

# 1970's to 2000's has life changed in the united states?

[War](#), [Cold War](#)



1970's to 2000's — Has Life Changed in the United States? It is important to learn from our history and draw the right conclusions from our past. As George Steiner once said, " Each new historical era mirrors itself in the picture and archive mythology of its past or of a past borrowed from other cultures. It tests its sense of identity, of regress or new achievement, against that past. " (Web) However, while each historical era may mirror itself on the past, we can't assume that what we are facing today is exactly the same as what we have faced previously. One of the biggest similarities between the 1970s and the 2000's in the United States is that our troops are overseas fighting a war. In the early 1970's, the U. S. was at war in Vietnam and today we are at war in Afghanistan. Some people will say that these wars were both battles that the U. S. should not be involved in while others will look at the opposite side and say that we are there for good reasons. While there are similarities for each war, there are also differences, both sides of which should be examined. To begin with, let's look at the reasons for why the U. S. became involved in these wars. The Vietnam War was a Cold War-era military conflict that occurred in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia over a span of twenty (20) years to eliminate the communist government of South Vietnam. The U. S., as part of its commitment to the containment of communism during the Cold War, allied with South Vietnam to prevent a communist takeover of their republic. The War in Afghanistan has currently been ongoing for 11 years and began primarily because of the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. The goal of the Afghanistan invasion was to dismantle the al-Qaeda terrorist organization and ending its use of Afghanistan as a base. The U. S. also stated that the war would bring about

the end of the Taliban regime and create a democratic state in Afghanistan. Let's start by looking at some of the similarities of these two wars. First, as stated previously, the United States was at war for many years in each conflict. While Afghanistan has not reached the same length of time as Vietnam, we are not that far behind. The U. S. occupied Vietnam for approximately 15 years and we have occupied Afghanistan for over 8 years now and there is no word on when we will pull our troops back. A second similarity is that support for the war among Americans is divided about Afghanistan just like it was with Vietnam. Finally, a third similarity is that the United States went to war to change the government of the opposing nation. On the other side though are the differences between the Vietnam and Afghanistan Wars. In the previous paragraph, it was stated that both wars were fought to assist with changing the government of the nations. However, the main reason that the Afghanistan War began was because of the attack on the U. S. that was instigated by the Taliban regime and al-Qaeda terrorist organization; Vietnam did not attack the U. S. prior to our invasion which is a large difference between why the wars began. Second, is the method of supplying troops to man these wars. While both wars involved U. S. troops that voluntarily enlisted in the military and fight these battles, only the Vietnam War required drafting additional troops due to the number of people needed. Because of the all-volunteer military in Afghanistan, there are less American families at home that are missing their loved ones which may be why there is less opposition now than there was during the Vietnam War. A third difference is the amount of casualties in the Vietnam War versus the Afghanistan War. There were millions of people killed in the Vietnam War

with over 58, 000 of them from the United States. However, in Afghanistan, the number of casualties is much lower with best estimates of 20, 000 total and 1, 985 American fatalities (Web). While this paper focuses solely on two wars throughout the history of the United States, there have been many others that have occurred since the initial war, The American Revolution that founded the U. S. starting in 1774. Some of these wars, like the Civil War and the American-Mexican War, involved only the U. S. or one other nation while others, like World War 1 and 2, involved multiple nations. As military intelligence and technology continues to grow, more and more people may be wary and anxiously awaiting World War 3. Can anything be done to stop the wars among nations? I believe that while future wars can be prevented, they likely won't unless people start to learn from their past. Some ways to prevent future war would be for people to be more tolerant of other nation's cultural, political and religious beliefs. Part of how wars continue to begin is the West's tendency to impose our own cultures, values and expectations on other regions without taking the time to understand where the people we're dealing with are coming from. People interested in stopping terror and avoiding war cannot afford to repeat that mistake. Works Cited Operation Enduring Freedom iCasualties. org. Web. 31 May 2012 Steiner, George. In Bluebeard's Castle. In Bluebeard's Castle, 1971. Web. 31 May 2012 Vietnam War Casualties VietnamGear. com. Web. 31 May 2012.