

Manifest Destiny

During the American Revolutionary War and then again in 1812, America sought to take possession of the British colonies to its north – known as the Canadas. Had they been successful the lives of Canadians would have been forever changed. What would these changes have looked like? Would they have been to the benefit of Canadians?



What do you think the flag of a united North American nation would look like? Give it a try...

One of the ways that historians decide if an event is worthy of study, is if it resulted in change. There is no doubt that the War of 1812 led to, or had the potential to lead to, dramatic change in North America.

If the United States had won the War of 1812, how would life change?

	True	False
Canada would have a tax payer funded healthcare system.		
Hockey would be Canada's most popular sport.		
Access to consumer goods would increase.		
Products would be less expensive.		
First Nations treaty rights would be respected.		
Our entertainment (movies, music, tv, etc.) preferences would be different.		
Greater access to internet services.		
Greater chance my family entered military service.		
My family would still be living in this area.		
Vacation plans for my family would change.		
Our school would have a football team.		

Going to War

On June 17, 1812, the United States congress passed a resolution to declare war on Great Britain. It was the closest vote to declare war in the history of the United States as it passed only 19-12. This vote shows that there was not widespread support for a war on Canada; however, Britain's war with Napoleon was enough to convince most American policymakers that they could finally capture British North America. This movement, led by the **War Hawks**, pushed their idea of **manifest destiny**. The idea that all of North America should be a united nation under the American flag.

One of the many unique differences between Canada and the United States is how each nation declares war. Analyze how each nation declares war and decide which structure you prefer.

Canada	United States of America
The ability to declare war in Canada rests on the prime minister and his/her cabinet. This is built upon the British system still in use today. Parliament has the ability to question the prime minister's decision and debate the war, but does not have the power to end a conflict through a direct vote. If parliament wanted to end a conflict, they would have to have a vote of no confidence in the government. If the government was defeated, a new government would be formed with a new prime minister. The new prime minister would now have the power to end the conflict.	In the United States, the ability to declare war rests on congress. This was written into the Constitution to ensure that power would be shared and not concentrated too heavily on one person. The last time the U.S. formally declared war was during WW2. Since that time, congress has passed congressional authorizations of use of military force. This gives the president (commander in chief) the ability to make wartime decisions.

One of the ways that Canada and the United States differ is in the powers granted to its leaders. Look at the list below and put a checkmark next to the items you believe should be the decision of a nation's leader (prime minister or president):

- Declare war
- Decide to have a navy and maintain it
- Decide how large the army is and maintain it
- Appropriate dollars in order to support the war effort
- Suspend the writ of habeas corpus
- Make decisions on the battlefield
- Power to call a militia to execute laws, repel invaders, and suppress insurrections
- Make treaties that officially end the conflict
- Make rules for governing of new lands acquired through war

