



# American and French Revolutions



IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.  
The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America

## U.S. Declaration of Independence

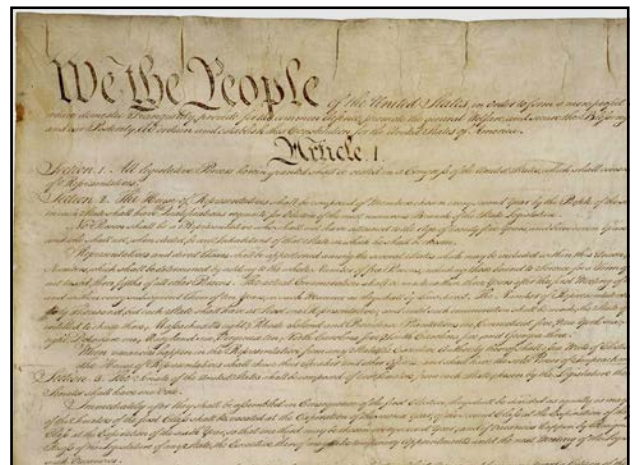
- Thomas Jefferson, echoing Locke, appealed to man's natural rights in the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain, July 4, 1776:

*— "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."*



## Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

Thomas Jefferson was a "founding father" of the United States, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence (1776), and the third President of the United States (1801-1809).



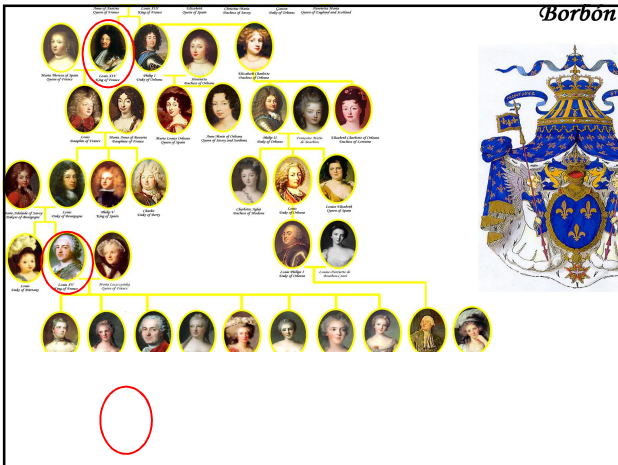


## The French Revolution

The French Revolution (1789–1799) was a period of radical social and political upheaval in French and European history. The absolute monarchy that had ruled France for centuries collapsed in just three years. French society underwent an epic transformation as feudal, aristocratic, and religious privileges evaporated under a sustained assault from liberal political groups and the masses on the streets. Old ideas about hierarchy and tradition succumbed to new Enlightenment principles of citizenship and inalienable rights.

### French Revolution Timeline

- (1649 England - King Charles I tried and executed)
- (1688 England - The Glorious Revolution)
- (1776 – American Declaration of Independence)
- 1789, June: Tennis Court Oath
- 1789, July: Storming of the Bastille
- 1789, August: *Declaration of the Rights of Man*
- 1793: King Louis XVI executed
- 1793-1794: The Reign of Terror
- 1799: Napoleon Bonaparte comes to power.



### France's Financial Situation

- France had financed its participation in the American Revolution with high interest loans. By early 1789, the French Crown was in financial crisis.
- The peasants and middling orders were expected to solve the crisis by paying more taxes.
- The richest groups, the aristocrats and clergy, paid less taxes than the poor.
- People demanded a meeting of the Estates General.



*Hameau de la Reine*, The Queen's hamlet, 1783



Thomas Gainsborough, *Haymaker and Sleeping Girl*, c. 1785

## Neoclassic Style

As time passed, many artists were repulsed by the ornate grandeur of the Baroque and Rococo styles and sought to revert to the earlier, simpler art of the Renaissance, creating Neoclassicism.

Neoclassicism was the artistic component of the intellectual movement known as the *Enlightenment*, which was similarly idealistic.

David was the most famous Neoclassical painter. He incorporated revolutionary themes of republicanism and personal sacrifice into his art.

*Oath of the Horatii*, David, 1784.



## Neoclassical Architecture

Neoclassical architecture was an architectural style produced by the neoclassical movement that began in the mid-18th century.

It is a style principally derived from the architecture of Classical Greece and Rome.



Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, Scotland (1826)

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## The Estates General

- The three traditional Estates of France
  - The First Estate was the clergy
  - The Second Estate was the aristocracy
  - The Third Estate was everybody else
    - Represented by lawyers, bankers, and merchants of the middling orders
- Any legislation required the approval of two of the estates.
- But one thing they had in common, many had been reading the *philosophes*.

## The Tennis Court Oath

- Some 'enlightened' members of the First and Second Estates joined the Third and they proclaimed themselves the National Assembly.
- After being locked out of their normal meeting place, they went across the street to an indoor tennis court.
- They vowed to remain there until France had a new constitution.



## Storming of the Bastille

- July 14, 1789, the *sans-culottes* (without breeches) stormed the Bastille looking for arms to protect the National Assembly. They soon took over the government of Paris. Aristocrats fled the country.
- August 26, 1789, the National Assembly ratified the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, a summary of Enlightenment thought on the state.

## Constitution of 1791

- France remained a monarchy, but one governed by a constitution.
- It attempted to expand civil liberties, empower the middling orders, and base the state on reason, not faith.
- But nobody was satisfied; the King, the ruling class, the people of France, and the royalty of Europe all had problems with it.
- In 1772, most of Europe went to war with France to restore the monarchy.

## French Nationalism

- The events of 1791-1792 convinced the French people that they were no longer the subjects of a king, but the citizens of a nation.
- Rouget de Lisle penned *La Marseillaise*.
- The French people rallied to the revolution, formed a citizen army, and defeated the smaller professional armies opposing them.

## The Reign of Terror (1793-1794)

- Beset by enemies on all sides, France turned to radical solutions. The government created a Committee of Public Safety to eliminate its enemies with show trials and executions.
- It initially targeted nobles and other conspirators against the revolution, but eventually anyone that opposed the Committee was not safe.
- Overall, 250,000 were arrested, 17,000 were tried and executed, 12,000 were guillotined without trial, and many more died in jail.
- Marat sent many of those people to their deaths by signing their death warrants.

## France After the Reign of Terror

- The Reign of Terror ended July 1794 with the death of Robespierre.
- As in the English Civil War, the Revolution now took a turn towards conservatism.
- By 1799, the country was sick of revolution, war, high taxes, high prices, new constitutions, and politicians.
- The result, the rise of Napoleon, and eventually, the return of monarchy.



David, *Napoleon Crossing through the St. Bernard Pass*, 1801