
“Going to Canada”: The Politics and
Poetics of Northern Exodus

A cover story in the January 4, 2004 *New York Times Magazine* titled “The Things They Carry” is a reminder that the Vietnam era lingers uneasily in U.S. political consciousness.¹ Alluding in its title to the ubiquitously anthologized short story by Tim O’Brien, the article claims that the Democrats would face difficult questions about national security because of their image as the anti-war party, which extends back to their opposition to U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The questions about military duty that surfaced around the 2004 Presidential race are nothing new: each major election since the 1970s has served as a symbolic referendum on that tumultuous moment in U.S. history, as boomer-age candidates are called to account for their wartime activities and sized up for the quality of their service or their failure to serve. The persistence of the controversy implies that despite the widespread sentiment that the Vietnam War was a mistake, the American electorate remains hostile toward those who are seen as having shirked their duty during a time of war.

Worst of all are those men who literally abandon the nation. Bill Clinton was repeatedly criticized for studying abroad at Oxford while his compatriots faced the draft. During the 1986 Republican National Convention, George Bush senior defended running mate Dan Quayle against allegations that he evaded his duty by noting that Quayle “did not go to Canada.”² His strategy was echoed by the younger Bush, who stated, “I was not prepared to shoot my eardrum out with a shotgun in order to get a deferment. Nor was I willing to go to Canada. So I chose to better myself by learning how to fly airplanes.”³ In the vernacular of a U.S. election year, “going to Canada” becomes synonymous with bad character. As George W. Bush implies, it is as foolish and self-destructive as shooting oneself in the head.

The draft dodger who fled to Canada is a figure maligned from all points on the political spectrum.⁴ His participation in the largest politically motivated exodus since the American Revolution gives the lie to the myth of the U.S. as a harbor for immigrants and a bastion of tolerance for dissent. The draft dodger is a treasonous radical from the vantage of mainstream political rhetoric, which insists that, in times of

war, military service is the *only* genuine way to fulfill one's civic obligation. From farther left, the draft dodger looks solipsistic and apolitical, the target of Todd Gitlin's accusatory question, "What if the logic of [the counterculture's] individualistic revolt led no further than sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll, and dodging the draft?"⁵ These views are so heavily overdetermined, and the understanding of politics associated with them so narrow, that they obstruct a more complex view of the place of draft resistance in North American culture of the late 1960s.

The draft is a rare moment when U.S. citizens are required to serve their country in return for the individual liberties so cherished in the national consciousness. Linda Kerber has argued that American political theory has been far more concerned with the rights of citizenship than with the ways in which "the state can use its power to constrain the freedoms of individual citizens."⁶ Franklin Roosevelt emphasized the obligatory dimensions of civic identity when he signed the 1940 Draft Bill, claiming that it "broadened and enriched our basic concepts of citizenship. Besides the clear and equal opportunities, we have set forth the underlying other duties, obligations and responsibilities of equal service."⁷ Yet those who opposed the draft argued that it does not require "equal service" of all citizens but rather reflects the prevailing class and racial stratification of U.S. society. It was a well-known fact that money and social connections provided numerous avenues to evade the military. Many came to believe that, in addition to the blatant inequalities they observed within the Selective Service, the war in Vietnam represented a betrayal of national principles. To enlist in the armed forces would mean serving a state that was acting in ways that were fundamentally un-American. The draft thus raises broader questions about the citizen's obligation to the state and the state's relationship to the underlying values and ideals of national community. When he crosses national borders, the draft dodger invites additional questions about whether it is possible to conceive a viable form of American citizenship independent of the state.

A comprehensive examination of these questions requires an understanding of citizenship that extends beyond official definitions to an individual's felt attachments to local, national, and transnational communities. In what follows, I focus on literary representations because they access this emotive register by drawing parallels between the crisis of citizenship occasioned by the draft and problems of romantic love, sexual excess, or marital discord. I begin by examining fiction of the 1980s and 1990s, where the draft dodger's conflict with the state is typically played out as a romantic crisis, where love relations that span the U.S.-Canadian border function as analogues for political relations. I then turn to writings of the Vietnam era, where the emphasis is more often on sex than love. Crude, non-normative, and promiscuous sex is figured as the alternative to the impersonal

machinations of the state. In some ways, these narratives replay a classic American contradiction between Thoreauvian individualism and democratic egalitarianism. But they situate that contradiction in a particular historical context where the U.S. economy has risen to global dominance and where an increasingly bureaucratic state is committed to the management of populations at home and the spread of American policy abroad.⁸ Because this is also the era of sexual revolution, the protagonists' struggles are worked out as much in the bedroom as in the domain of protest politics. The personal and the political collapse into one another as the liberation of sexuality becomes a way of subverting the authoritarian intervention of the state. The danger of this position is that it risks losing sight of the international context responsible for the draft dodger's plight. The final set of narratives I consider are by American women. Because they are not subject to the draft themselves, but are ambivalently "enlisted" to serve the needs of male partners, they write with the broadest sense of perspective on the personal and political stakes of "going to Canada."

The Things They Carried

When New York Congressman Ed Koch visited Canada in 1969, he praised the draft dodgers as "intelligent young Americans seeking answers to questions which should bother every thoughtful individual." While conceding that "they had taken a route different from that which most would take in responding to the problems besetting our country," he came to the affirmative conclusion, "they took it proudly."⁹ Today such a statement would be tantamount to political suicide. How did the draft dodger sink from proud American to his current status as political pariah? An initial answer to that question comes from fiction of the 1980s and 1990s in which authors—both American and Canadian—work through their ambivalence about "the sixties" through the degraded figure of the draft dodger. Stories and novels by such best-selling American authors as Tim O'Brien ("Winnipeg"), John Irving (*A Prayer for Owen Meany*), and Scott Turow (*The Laws of Our Fathers*) and Canadians Margaret Atwood (*The Robber Bride*) and Mordechai Richler (*Barney's Version*), share key similarities in form and content. In each case, middle-aged characters in the present (the 1980s and 1990s) look back to their experiences as young people during the Vietnam era. This temporal counterpoint bespeaks a melancholic attachment to the past whereby current events persistently reopen the wound inflicted by the draft. Regardless of where he is thirty years later, the draft dodger and those around him continue to be scarred by his decision to leave the country. Significantly, migration is seen differently from one side of the border than it is from the other. In the fiction of the American authors, the draft dodger re-

mains pathologically bound to the U.S. The source of his melancholy is a love object whose loss is closely tied to separation from home and country. To the Canadian authors, the draft dodger may be a fugitive, but he is also an invader who demands the attention of his Canadian saviors and steals the affections of Canadian women. For both Canadians and Americans, the draft dodger is associated with exile. No matter how long he resides in Canada, he remains an American who bears the burdens of his nation's crimes, as well as of his decision to abandon it.

Fiction from the U.S. tends to focus on the irreparable personal damage incurred by dodging the draft. This dilemma is most interestingly captured by Tim O'Brien, the preeminent chronicler of the American experience in Vietnam. The characters in O'Brien's highly autobiographical stories typically object to the draft but cannot stomach the censure of patriotic families and communities that would be precipitated by a refusal to serve. These men go to war haunted by the prospect of desertion, which they see as a courageous and terrifying road not taken. To the soldier, flight to Canada seems like the ultimate act of bravery. While war places one's life in danger, resistance requires a leap of faith into a far more perilous unknown. It is not until 2000 that O'Brien depicts an actual draft dodger in a short story called "Winnipeg."¹⁰ Far from the strong and principled rebel imagined by the enlisted men, Billy McMann is as debilitated by his flight to Canada as were those who went to Vietnam. Having bravely followed his political convictions, Billy arrives in Canada in desperate straits: "he had no friends in Winnipeg. He had no job. He had no ambitions that reached beyond the next sunrise."¹¹ Billy's suffering corroborates the fears of the enlisted men in O'Brien's stories, who would rather go to war than face the terror of exile. Whereas he once acted on his convictions, Billy leads an unremarkable and depressing life in Canada. Years later, he still lies awake "wondering how things might have turned out if he had gone to the war and died politely and pleased everyone but himself."¹² For O'Brien, desertion *always* means going against the desires of one's community. The implication is that seeking to please himself has left Billy as damaged as if he had gone to war. He remains in a perpetual state of exile because he can neither accept his decision nor forget what he has left behind. With this story O'Brien, who went unwillingly to Vietnam, deflates the suggestion that the draft dodger was a heroic figure or that fleeing to Canada would have had less traumatic results than military service.

The most negative picture of the American expatriate in Canada must be the protagonist of John Irving's *A Prayer for Owen Meany* (1989), the angry, misanthropic John Wheelwright. Like Billy McMann, John has lived north of the border for twenty years. He is not technically a draft dodger, having been disqualified by the loss of his

trigger finger, which was deliberately cut off by his best friend, the eponymous Owen Meany. Disillusioned with his country, John emigrates to Canada after Owen's death. Although he becomes a long-term resident, John expresses no interest in Canadian culture and stubbornly refuses to assimilate. His anti-Americanism surfaces as a form of self-hatred; he feels the evils of the state with a visceral intensity, as if they were extensions of his own identity. By the time he is narrating the story in 1985, he is a celibate recluse whose only passion is for reading U.S. newspapers where reports on the dishonesty of the Reagan administration fill him with impotent rage. Too angry to return to America, John remains an exile who is tormented by, but unable to dissociate from, his hatred for the U.S. government.

In U.S. fiction, the draft dodger remains in a perpetual state of exile. Disillusioned and estranged from his country, he cannot imagine himself as anything other than a displaced American. This pattern is reiterated in the novels' treatment of romance, where America is personified as a lost love object. Seth Weissman, the protagonist of Scott Turow's *The Laws of Our Fathers* (1996), is heartbroken when his girlfriend Sonny refuses to follow him to Canada after he has received his draft notice. Their paths cross again thirty years later, when Sonny has become a judge, a career that embodies respect for the law. Their reunion suggests the possibility of reconciliation between the draft dodger and the nation that once betrayed him. America is symbolically figured as a middle-aged woman who is cautiously forgiving, willing to give a failed relationship another go. With their renewed commitment, a generation that once threatened to forget the laws of its fathers is now ready to cherish them and pass them on to its successors.

No such happy ending is available to Billy McMann in "Winnipeg." If Turow brings closure by reconciling the draft dodger with the America that he always loved, O'Brien writes of a wound that cannot be healed. An author whose career has been devoted to male trauma, O'Brien seems interested in women only as they enable, exacerbate, or become victims of masculine crisis. In "Winnipeg," Billy is tormented by the loss of his girlfriend, the conservative, all-American Dorothy Stier, who reneges on her promise to join him in Canada. Despite the fact that she has failed him, Billy cannot forget her: "Dorothy was an obsession . . . a rock in his heart, but he trusted, over time, that he would learn not to love her so much, and not to hate her."¹³ Yet those intensely ambivalent feelings do not fade with time and two decades later Billy has transformed Dorothy into a symbol for the promises and betrayals of America. After half a lifetime in Canada, he still longs for and resents the country he was forced to leave behind.

Whereas both O'Brien and Turow figure America as a woman, *A Prayer for Owen Meany* is a story of chaste love between men. De-

scended from a strongly matriarchal family that arrived on the Mayflower, John's identification with his female ancestors and his deep American roots locate him in the position occupied by women in O'Brien or Turow.¹⁴ Like the women of his generation, he is ineligible for the draft. The absent trigger finger is an obvious symbol of castration and the external signifier of John's lifelong virginity (thinking in typically feminine terms, he reflects, "I decided that, in the long run, my virginity was valuable only if I kept it"¹⁵). John is also an unabashed misogynist who writes about potential female love interests with disgust. And although he denies the confused allegation that he is a "non-practicing homosexual,"¹⁶ he readily confesses that Owen was his only love and that he moved to Canada because Owen wished him to go. But instead of finding a fresh start there, John remains mired in the past and masochistically attached to a self-hating Americanism.

The draft dodger fares no better in the work of late twentieth-century Canadian authors. Like their U.S. counterparts, they view him as unassimilably American and see his resistance to military service as a sign of deep character flaws. However, in the work of Margaret Atwood and Mordechai Richler, the draft dodger becomes a figure for Canadian anxiety about invasion from the south. Margaret Atwood's *The Robber Bride* (1993) looks at the draft dodger through the eyes of a Canadian woman. Writing in the 1990s, Atwood, who was an active participant in the Toronto anti-draft movement in the early 1970s, represents the draft dodger as a ridiculous and ungrateful character. Thirty years after the Vietnam War, she seems more concerned with the threats U.S. cultural and political hegemony pose to Canadian sovereignty than with the plight of American men at a particular moment of history. The draft dodger is no longer a victim, but rather the embodiment of his nation's abuse of power. Atwood's sympathies lie with the Canadian Charis, a woman who is ignorant of world events and closely tied to the local Canadian setting of her home on the Toronto Islands. Charis's involvement with a draft dodger named Billy serves as an allegory of U.S.-Canadian relations. As she becomes aware of world events for the first time, Charis's sense of personal insignificance gets tied to her perception that America is more important than Canada. She describes Billy's origins in the American South as "strange, and more dangerous—that much is clear—and maybe because of that, superior. The things that happen there are said to matter in the world. Unlike the things that happen here."¹⁷ Like O'Brien's Billy McMann, Atwood's Billy is lonely and disoriented. However, she downplays the emotions surrounding the fugitive's painful arrival in order to concentrate on his host's feeling of being treated as a stopping point on the road to more important destinations. Billy soon becomes distant and neglectful. His self-absorption leaves Charis with a sense that she is "a temporary convenience, like the native brides of sol-

diers who are posted abroad. Although he doesn't know it yet, she isn't his real life. But he is hers."¹⁸ Having deserted his country, Billy also deserts the woman who sheltered him and is pregnant with his child.

Atwood's condemnation extends to the foolish and juvenile activities of the local draft resistance community. Charis doubts whether "all these cloak-and-dagger props, the sneaking around and the codes and pretend names, are really necessary. It's like kids playing. But the activity seems to give Billy more energy, and a purpose in life."¹⁹ Filled with an inflated sense of their own importance, the draft dodgers are silly and melodramatic. The trauma of exile depicted so seriously by a writer like O'Brien is diminished when seen through the eyes of a Canadian woman and channeled through the sarcastic voice of the narrator. Having written persistently about abusive relationships between men and women, Atwood grants the problem of male self-absorption priority over the problem of the draft, which was resolved twenty years before she wrote *The Robber Bride*. And if this particular chapter in the history of American imperialism is closed (however unsatisfactorily), the unattractive portrait of Billy implies that the pattern of American arrogance remains.

Whereas Billy's fantasies about his own subversiveness are made up, Charis's pregnancy is real. Optimistic to a fault, she decides to reinvent history by telling her daughter that Billy "died bravely fighting in the Vietnam War."²⁰ Charis's plan attests to her lack of political convictions, but it also constitutes another authorial jab at the American draft dodger. Not only does this invented history figuratively kill off the absent father, but it deprives him of the moral stance that brought him to Canada in the first place. In the wake of her unhappy experience with Billy, Charis, who has no opinions of her own about the war in Vietnam, sees the draft resister as more cowardly than the enlisted man who fights to the death. Although still tragic, her revision provides the happiest possible ending to the story of her affair. Before the novel's end, Charis will be party to a third and far more unresolved possibility related by her former friend, the treacherous Zenia. According to this version, Billy "went back to the States, and ratted on all his incendiary-minded little friends, the ones who were still there. . . . They paid him off with a new identity and a sordid little job as a third-rate spy. He wasn't very good at it, though."²¹ Zenia enacts revenge by turning the tables on the draft dodger, suggesting that the man who has betrayed his country can just as easily betray his friends. By the end of *The Robber Bride*, Atwood has covered multiple bases in representing the draft dodger as self-absorbed, treacherous, or simply dead. Yet there is a limit to this postmodern play with history. While there may be more than one conclusion to Billy's story, he remains an American. Strikingly absent is any alternative in which Billy assimilates into, or even takes up more permanent residence in, Canadian society.

A similar nationalist sensibility is at work in Mordechai Richler's *Barney's Version* (1997), where an aging protagonist writes resentfully of the American draft resister who eventually took up with his ex-wife, Miriam. Although Barney and Miriam volunteered their home as a safe haven for draft dodgers, Barney describes Blair as "an unwanted polyp" and tells Miriam that he feels "invaded."²² When Blair begins to moralize about the "Yanqui invasion" from the south and the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, Barney taunts him by asking, "Sure it's a dirty war, but Blair, don't you feel just a wee bit guilty, a man of conscience like you, allowing this war to be fought largely by blacks and rednecks and working class kids out of the inner cities while your middle-class ass is safe in Canada?"²³ Like Atwood, Richler draws attention to the social privilege that enables the draft dodger's passage to Canada. While these authors acknowledge that exile may be painful and lonely, they put it into perspective by recalling the suffering of those who went to war.

Like Atwood, Richler depicts the seduction of a Canadian woman by an American interloper. Barney seeks revenge by impugning Blair's masculinity. In 1969 he accuses Blair of being a "queer"; years later he tells his daughter that "poor Blair is one of those men who has always felt insecure about his masculinity, and that's why he feels obliged to make public displays of his affection for your mother."²⁴ Blair is accused of weakness, hypocrisy, and effeminacy; his infidelity to his country is aligned with his theft of another man's wife. Like Atwood's Zenia, Barney fantasizes a scenario in which Blair is a secret agent of the U.S. government. He sends an anonymous letter to the university where Blair teaches, stating that he was a known sexual deviant sent to Canada by the FBI in 1969 "to spy and report on the activities of American draft dodgers."²⁵ In Barney's imagined reversal, Blair becomes both a pervert and a government agent. Imagining the draft dodger as so lacking in conviction that he could plausibly work either for or against his government, Atwood and Richler undermine the seriousness of his protest. They imply that, ultimately, his political commitments are irrelevant for he remains an unwanted intruder from the south who is using Canada for his own purposes.

These late twentieth-century narratives do little to illuminate the social and political context that set the stage for exodus to Canada. But they do a great deal to explain the affective baggage that exodus accrued for both Canadians and Americans in the ensuing decades. In these texts, draft evasion is not a singular act but a more enduring mark of bad character and deep disrespect for the obligations of citizenship. Collapsing personal and political identities, the draft dodger betrays not only his country but himself and the person he loves most. Personifying the draft dodger's relationship with the state in the figure of a romantic couple, U.S. and Canadian authors depict its disso-

lution differently. Some equate America with a deceitful woman, transforming the military resister's problems with his country into a problem of failed romance. Others represent Canada as the woman, playing on longstanding Canadian fears of invasion by a powerful neighbor. As we will see, these questions about citizenship and sexuality had also been at the forefront of Vietnam-era representations. More interested in sex than romance, they treated erotic relations not as a simple analog for political relations but as a means of subverting the authoritarian demands of the state.

The Things They Wrote

By the 1980s, a set of stock formal and thematic concerns had come to surround literary representations of the draft dodger. These recent works of fiction could not be more different from Vietnam-era texts by and about the participants in the exodus to Canada, which have been all but forgotten by literary history. Four books published in the 1970s tell the stories of American men who evaded the draft by moving to Canada: Allen Morgan's *Dropping Out in 3/4 Time* (1972); Daniel Peters's *Border Crossings* (1978); Morton Redner's *Getting Out* (1971); and Mark Satin's *Confessions of a Young Exile* (1976). My point in returning to these works is not to claim that they are more authentic than subsequent representations of the draft dodger, nor to assert their literary quality. There are some legitimate reasons for overlooking these narratives, all of which are out of print and relatively difficult to obtain.²⁶ Often hastily produced and highly personal, they were neither as popular nor as artfully constructed as more recent treatments of the theme. Yet their immediacy is part of what makes them valuable, for they represent a particular moment *before* it became reified into the clichés that govern more contemporary representations. Their narrowness and aesthetic flaws bespeak the urgency of the world-changing situation they represent. As they confront the prospect of abandoning home and country, these narratives ask whether an idealized "America" can be saved from a state that has abandoned cherished principles, and whether it is possible to conceive alternative modes of collective organization that are less tied to categories of national identity. Like the more recent works of fiction discussed earlier, they focus on the struggles of an individual, but one whose concern with personal freedom is presented as a reaction against the impersonality of "the system." In contrast to more contemporary writers—who compare the protagonist's failed relationship to his country with his failed romantic relations—these works are obsessed with sex as a means of subverting the perceived inhumanity of the administrative state. In their concerns with non-normative erotics, they reflect Herbert Marcuse's influential formulation: "against a society which em-

ploys sexuality as means for a useful end, the perversions uphold sexuality as an end in itself.”²⁷ Thus, in these works sexual perversion is closely aligned with the decision to go to Canada, since both represent the capacity to resist “the system” by leaving it altogether.

Whereas contemporary fiction about draft dodgers emphasizes the consequences of past mistakes by cutting between past and present, the predominant mode of 1970s draft dodging narratives is the *bildung*. Each of these darkly comedic works draw parallels between the protagonist’s coming of age and the nation’s fall from innocence into maturity. He resists the terms of successful development set out by an older generation by being deliberately non-productive. As Danny Mordl of Redner’s *Getting Out* puts it, “I didn’t know why I was at work. There was nothing that had a forward motion to it, that I would want to do.”²⁸ Ironically, the very qualities that would make such men America’s best and brightest would also make them ideal candidates for immigration. According to the *Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada*, applicants were gauged according to “assessment units” based on skills, education, and “personal qualities.” Many of the 50 points required to become a “landed immigrant” were likely to favor those who were white, well-educated, and financially secure. The “Occupations in Strong National Demand” listed in the *Manual* typically “require a degree or extended training . . . Letters of reference or formal training certificates.”²⁹ The largest concentration of points went to “Education and Training,” followed closely by the highly subjective category of “personal assessment.” Here, the immigration officer measured an applicant’s “adaptability, motivation, initiative, resourcefulness.”³⁰ “Needless to say,” the *Manual* cautions, “be on your best behavior” and avoid crossing the border with “long hair, untidy dress or peace buttons.”³¹

According to these guidelines, the white, middle-class college students who are the protagonists of these narratives should be model applicants. They have been raised to anticipate the power and affluence accorded to America’s most valued citizens. As the U.S. forecloses on its promises, Canada is in prime position to benefit from the “brain drain” of a northern migration. Yet instead of performing the role scripted by the *Manual*, these men intentionally undermine future prospects for professional and social success in the U.S. while also impeding their chances of legal immigration to Canada. Instead of obeying social convention, they are indolent and rude. They oversleep when punctuality is required; talk back to authority figures; refuse to do their homework; take drugs; drink to excess; and fuck strange women. In short, they are the embodiment of Marcuse’s Great Refusal, resisting the strictures of an older generation by being willfully unproductive, perverse, and directionless.³² While the draft dodger is certainly not unique in adopting this posture, he politicizes it by link-

ing it to the ultimate imposition of discipline in his time, enforced military service. When he crosses national borders, his affronts to propriety go beyond an unruly self-expression to challenge the definitions of citizenship and state authority.

In contemporary fiction, the draft dodger's political disaffection goes hand-in-hand with his romantic woes. By contrast, protagonists of the 1970s have little interest in romantic love. Their libidinal hyperactivity accords with Marcuse's belief in the liberatory power of eros. They are far less worried about whether particular relationships will survive the flight to Canada than about the gratification of their immediate sexual urges. One version of this erotic excess involves an accumulation of heterosexual exploits and fantasies at moments of political tension in the narrative. After learning that fatherhood might make him eligible for a deferment, Danny Mordl has sex with multiple partners in the hope of impregnating one of them. The state's policy—designed to privilege the nuclear family and encourage responsible parenting—is turned on its head by Danny's wanton promiscuity. In *Border Crossings*, Matthew Craft manages his anxieties about conscription by personifying the draft board as a cruel dominatrix named Daisy. "She craves my body," he tells an actual woman. "We've never met but she sends me love letters all the time."³³ His fears about loss of agency are displaced onto fantasies about flirtation with a seductive and vengeful mistress. Her double is Sarah, a real woman who is only slightly less fantastic. Although she is some years older, Sarah—quite inexplicably—finds the immature undergraduate Matthew sexually irresistible. In Satin's *Confessions*, flight to Canada becomes a way of escaping a claustrophobic relationship. Mark's girlfriend Marcie responds to his plan to emigrate by crying out, "I love you, you brave, courageous, wonderful person" as she climbs on top of him. Instead of igniting his desire, her attentions make him feel that he is "suffocating under her."³⁴ The implication is that the draft dodger's sexual allure is heightened by his impending flight to Canada. He feels no corresponding obligation to the women who pursue him and whose claustrophobia-inducing embraces may become further grounds for his desired escape.

The disregard for romantic commitments is one manifestation of a general aversion to participation in any kind of organized activity. It is to be expected that the draft dodgers denounce the state as an oppressive bureaucracy, using the vernacular of the time to rail against "the machine" and "the system." What is more surprising is their general resistance to mass movements, a sentiment that contradicts the association of the draft dodger with sixties protest found in more recent work by Turow or Richler. In contrast to stereotypes, the draft dodger in these narratives is neither an unthinking follower of movement ideology nor a radical who attempts to convert others to his cause. The most politicized character is Mark Milland of the *Confessions*, who becomes dis-

illusioned by the infighting and hypocrisy he finds in leftist political organizations. Formerly committed to SNCC and SDS, he objects to their increasing adherence to Marxist dogma (yet another “system”) and the inefficiency of participatory democracy. His efforts to institute change and take a leadership role are consistently thwarted by personal disagreements and collective disorder. Flight to Canada is not the realization of his political activities, but a recognition of their failure.

While Milland comes to this realization through experience as a political activist, other characters have a more immediate aversion to all manner of collective action. “I’m not a person you could think of as being against war,” Danny Mordl tells the draft board. “I don’t bother with that.”³⁵ Matthew Craft of *Border Crossings* goes to Chicago the day before the Democratic National Convention only to “[watch] the riot the next night on TV. Craft knew it wasn’t entirely accidental; something in him simply didn’t like to stand in crowds and listen to slogans, another part of him wasn’t too keen on violent confrontations with armed policemen. His own form of resistance was more private and visceral, a basic ‘don’t-tread-on-me’ attitude; the draft had made him very aware that his only real power lay in withholding consent, and he was very stingy with his agreement.”³⁶ Matthew’s commitment to a “private and visceral” individualism makes him balk at the thought of collective protest. Challenging the stereotypical equation of sixties politics with youth, Allen Morgan complains in *Dropping Out in 3/4 Time* that he is too young to have developed a political consciousness: “I really didn’t believe in armies and wars and killing. But the trouble was that I wasn’t a Quaker and I wasn’t old enough to really have belonged to enough groups or done enough things to really qualify as a person who doesn’t believe in war. I mean in order to be against war, you have to be thirty-four or forty and by that time you’ve already been in the Army and been in a war, so what’s the difference?”³⁷ These characters’ strident individualism must be seen as a strategic gesture of resistance against any political organization that, like the military, threatens to become yet another “system” requiring a sacrifice of self for a larger purpose.

For some, the gesture is more than strategic as Canada, somewhat ironically, becomes a means of realizing a more entrenched commitment to American identity. These characters echo the sentiments of the expatriates surveyed by Frank Kusch, who justified their flight to Canada by citing an American tradition of dissent that included such thinkers as Paine, Jefferson, Emerson, and Thoreau. According to Kusch, they believed that “it was honorable to be a nonconformist in the way one thought and acted, and maybe being alone with the way one thought was not such a bad thing.”³⁸ This view sets clear limits to the obligatory aspects of citizenship for it asserts that when the state behaves in a way that is excessive or immoral, it loses the right to de-

mand sacrifices of its citizens. Indeed, Kusch discovered that many expatriates continue to see themselves as “quintessential Americans” who feel *obligated* to challenge the state when it engages in un-American activities. Rejecting the conventional belief that the military resister is a traitor and a coward, they insist that they are participating in a venerable American tradition that can be readily transferred across national boundaries. They come to this position having endured an extended period of statelessness. As Kusch explains, “for several years they held no papers of citizenship for either country, as many had neglected to obtain passports before their departures to Canada. They were not allowed to apply for their U.S. passports, once they left the country, and bench warrants were issued for their arrest.”³⁹ The embrace of Americanism must be understood through this experience of exile. Settled in Canada, these expatriates gesture toward an America that rejects the demands, as well as the security, of the nation state in return for the freedom of self-determination.

Although Kusch conducted his survey in the late 1990s, the seeds of this stateless Americanism are evident in several of the 1970s narratives. There is an America of dissenting individuals rather than a democracy in which equal responsibilities are shared by all citizens. As he drives to Canada, Danny Mordl identifies with “the exiles and criminals who started America. I thought how they must have felt to come to America, to want to immigrate once.”⁴⁰ Danny equates his passage with a celebrated American tradition of flight from injustice; to be an immigrant is to be identified with the nation’s most valued and earliest populations. Likewise, Matthew Craft describes the American literary tradition as “one of alienation and opposition, the perspective fierce rather than broad.” Musing over how to account for his uneven academic record, he concludes that “in typical American fashion, he’d never given a shit for requirements.”⁴¹ More than once, Mark Milland invokes Whitman, Emerson, and Thoreau in the spirit of protest “for, not against, my country.”⁴² The “America” claimed by these characters is distinguished from the state that has demanded their participation in an unjust war. By insisting on their fidelity to American traditions and principles, they refuse the stark opposition presented by the ubiquitous slogan LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT, which crops up at opportune moments in most of these narratives. Instead they express an exilic sensibility that allows them to love and leave at the same time, that understands “America” as a portable set of values and beliefs. As they take this irreverent, highly individualistic sensibility with them into Canada, these characters claim to belong to an outlaw “America” that extends across national borders.

If some draft dodgers tie political individualism to sexual freedom, others associate it with more extreme versions of sexual perversion. It is no accident that Mark Milland includes Whitman in his list of po-

litical antecedents, for his struggle with the draft is consistently linked to deviant sexual appetites. On the first page, he describes his childhood in Moorhead, MN: "When the trains go by, clacking and howling, I am often moved by vast longings that I do not understand, and by an almost mystical sense of the beauty and promise of my native land." His nationalist reveries are abruptly interrupted with the next sentence: "When I masturbate I think of my friend Michael, my mother, and all the girls at Moorhead High."⁴³ Textbook in its polymorphous perversion, this chain of desire incorporates fantasies of homosexuality, incest, and orgiastic sex that provide an ironic commentary on "the beauty and promise" of America. This early moment initiates a pattern in which the seriousness of Mark's political and professional interests is consistently undercut by libidinal desire that is both improper and irrepressible. On his way to Mississippi to work for SNCC he fantasizes about doing voter registration with a Barnard student who is raped by rednecks as Mark watches. "Then they turn to me," he continues, "and I am beaten, blinded, castrated, and finally buried half-alive in a swamp. . . I am thoroughly terrified now, and have a terrible hard-on; I wish the bus weren't so crowded so I could masturbate."⁴⁴ Another chapter begins with the irreverent invocation of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech: "how long, Lord, O how long will it be before I can fuck someone like the girl sitting at the SDS literature table?"⁴⁵ As a fellow SDSer discusses Black Power, he notices, "I can see her nipples under her Harpur College sweatshirt."⁴⁶ Mark's erotic proclivities are not exclusively heterosexual. He is aroused by the "old queers making love in the room next door" in his New York boarding house, where he later has sex with a former (male) college roommate, while invoking Whitman's line, "Nothing human is alien to me."⁴⁷

Beyond an embrace of Marcusean perversion, Mark's sexual activities must be associated with the specific political dilemmas depicted by his story. Queer represents the limit case for both U.S. and Canadian citizenship. Not only were homosexuals immediately disqualified for U.S. military service, but they were also prohibited from immigration to Canada in the same category with prostitutes, mentally or physically defective individuals, and chronic alcoholics. If, as Kerber has argued, it is only by being subject to *obligation* that national subjects can fully realize the rights and privileges of citizenship, then homosexuals, like women, are only partial subjects of either nation. The connections between citizenship-as-obligation and sexuality are brought into focus by the erotics of draft dodging narratives of the 1970s. Whereas the homosexual is frequently a reviled figure, the draft dodgers belong to a context where he is ideally suited to represent contradictions between the interests of the state and those of individuals.

Some of these works ridicule the strict classification system of the

Selective Service by confusing homo and hetero. In *Getting Out* Danny Mordl identifies himself to the draft board as “queer,” explaining that “I openly engage in anal intercourse.”⁴⁸ Their rejection of his claim only highlights the absurdity of a system that attempts to gauge queerness through physical examination. His antics continue with the written Selective Service test, which asks if he has “homosexual tendencies. Yes or no. One [question] asked if you were a practising [sic] homosexual. Yes or no. I looked around me. Then I checked all the yeses and noes. Then I carefully erased everything and rubbed it in smeary with my finger. Then I checked only the yeses and left them. It was someone’s suggestion, that I had talked to, who said it makes it look more honest, that you still haven’t resolved it and you have guilt about it.”⁴⁹ Danny’s approach to the written test refuses the rigid opposition between yes and no, staining his exam with the marks of queer indeterminacy.

Whereas I have argued that the draft dodgers associate heterosexual libertinism with an American individualism, they tie queer sexuality to the imagination of a utopian community where the institutions of the state and the obligations of citizenship disappear altogether. In contrast to activists like Tom Hayden and Stokely Carmichael, who believed that flight to Canada represented a betrayal of the anti-war movement, these narratives suggest that the unrealized potential of collective protest is tied to a massive northern exodus. They echo the sentiments of draft dodger Richard Lemm, who argued that “submitting to imprisonment seemed indistinguishable from submission to the military.”⁵⁰ Mark Satin, author of the *Confessions*, would become a key figure in the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme (TADP) and architect of the influential *Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada*. In the *Confessions*, the fictional Mark imagines a mass migration to Canada that would force the government to “think twice about what they’re doing in Vietnam . . . And if hundreds of thousands join us, the whole military machine will fall apart.”⁵¹ Although his dreams of being an urban planner have been thwarted in the U.S., he fantasizes about founding a city of draft resisters in Canada: “I decide that a communal population of 200 would be ideal—large enough to support the ‘amenities’ of city life such as libraries and lecturers, yet small enough so that every encounter would be with a potential friend.”⁵² His vision of an urban space that is big enough to be culturally vibrant but intimate enough to encourage neighborliness reflects the influence of Jane Jacobs, one of the more famous Americans to follow her draft-age son to Canada, where her work influenced the development of Toronto in the 1970s.⁵³ When linked to Mark’s sexual politics, this utopia begins to look like the “queer world” imagined by Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant, which affirms “kinds of intimacy that bear no necessary relation to domestic space, to kinship, to the couple

form, to property, or to the nation.”⁵⁴ Located in Canada, Mark’s dream city would enable intimate attachments without the constraints of social convention or state authority.

Another significant affirmation of the collective potential of draft resistance occurs in *Dropping Out*. Morgan, who had never “belonged to enough groups or done enough things to really qualify as a person who doesn’t believe in war,” finds a sense of purpose in volunteering for the TADP. As he assembles copies of the *Manual*, he fantasizes about its capacity to reach large audiences who, in turn, have the potential to effect an as-yet-unimaginable political transformation. In keeping with the musical motif suggested by the title, *Dropping Out in 3/4 Time*, the passage describes this transformation in symphonic terms that are worth quoting at length:

the music is cyclic as the papers move from one pile to one pile to one pile and the piles move from one pile to one pile to one pile, and finally the subpiles are made into large piles and the large piles are made into larger piles and the covers put on them and the manuals are turned out and then put in a box and stuck in the corner to wait another day and another line of envelopes and stamps and addresses stuck on and mailed out in the afternoon mail to go all over the United States to people and institutions and dead letter offices and jails and Government people to tell them all how to come to Canada (in one hundred and something easy pages), and couples look at it together and parents read it and college kids, high school kids, everybody all over the country reads the pamphlet and finds out how to come to Canada (first printing how many thousands?), everybody reading and saying to themselves “Maybe I might.” Thousands of young people thinking about leaving, going, splitting (goodbye) . . . and all these people and all these postcards and non-people and all these manuals and points and immigration cards and numbers, and you start to know, whether you add them up or take them away or just stick them away in the backest part of your mind (something is happening), that all of this is part of some bigger thing, some bigger change, and the thing is that something is happening.⁵⁵

The repetitive movements of collation generate a rhythm, which helps Morgan to imagine the impact of many individual readers all engaged in similar acts of reading and acting on the *Manual*’s counsel. His feeling that “something is happening” represents a change from the futility and desperation of his life in the U.S. The affirmation of the potential to change America through collective exodus contrasts with the steadfast individualism of Peters or Mordl.

Border Crossings, *Confessions of a Young Exile*, *Dropping Out in 3/4 Time*, and *Getting Out* represent the experiences of the white, middle-class, educated young men who comprised the predominant group of draft dodgers in Canada. Whether they maintain an outlaw identity or imagine the formation of new collectivities, these authors see erotic activity as the counterpart to, and sometimes itself an expression of, political resistance. In this context, the individual remains paramount. Against the state that attempts to enlist him as part of an indistinguishable mass, against parents who demand that he climb a predictable path of upward mobility, and against women who seek to domesticate and tame him, he asserts the transgressive capacity of sexual

freedom. As we will see, it is the women who affirmed and enabled his opposition to the state who will point out the limits of the draft dodger's erotic rebellion.

Goodbye to All That

When they link their stories to America, draft dodging narratives of the 1970s invoke a literary tradition in which a male protagonist lights out for the territory, leaving behind the comfortable and familiar province of home. His flight is inaugurated by the receipt of a draft notice. Along the way, his suffering grants him license to be neglectful, abusive, or unfaithful, while insulating him from criticism. Of course he does not face his struggle alone: each of these young men relies heavily on networks of teachers, friends, family, and often a female partner. And while these literary protagonists travel solo, it was common for actual military resisters to emigrate with a wife or partner. But because women were not the immediate victims of the draft, their experiences tend to be diminished and their stories marginalized. As Kerber has argued, women have historically been excused from many of the obligations of citizenship. While situations like the draft might make this exclusion seem like a privilege, its result is political marginality. As Roosevelt acknowledged with the inauguration of the Draft Bill, an individual receives the full benefits of citizenship *only* in exchange for his service to the nation. Women therefore have less to lose in leaving the nation behind, but also less to gain by entering a new national space governed by many of the old assumptions about gender and civic belonging. Ironically, this position has made women among the most trenchant commentators on citizenship and the draft. Whereas in 1993, Atwood missed an opportunity to connect the draft to the state's partial disenfranchisement of women, women writers of the 1970s recognize that domestic and civic obligations are densely entangled with the state's role in an international arena. Because they cannot be called to serve, they are less likely to treat the draft as a problem of individual freedom than as a larger systemic injustice. And once they adopt this broader point of view, they understand that the draft is not only a conflict between America and its citizens, but a byproduct of U.S. intervention in world affairs.

Joyce Carol Oates's *Crossing the Border* (1976) and Valerie Miner's *Movement* (1982) tell stories of the anti-draft exodus from a woman's perspective. These authors are an important counterpoint to their male contemporaries, who tend to associate women with stasis and men with the capacity for movement and change. More carefully structured than the male-authored narratives, *Crossing the Border* and *Movement* are both composed as short story cycles that intersperse episodes in the life of a single female protagonist with other stories.

This device invites comparisons across individual stories and emphasizes the collective nature of the protagonists' experiences. The dominant narrative thread of *Movement* concerns Susan, who follows her husband to Canada after he has been drafted. She then leaves him to travel, develop her career, and experiment with new sexual partners, both male and female. In keeping with the title, Susan's story is interwoven with shorter vignettes about other women on the move: hitchhikers, immigrants, travelers, divorcees, and wanderers. As Miner explains in her foreword, this formal device was motivated by the political concerns of the women's movement: "I write these stories to break through the isolation and the individualism of the *Bildungsroman*, the conventional novel of development. Susan does not know, and may never meet, any of these women. Their stories are told as shadows and illuminations of our mutual momentum."⁵⁶ In this, Miner significantly broadens the canvas of her male counterparts, who conform more closely to the *bildung's* singular focus. Oates's *Crossing the Border* is similar in structure, interspersing stories about Renee, whose husband Evan evades the draft by getting a job in Canada, with stories about other characters, male and female. In contrast to the developmental thrust of Miner's novel, the movement of *Crossing the Border* is less purposive. Individual characters are often disoriented, lost, or in retreat. The dominant narrative tracks the increasing estrangement of Evan and Renee as they struggle with loneliness and financial insecurity in a foreign country. Locating both members of the couple in Canada, Oates avoids the trope of either the lone male outlaw or the cross-border romance, with its implicit hierarchy of suffering.

The short story form allows these works to cross multiple national boundaries, expanding the horizons established by the male-authored memoirs into Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East, as well as Canada. Whereas male authors tend to see a clean opposition between constraint and freedom, Miner and Oates dwell on the danger and indeterminacy of border zones. Far from centers of national governance, borders are the place where the state's authority is vulnerable, but also where its power to regulate travel, economic exchange, and territorial limits becomes most visible. For the draft dodger, the U.S.-Canadian border, which has always seemed like a formality, suddenly becomes an obstacle. Early in each collection is the story of the initial, harrowing border crossing from the U.S. into Canada. In *Movement*, the newly hostile border contrasts with past experiences of North America as a place of "no barriers." On a summer vacation, Susan and Guy "had looped back and forth from Plattsburg to Montreal to Rochester to Toronto to Detroit to Calgary to Seattle."⁵⁷ It takes their new vantage as "refugees" to make them realize that Canada is a foreign country. Similarly, in *Crossing the Border* Renee observes, "The border between two nations is always indicated by broken but definite

lines, to indicate that it is not quite real in any physical sense but very real in a metaphysical sense: so nature surrenders to politics, as mythology surrenders to physiology.⁵⁸ This recognition introduces a persistent concern with the cultural and political divisions marked by the U.S.-Canadian border.

Virtually all draft dodging narratives contain just such a requisite moment of insight where national borders are understood to be arbitrary but all too real. However, during the peak years of anti-war emigration, women seem to come to that insight differently than their male counterparts. *Crossing the Border* begins with Renee sitting “helpless in the car” as her nervous husband visits yet another roadside bathroom.⁵⁹ Literally positioned in the passenger seat, the woman is consistently reminded that she is an accomplice, rather than the protagonist, of this adventure. She is not breaking the law, but she is socially and financially dependent on a man who is. Marriage, in these narratives, is the political arrangement that makes her dependence official. Both authors are strikingly unsentimental about the bond that ties these couples together. As Susan explains, “They were married because, if nothing else, it was necessary for crossing borders.”⁶⁰ Her status in the marriage becomes clear at the border itself. Although under the Canadian immigration system Susan has five more qualification points than her husband, she learns that “a wife goes through on her husband’s points.”⁶¹ Hearing Guy refer to her as “my wife” during the immigration interview, she reflects bitterly that their hasty marriage is a “charade.”⁶² Rather than confirming her secondary status, the experience of immigrating to Canada contributes to Susan’s incipient feminism. Cut lose from her family in the U.S. and frustrated by her status as “wife,” Susan becomes absorbed in the women’s movement that will eventually enable her literal movement away from her husband and Canada. In *Movement*, flight to Canada is a transitional act in a longer journey of self-development.

When Susan leaves her husband, she claims the right to unhindered self-discovery that has long been the exclusive province of men. She maintains a strongly individualistic American identity throughout her extensive international travels. Although she is involved with anti-war activities, she shares the draft dodgers’ discomfort with organized political protest, which comes to seem redundant and ineffectual. However, instead of using her disillusionment as an excuse to abandon politics altogether, Susan gains new perspective from the Canadian peace movement. If “the people didn’t look much different from those Susan marched with in California,” their anti-Americanism confirms that they are not the same. Their location outside of the U.S. also makes them more aware of Canadian complicity in the war effort.⁶³ As an immigrant, Susan cannot take refuge in her oppositional politics because she is negatively pegged as “American,” an identity that

links her to the crimes of the state. But she also learns to be critical of Canada's support for U.S. military ventures. Her version of self-discovery relies less on the expression of individual freedom so valued by male authors than on the fullest articulation of self with a range of cultural and political contexts.

Oates is far less sanguine about the prospects of individual autonomy for men or women. In her collection, the U.S.-Canadian border is a haunting presence behind all of the stories, a figure for the uneasy alliance between couples whose intimacy is driven by necessity rather than affection. Renee and Evan live on the Detroit River, where their view of the U.S. reminds them of what they have left behind, as well as their tenuous status as landed immigrants. In a story called "Natural Boundaries," Renee notices that the river is under constant surveillance by Coast Guard helicopters. Rather than assuming that they are there to ensure her safety, she imagines that they are looking for illegal immigrants. Instead of seeing the Coast Guard as an institution of public service, she recognizes only its policing function. Renee's most terrifying experience with repressive state power occurs on a return trip to the U.S. As a white woman, she feels free to traverse the border: "She had nothing to hide. Guilty of nothing, smuggling nothing across the border."⁶⁴ She learns that her casual approach to crossing is a privilege after she witnesses the harassment of a black couple and then is subject to an insulting interrogation of her own:

Who was her husband, was he an American citizen also? Was he a draft dodger, eh? No? Not a draft dodger? But living in Canada. Residents over there for a year and a half? And did her husband work there? He did. And did she? No. Well—yes. She did? It was not a real job, not a salaried job; part-time office work . . . not a real job. But did she get paid for it? She did? Then it was a real job, wasn't it?⁶⁵

These questions strike at the core tenets of Renee's identity. The story ends following her release as she sits confusedly at a stop sign: "she knew where she wanted to go, but how to get there?"⁶⁶

Finding out "how to get there" is central to each collection's feminist project. Whereas Miner depicts a journey of growth and self-discovery, Oates's stories tell of accommodation and compromise. Although Renee becomes involved with another man, sex lacks the transgressive, liberating power it has for the draft dodgers. Adultery does not confirm her independence, as it does for Susan in *Movement*. A victim of too many romantic plots, Renee "had hoped that falling in love would allow her to love herself, once again, or to halfway respect herself, but it had not worked out that way."⁶⁷ Her affair with the Canadian Karl does not make her more comfortable with herself or her new home; it only reminds her that she is an outsider. In the final story, Renee and Evan's imperiled marriage, their tenuous status as immigrants, and their new relationship to the Canadian state come

together. On the night that Renee breaks off her affair, the river threatens to flood their home. This violent and literal intrusion of the border into their domestic space reflects the more symbolic disruption it has caused since their arrival in Canada. As the river rises, Renee panics and calls for help only to find that the civil authorities are unconcerned. The Coast Guard that Renee suspects of tracking illegal immigrants is unavailable in an emergency. Left to confront the river on their own, the couple realizes that they will survive. After the storm has passed, Evan laughingly accuses her of being “ready to abandon the house—ready to run.”⁶⁸ In the terms of the story, this readiness to run might apply to Renee’s affair or the tedium of her domestic life; the book ends with the fact that she stayed in place, at least temporarily reconciled to confronting the challenges of their new home.

Despite this rather pat ending, *Crossing the Border* suggests that Renee and Evan’s newfound sense of security is tenuous. Significantly, the couple is forced to turn to each other for solace when they are refused help by local authorities. Having fled in protest against the immorality of the state, they are dismayed at its absence in a time of need. Oates’s collection is particularly incisive about the uneasy compromises that all individuals must make as they relate to one another and to the larger national and international contexts that define their status as citizens. Renee and Evan are constrained not only by immigration law, but by a faltering Canadian economy where a scarcity of jobs heightens anti-Americanism and prejudice against women in the workforce. Whereas *Movement* implies that Susan’s financial insecurity is caused entirely by personal choices—the decision to leave her husband and take jobs that are meaningful rather than lucrative—*Crossing the Border* recognizes that a weak economy will profoundly constrict opportunities to work for both men and women. This perspective would help to explain the seemingly callous behavior of Canadian immigration officials in *Confessions* or *Dropping Out*. Oates’s stories reflect an awareness that, regardless of one’s feeling of national identification, a tight job market undercuts the prospects for successful assimilation into Canadian society. Although Renee has a credential, she is unqualified to teach in Canada. She understands her joblessness as part of a larger national crisis in which “unemployment figures were headlines nearly every evening in the newspaper.”⁶⁹ She is a housewife not by choice but because she is an immigrant woman in a time of economic downturn, a position that has made her unemployable and utterly reliant on her husband. These circumstances complicate the prospect of individual escape that is the goal of almost all other draft dodging narratives.

Crossing the Border situates Canada’s economic troubles in the context of its relations with the U.S. and the war in Vietnam. When Susan realizes Canada’s more indirect contribution to U.S. militarism in

Movement, her solution is to leave. This option is unavailable to Renee and Evan, who struggle to make a living in Canada even as they question whether they have effectively resisted the war. Evan thought he had done so by giving up his well-paying job as a scientific researcher in the U.S. only to realize that “his talent had been hired to manufacture death, the Great Defense: the ‘frontier’ he and his teammates had cultivated was a tiny scaled-down universe of pathogenic creatures, allies of democracy, ‘biological cloud agents’ that, released in enemy territory, would do a great deal for the survival of the free enterprise system.”⁷⁰ Refusing to contribute his labor to the production of biological weapons, Evan sacrifices his professional and national identity, becoming instead “an anonymous man, a citizen of no country.”⁷¹ Any feeling of virtue that might come from his sacrifice is diminished by constant fears about the recessionary Canadian economy. Realizing that “the budget at the Institute was going to be cut,” he worries that “he might be asked to leave: he was an American citizen, after all. Not a Canadian.”⁷² On top of this is Evan’s growing suspicion that he has not escaped the war machine: “the work he was doing was funded, indirectly, by an American chemical corporation. He could not be certain; no one told the truth about such things. He suspected that everyone lied. For money, of course. For American money.”⁷³ The crisis Evan faces as an immigrant is thus not only the loss of his identity but a growing realization of the transnational reach of American interests. He confronts the chilling understanding that moving to Canada and working for a Canadian research lab does not inure him against complicity with the American military industry. Whereas the male-authored narratives treated here tend to see a strict opposition between the U.S. and Canada, these stories portray a contradiction between Canada’s willingness to stand firm on the matter of extradition, thereby securing the illusion of national autonomy, and its reluctance to sacrifice lucrative research and development contracts that continue to indebted it to the U.S. Oates rightly refuses to resolve these contradictions, implying that there is no easy escape or political absolutism to be attained simply by crossing national boundaries. Rejecting the logic of “love it or leave it,” the best Renee and Evan can do is to learn to live with one another in their new home, without believing that they have solved their problems or achieved a state of political purity.

Exploring Canada’s political entanglements with the U.S., Miner and Oates neither lionize the draft dodger nor accuse him of weakness or immorality. At the time, criticism of those who fled to Canada allowed the anti-war movement to preserve its belief that genuine protest could take place only on national soil and the establishment to believe that all good Americans recognized the value of military service. In subsequent

decades, Americans have used the draft dodger's abjection to elevate the moral standing of those who served. For their part, Canadians claim draft dodgers as evidence of national tolerance and resistance to U.S. imperialism. As I hope I have shown, it is worth probing these associations to better understand why the draft dodger lingers in the rhetoric of U.S. electoral politics, as well as that of U.S.-Canadian relations. By returning to the literature of the time, I have argued that "going to Canada" once meant more than we now recognize. For draft dodgers themselves, it was about serious struggle with the meaning of citizenship. Such struggle is often waged in the domain of sexual relations, which are a means of resistance to the systemic authority of the state, an expression of individuality, and an attempt to reclaim feeling in a society that has grown excessively impersonal and mechanized. Like sex, "going to Canada" is the ultimate refusal and the expression of a desire for alternative communities based on shared commitments rather than demographic categories. For the women who followed the draft dodgers, "going to Canada" represented the more sobering realization that U.S. military and economic power extended across national boundaries. In Canada, the American migrant recognizes that movement does not provide political absolution. But in coming to this realization, she gains the knowledge and perspective that makes her a better citizen, which means understanding that responsibility for the self should not come at the expense of responsibility to others, the nation, or the world. If this is true, suggest Oates and Miner, then "going to Canada" is not like committing personal or political suicide. It something every American should do.

Notes

Thanks to Amanda Claybaugh, Jon Connolly, Jenny Davidson, Elizabeth Hutchinson, Sean McCann, Monica Miller, and Michael Szalay for their generous and helpful comments at various stages in my work on this essay.

- 1 James Traub, "The Things They Carry," *New York Times Magazine*, 4 January 2004, 28, 33, 41, 52-53.
- 2 Cited in John Hagen, *Northern Passage: American War Resisters in Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 10.
- 3 Originally printed in *Houston Chronicle*, 8 May 1994; cited at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4114162/> (accessed 25 August 2004).
- 4 My vocabulary itself may seem controversial, since "draft dodger" is a slur in mainstream political rhetoric in the U.S. However, it is also the favored self-descriptor for those who fall into this category. See Roger Neville, *The New Exiles: American War Resisters in Canada* (New York: Liveright Publishers, 1971), 9; as well as Hagen, *Northern Passage*, x; and Frank Kusch, *All American Boys: Draft Dodgers in Canada from the Vietnam War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), 9.
- 5 Cited in Hagen, 10.
- 6 Linda Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), xxi.
- 7 Cited in George Q. Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 2.

- 8 On transformations in American state power and their influence on foreign policy during the Vietnam era, see Mary Sheila McMahon, "The American State and the Vietnam War: A Genealogy of Power," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 45–89.
- 9 Edward I. Koch, "Introduction" to *They Can't Go Home Again: The Story of America's Political Refugees*, ed. Richard L. Killmen, Robert S. Lecky, and Deborah S. Wiley (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1971), 4.
- 10 Tim O'Brien, "Winnipeg," *The New Yorker*, 14 August 2000, 72.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 73.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 74.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 John Irving, *A Prayer for Owen Meany* (New York: Ballantine, 1989), 17.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 492–493.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 253.
- 17 Margaret Atwood, *The Robber Bride* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 208.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 209.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 283.
- 20 *Ibid.*
- 21 *Ibid.*, 423.
- 22 Mordechai Richler, *Barney's Version* (New York: Knopf, 1997), 270, 275.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 278.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 112.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 270.
- 26 At the Columbia University libraries, where I conducted this research, all but Daniel Peters's *Border Crossings* had to be ordered through interlibrary loan. These books are long out of print and most cannot be purchased through online used-book distributors.
- 27 Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (1955; New York: Vintage, 1962), 48.
- 28 Morton Redner, *Getting Out* (New York: Walker and Company, 1971), 34.
- 29 *Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada*, ed. Mark Satin (Toronto: House of Anasi, 1968), 84.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 14.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 8–9.
- 32 Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (1964; Boston: Beacon Press, 1991).
- 33 Daniel Peters, *Border Crossings* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 44.
- 34 Mark Satin, *Confessions of a Young Exile* (Agincourt, ONT: Gage, 1976), 172.
- 35 Redner, 55.
- 36 Peters, 51.
- 37 Allen Morgan, *Dropping Out in 3/4 Time* (New York: Seabury Press, 1972), 33.
- 38 Kusch, 61.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 125.
- 40 Morgan, 176–177.
- 41 Peters, 180.
- 42 Satin, *Confessions*, 79.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 52–53.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 140.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 181.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 126, 129.
- 48 Redner, 171.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 103.
- 50 Richard Lemm quoted in *The New Refugees: American Voices in Canada*, ed. Jim Christy (Toronto, ONT: Peter Martin Associates, 1972), 14.
- 51 Satin, *Confessions*, 172.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 201–202.
- 53 On Jane Jacobs and Toronto, see Anthony Ashtacan, "A City That Works," *Harper's*, December 1974, 14–19; and Edward Faltermeyer, "Toronto, The Great New City," *Fortune*, September 1974, 126–137.

- 54 Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant, "Sex in Public," in *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone, 2002), 199.
- 55 Morgan, 131–132. Italics in original.
- 56 Valerie Miner, *Movement* (Trumansberg, NY: Crossing Press, 1982), xiii.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 13.
- 58 Joyce Carol Oates, *Crossing the Border* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1976), 13.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 9.
- 60 Miner, *Movement*, 4.
- 61 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 18.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 26.
- 64 Oates, *Crossing the Border*, 106.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 109.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 117.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 172.
- 68 *Ibid.*, 255.
- 69 *Ibid.*, 69.
- 70 *Ibid.*, 209.
- 71 *Ibid.*, 209.
- 72 *Ibid.*, 208.
- 73 *Ibid.*, 177.