

“Nation Building and History” Seminar

How is history used to build a sense of nationhood? In 2017 the Canadian Government was commemorating the 150th anniversary of Confederation – a celebration branded as Canada150. Produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), *Canada: The Story of Us*, was a series of 10 episodes that aired throughout the year.

Writing for the *Globe and Mail*, John Doyle wrote “For history buffs, it’s a massive waste of time. For anyone else, it’s just plain boring.”

Doyle went on to say:

"The Story of Us is not meant to be a comprehensive and linear account of Canada's history nor a definitive history of Canada," CBC spokesman Chuck Thompson explained, while noting that about 75 real historians were consulted on the project. "It's a docudrama that highlights the often untold stories of just a few of the extraordinary people and events that helped shape our nation."

As a class, we are going to watch **Episode Three: War of Independence (1812 - 1813)** and then have a university-seminar to explore its value to our study of Canada.

Some questions:

1. What is the purpose of such a series? What does it tell us about Canada in 2017?
2. What do you notice about the language used in the episode? What do you think was the purpose of such language being used?
3. Do you think this episode was effective? What did you like? What didn't you like?
4. Anything else you found interesting.