuous in Wollstonecraft, who mocks her opponent's rhapsodic style; pointed and plain in Paine, who purposefully develops an accessible style meant to appeal to the newly literate. The loyalists soon found that, despite their belief that the common people were better suited intellectually to deference than to discussion, they too needed to mobilize popular support and address Paine's broad audience. The British government therefore launched a full-throttled propaganda campaign of its own—an attempt to communicate conservative ideas across the barriers of social class that itself represented a radical break with tradition. This section ends by sampling the pivotal contributions to that campaign that he etched during the 1790s—works that seem to have begun as pictorial synopses of loyalist pamphlets, but whose shock tactics took them far beyond that assigned function. Gillray's exaggerated depictions of English radicals and members of the Parisian mob made revolutionary ideas look depraved and a tad ludicrous and convinced many that total anarchy was the inevitable consequence of any mass movement for political reform.

## RICHARD PRICE

Richard Price (1723–1791) was a Unitarian minister in London and a writer on moral philosophy, population, and the national debt, among other topics. The full title of his sermon, which prompted Burke's *Reflections* and in turn the scores of responses to Burke, is *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country, Delivered on Nov. 4, 1789, at the Meeting-House in the Old Jewry, to the Society for Commemorating the Revolution in Great Britain*. The London Revolution Society had been founded a year earlier to mark the hundredth anniversary of the “bloodless” Glorious Revolution of 1688, which ended the short reign of King James II and produced the Declaration of Right, establishing a limited monarchy and guaranteeing the civil rights of privileged classes. The first two-thirds of the extracts given here commemorate that Revolution; in the final third, beginning “What an eventful period is this!” Price greets with religious fervor “two other Revolutions, both glorious,” the American and the French. The *Discourse* went through six editions in its first year of publication.

### From A Discourse on the Love of Our Country

We are met to thank God for that event in this country to which the name of THE REVOLUTION has been given; and which, for more than a century, it has been usual for the friends of freedom, and more especially Protestant Dissenters, under the title of the REVOLUTION SOCIETY, to celebrate with