

**Journeys to the “North Country Fair”:
Exploring the American Vietnam War Migration to Vancouver**

by

Aisling Murphy
B.A. (Honors), University of Alberta, 2001

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

In the
Department
of
History

© Aisling Murphy 2010

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Summer 2010

All rights reserved. However, in accordance with the *Copyright Act of Canada*, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for *Fair Dealing*. Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.

Approval

Name: Aisling Murphy
Degree: Master of Arts
Title of Thesis: Journeys to the “North Country Fair”: Exploring the American Vietnam War Migration to Vancouver

Examining Committee:

Chair: Dr. Thomas Kuehn
Assistant Professor of History

Dr. Mark Leier
Senior Supervisor
Professor of History

Dr. Karen Ferguson
Supervisor
Associate Professor of Urban Studies and History

Dr. Lara Campbell
External Examiner
Assistant Professor of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies

Date Defended/Approved: July 13, 2010



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

Declaration of Partial Copyright Licence

The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the "Institutional Repository" link of the SFU Library website <www.lib.sfu.ca> at: <<http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/handle/1892/112>>) and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

While licensing SFU to permit the above uses, the author retains copyright in the thesis, project or extended essays, including the right to change the work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the work in whole or in part, and licensing other parties, as the author may desire.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, BC, Canada

STATEMENT OF ETHICS APPROVAL

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

(a) Human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics,

or

(b) Advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University;

or has conducted the research

(c) as a co-investigator, collaborator or research assistant in a research project approved in advance,

or

(d) as a member of a course approved in advance for minimal risk human research, by the Office of Research Ethics.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed at the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, BC, Canada

Abstract

This thesis explores the American Vietnam War migration to Canada through the lives of eight men and women who moved to Vancouver, British Columbia between 1967 and 1973. Using oral history, it challenges prevailing conceptions of this migration by examining the broader composition of migrants, the circumstances that informed their decisions to leave the United States, and the welcome they received in Canada. Active participants in the democratic struggles for change that marked this period in American history, their experiences indicate that migration to Canada was an expression of a profound alienation from American society that went beyond opposition to the Vietnam War. Once in Vancouver, the intersection of the class bias of the Canadian Immigration Act and authorities' antipathy towards the city's burgeoning youth counterculture created a climate of hostility that complicated the image of Canada as a "refuge from militarism" and the haven that it promised.

Keywords: Vietnam War; War Resisters; United States, 1960s; Vancouver, 1960s; Americans – Canada; Oral History

Dedication

To my parents, Esther and Kevin Murphy, for all your love and support.

Acknowledgements

A number of people deserve thanks for helping this project come to fruition. I want to first thank my senior supervisor, Dr. Mark Leier, for his support throughout the process, and particularly in the crucial last months. I am also grateful to Dr. Karen Ferguson, for her thoughtful comments on the project in its last stages, and to Dr. Lara Campbell, for serving as my external examiner. Thanks are also owed to my family and friends, especially Esther Murphy, Sheamus Murphy, Holly Palmer, and Cameron Hassall, without whose encouragement I might never have finished.

My deepest gratitude, however, goes to the eight men and women whose lives form the foundation of this thesis. I continue to be inspired by the decisions they made as such young people. Such memories are invaluable to studies on this topic, and I am indebted to them for sharing their experiences with me.

Table of Contents

Approval	ii
Abstract	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Love it or Leave it.....	19
Chapter 2: Class and Canada as a “Refuge from Militarism”	66
Conclusion	107
Bibliography	111
Primary Sources	111
Secondary Sources	113

Introduction

...Had I thought about what I was going to in Canada? No, not at all. In fact, it stuns me now that I think about it – well, it doesn't exactly stun me. It's just revealing to me of my state of mind and our states of mind, because I don't think I differed that much from the other people that came up then. It was, "alright, we're going to go up there." And there was an image of Canada as an alternate America. And I think lots of people [thought] – and I at certain times must have said it – that I'll go up there and I'll be able to really live the American dream, that that polity that was supposed to be [in the United States] may in fact exist in Canada.¹

James Leslie left the United States in December 1967, driving his Volkswagen car, stuffed with all of his worldly possessions, due north from San Francisco, California, to Vancouver, British Columbia. A female friend had agreed to make the ride with him; she had friends they could crash with in Seattle, and, more importantly, they reasoned that he would have an easier time crossing the border if they appeared to be a couple than if he crossed alone. This they did with no incident, and within two months of arriving in Canada, James, a deserter from the U.S. Reserves, had become a landed immigrant.²

James Leslie was one of an estimated 35,000 draft-age American men who immigrated to Canada between 1965 and 1975 to refuse participation in the United States military and the Vietnam War.³ Yet his comments about moving to Canada indicate that his decision to leave the United States was conceived not just as a means to escape service in the army, but in the hopes of realizing the democratic promise of the United States that in the turbulent days of the late 1960s seemed as far away as ever. His words also speak to the prevailing image of Canada as a

¹ James Leslie, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 22 February 2005.

² James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

³ The numbers surrounding the migration of Vietnam War resisters to Canada remain obscure because no records regarding the military status of men entering Canada were ever kept. 35,000 is the upper-range estimate calculated by Joseph Jones in his 2005 publication *Contending Statistics: The Numbers for U.S. Vietnam War Resisters in Canada*. Joseph Jones, *Contending Statistics: The Numbers for U.S. Vietnam War Resisters in Canada* (Vancouver: Quarter Sheaf, 2005), 34.

progressive, inclusive country, not only a haven for war resisters where choices of conscience were respected, but also a nation where the fundamental liberal principles of justice, liberty, and equality would be upheld.

Previous studies of this migration have focused almost exclusively on the issues of opposition to the war and the draft to explain the movement of Americans to Canada during the Vietnam War. Yet despite the attention focused on draft resisters and deserters during this period, immigration statistics indicate that these men comprised just a fraction of the more than 250,000 Americans who immigrated to Canada during the Vietnam War.⁴ Using oral history, this thesis explores the Vietnam War migration of Americans to Canada through the lives of eight Americans who moved to Vancouver, British Columbia between 1967 and 1973. Forming a sample comprised of men and women and representing the categories of draft resister, deserter, and draft-exempt, their experiences challenge two basic assumptions about this historic movement of people. The first is the belief that this migration was solely a reaction to American involvement in Vietnam by draft-age men who wanted to avoid service in the conflict. While this was undeniably an important motivator for this group of immigrants, an analysis of the lives of six of the men and women in my sample in the years leading up to their emigration reveals that in addition to opposition to the Vietnam War, their decisions to leave the United States were in fact expressions of a deep disaffection with American society more broadly informed by their participation in the democratic struggles for change such as the civil rights movement, the New Left, and the counterculture that defined this period in American history. The second assumption is that Canada provided a universal haven for Americans who looked to Canada as an escape from forced military service and the turmoil wresting their homeland. Considered within the political and social context of

⁴ F.C. Leacy, ed., "Series 385-416. Immigration to Canada by Country of Permanent Residence, 1956-1976," *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983).

Vancouver in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the testimonies of this group of Americans expose a stark difference in experience characterized by a disparity in economic class that saw lower-class, uneducated American deserters largely shut out of Canadian society and the refuge that it promised.

By considering this topic within the context of the social and political movements of the 1960s and early 1970s, this thesis attempts to reassess the place of this migration within American historiography. Indeed, in the annals of American history, the exodus of draft-age American men from the United States to Canada during the Vietnam War holds a place of particular infamy. Reviled as cowards and traitors by supporters of the war and the military for refusing to perform their patriotic obligation of military service, draft “dodgers” were also snubbed by the established American antiwar movement, who viewed their flight as abandoning the greater struggle against the war.⁵ These attitudes have been reflected in the treatment afforded this group by historians of the Vietnam era and the 1960s in the United States in general, even in light of revelations regarding the erroneous justification and questionable conduct of the Vietnam conflict.⁶ The most common tactic has been to ignore the issue entirely. Numerous volumes on this period make no mention whatsoever of this highly publicized form of draft resistance and the corresponding movement of tens of thousands of people to Canada, or, in fewer numbers, to places like Mexico,

⁵ Tom Hayden, one time leader of SDS, was among the most vocal opponents of the exile movement. John Hagan, *Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 111.

⁶ An excellent discussion of the myths and facts surrounding America’s war in Vietnam is Christian Appy and Alexander Bloom, “Vietnam War Mythology and the Rise of Public Cynicism,” in Alexander Bloom, ed., *Long Time Gone: Sixties America Then and Now* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 47-73.

Sweden or Great Britain.⁷ Where it has been included, it is mentioned in passing or dismissed, often derisively, as a form of resistance.⁸

Canadian historiography on this time period and topic differs in two ways. First is the relative dearth of studies regarding Canada in the 1960s and 1970s. With a few exceptions, including the important 2009 publication of Bryan Palmer's *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Time*, most discussions of the 1960s in Canada take the form of chapters in the more standard political histories of the nation or those regarding government relations between Canada and the United States.⁹ The influx of American war resisters to Canada, however, is one topic that rarely escapes remark in treatments of the period.¹⁰ Nevertheless, for the most part these accounts are brief and superficial, characterizing the arrival of these men as essentially unproblematic, if they consider their experience at all. One important departure from this norm is

⁷ See, for example, John Morton Blum, *Years of Discord: American Politics and Society, 1961-1974* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991); David Barber and Beth Bailey, *The Columbia Guide to America in the 1960s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); David Chalmers, *And the Crooked Places Made Straight: The Struggle for Social Change in the 1960s* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Tom Wells, *The War Within: America's Battle over Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Edward P. Morgan, *The 60s Experience: Hard Lessons About Modern America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); James Miller, *Democracy is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987).

⁸ See, for example, Myra MacPherson, *Long Time Passing: Vietnam and the Haunted Generation* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1994); Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *Peace Now! American Society and the Ending of the Vietnam War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999); Michael S. Foley, *Confronting the War Machine: Draft Resistance during the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

⁹ Bryan D. Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Time* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); Other exceptions include Myrna Kostash, *Long Way From Home: The Story of the Sixties Generation in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company Publishers, 1980); Pierre Berton, *1967: The Last Good Year* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Ltd., 1997); Doug Owrarn, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Ron Verzuh, *Underground Times: The Story of Canada's Flower-Child Revolutionaries* (Toronto: Deneau Publishers, 1989). On the history of Canada in the 1960s see, for example, Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, John English, *Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics, and Provincialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). On relations between Canada and the United States, see, for example, Robert Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion: Canada and the World, 1945-1984* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007); Robert Bothwell, *Canada and the United States: The Politics of Partnership* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*, 3rd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002); J.L. Granatstein, *Yankee Go Home? Canadians and Anti-Americanism* (Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 1996).

¹⁰ One notable exception to this rule is Doug Owrarn's *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

provided by Jack Granatstein in *Yankee Go Home?* in which he recounts the reception of American war resisters within the context of Canada's long-standing tradition of anti-Americanism. Thus he describes how some nationalist Canadians resented the "invasion" of draft-age Americans as yet another form of American imperialism, while several Canadian writers paid homage to the influx in their work with the inclusion of draft dodger characters typified by unsavory, condescending, and generally dishonorable behaviour.¹¹ Canadian nationalist Robin Mathews was the most vocal proponent of the argument that war resisters represented agents of Americanization, and it is in this context that draft resisters receive one of two brief mentions in *Canada's 1960s*, with Palmer noting that Mathew's attack on war resisters, published in a magazine of the Canadian left, was a far cry from the early efforts of Toronto's new left organization, the Student Union for Peace Action, to help Americans across the border.¹² Myrna Kostash, meanwhile, as one of the first Canadian authors to specifically consider the social and political upheavals of "The Sixties" as experienced by Canadian youth – including, for example, the rise of a Canadian counterculture, new left, peace movement and women's liberation movement – offers a frank introduction to the significant difficulties many war resisters encountered in Canada, including police harassment, discrimination by border officials, and political disputes with Canadian leftists.¹³

More specific accounts of the Vietnam era migration to Canada are presented in the small but growing body of literature produced over the past three decades. Perhaps a function of its contemporary nature, the first feature that emerges from an overview of this collection is that it is dominated by the work of sociologists and journalists rather than historians. Published in 1976, the landmark study in this field is criminologist Renée Kasinsky's *Refugees from Militarism: Draft-Age Americans in Canada*. Based on research collected over six years as a participant-observer in

¹¹ Granatstein, *Yankee Go Home?*, 170, 188, 190.

¹² Palmer, *Canada's 1960s*, 293.

¹³ Kostash, *Long Way From Home*, 55-68.

cities across Canada, Kasinsky characterizes American exiles as pawns of the “continental youth channeling system of North American capitalism.”¹⁴ Outlining the way in which the draft’s elaborate system of educational and occupational deferments worked to “channel” middle-class youth into college while relegating the sons of the working-class into the ranks of the army, Kasinsky describes how this system continued to control the lives of dissident American youth north of the border due to an economically-minded immigration policy that favored applicants with skills and education.¹⁵

What is overlooked in Kasinsky’s analysis of the exile experience in Canada is the impact of factors like the general political atmosphere that prevailed in both the United States and Canada in the late 1960s and early 1970s, particularly as it pertained to the booming youth demographic. This omission is also evident in the two subsequent sociological studies to appear on the Vietnam era migration to Canada, David Surrey’s 1982 publication *Choice of Conscience: Vietnam Era Military and Draft Resisters in Canada* and John Hagan’s 2001 study *Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada*. A product of the “Canadian component” of research compiled for the Vietnam Era Research Project, a national American sociological study “designed to assess the impact of the Vietnam era on age-eligible males,” *Choice of Conscience* is based on interviews conducted with 49 draft resisters and 11 deserters residing in Toronto in order to determine the factors that differentiated them from other draft-age American males, as well as what led to their decisions to leave the United States, and to remain in Canada.¹⁶ Considering issues like the socioeconomic status of resisters’ families and their socialization therein, Surrey, like Kasinsky, finds that draft resisters came from particularly privileged backgrounds, while military deserters

¹⁴ Renée Goldsmith Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism: Draft-Age Americans in Canada* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1976), 8.

¹⁵ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 8.

¹⁶ David Surrey, *Choice of Conscience: Vietnam Era Military and Draft Resisters in Canada* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), 1.

hailed overwhelmingly from the lower-income segments of American society. With respect to issues of politicization in the years preceding their departure from the United States, Surrey considers the attitudes of resisters towards service in the military in general, as well as the war in Vietnam in particular. However, the larger historical context in which these attitudes formed – a period marked by the rise of the civil rights movement, the New Left, and the broadly-defined youth counterculture, just to name a few significant socio-political developments – and how these factors might have contributed to their decisions to leave are afforded little discussion.¹⁷ John Hagan, whose particular focus in *Northern Passage* is the impact of “law resistance” on the life course of former war resisters also living in Toronto, similarly considers the migration of war resisters to Canada exclusively as a kind of spin-off of the antiwar movement and associates the motivations for exile solely with the threat of the draft and military service in Vietnam.¹⁸

In his 2001 PhD dissertation, “When Home Became Away: American Expatriates and New Social Movements in Toronto,” historian David Churchill hints at broader motivations for the American exodus to Canada than simply opposition to the Vietnam War, noting that other reasons had to do with a “profound alienation from American modernity and a desire to explore an alternative society and be true to their political beliefs and values.”¹⁹ Besides observing that opposition to the Vietnam War among young people “grew out of the inter-woven nexus of the Civil Rights movement, the student movement, and the older traditions of peace and nuclear disarmament,” however, he does not explore the process of politicization or other specific factors

¹⁷ In his discussion of the change in resisters’ attitudes towards service in the military as a result of the particular circumstances of the Vietnam War, Surrey adds in a footnote that “undoubtedly, had we interviewed more blacks, the Civil Rights Movement would have been suggested as at least a second major politicization factor. We didn’t and it wasn’t.” Surrey, *Choice of Conscience*, 104, footnote 3.

¹⁸ John Hagan, *Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 4, 21.

¹⁹ David Churchill, “When Home Became Away: American Expatriates and New Social Movements in Toronto” (PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 2001), 103.

within the context of the political and social atmosphere of the United States, characterizing migration to Canada, in addition to opposition to the Vietnam War, as a more general rejection of America as it existed at the time.²⁰

A broader historical analysis of the Vietnam War migration to Canada is provided by Frank Kusch in his 2001 publication, *All American Boys: Draft Dodgers in Canada from the Vietnam War*. Based largely on evidence collected from interviews with thirty “draft dodgers” still living in Canada, Kusch argues that their “motivations for leaving their country of birth permanently lay not solely with the Vietnam War, but with their experiences, influences and expectations growing up as Americans in the 1950s and 1960s.”²¹ According to Kusch, the root of these men’s migration lay not in any fundamental opposition to American intervention in Vietnam, but rather was the product of a resolute belief in the Jeffersonian ideals of freedom and individual liberty that precluded submitting control of their lives to the dictates of the state. Hailing from “relatively elite backgrounds,” Kusch argues that coupled with the “tremendous economic growth and opportunity” of the 1950s and early 1960s, these men entered maturity “envisioning lives of choice and prosperity.”²² As a result, when faced with the prospect of the draft, Kusch observes that these men “showed neither interest nor obligation to embrace forced military service with affluence and a strong economy at their wait.”²³ Moving to Canada allowed them to continue with their studies and pursue careers “free of government interference.” Thus the title “All American Boys”: in Kusch’s estimation, this “ardent individualism” that prompted their migration to Canada made them “quintessential Americans.”²⁴

²⁰ Churchill, “When Home Became Away,” 114.

²¹ Frank Kusch, *All American Boys: Draft Dodgers in Canada from the Vietnam War* (Wesport: Praeger Publishers, 2001) 2.

²² Kusch, *All American Boys* 6.

²³ Kusch, *All American Boys* 3.

²⁴ Kusch, *All American Boys* 3.

While it is clear that the historical context in which the men and women in my group of Vietnam-era expatriates grew up absolutely influenced their decisions to leave the United States, their motivations for emigration to Canada do not correspond with those related by Kusch in *All American Boys*. Using oral history, this thesis explores their lives in the years leading up to their decisions to leave the United States, and the situation they encountered when they arrived in Vancouver in the late 1960s and early 1970s. There are a number of reasons for this approach. Focusing on Americans who moved to Vancouver will first of all redress a significant bias in the existing literature towards the experiences of Americans who settled in eastern Canada. David Surrey, John Hagan, and David Churchill all focus their research exclusively on Americans who migrated to the city of Toronto, while Frank Kusch gives no indication as to what part of Canada in which his interviewees now live.²⁵ Toronto did draw the greatest numbers of American war resisters during the Vietnam period, which partly accounts for the amount of attention given to the experiences of those who settled there. This includes the work of journalist James Dickerson, who published *North to Canada: Men and Women against the Vietnam War* in 1999. A compilation of eight personal accounts of American Vietnam War resisters, five migrated to Toronto, while the remaining three recount experiences from the eastern cities of Ottawa and Montreal.²⁶

This predominant focus on centres in eastern Canada obscures the fact that Americans actually migrated in significant numbers to areas all across Canada during the Vietnam period. One exception to this trend in the literature is Kasinsky's *Refugees from Militarism*. While Kasinsky met and interviewed hundreds of Americans across Canada, including in the cities of Toronto,

²⁵ The most recent M.A. thesis on this topic also considers the experiences of war resisters in Toronto, from the perspective of the war resister support organization the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme. Mark Roth, "Crossing Borders: The Toronto Anti-Draft Programme and the Canadian Anti-Vietnam War Movement" (M.A. thesis, University of Waterloo, 2008).

²⁶ James Dickerson, *North to Canada: Men and Women Against the Vietnam War* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1999).

Ottawa, and Montreal, the bulk of her direct observation was conducted in Vancouver, the city where she made her “home base.”²⁷ Her work thus provides crucial information on the situation that existed for resisters in western Canada in this period, and serves as a basis for comparison with events and conditions in the east.

The experience of war resisters in western Canada has also been explored by Alan Haig-Brown in his 1996 publication, *Hell No, We Won't Go: Vietnam Draft Resisters in Canada*.²⁸ A book in the same vein as Dickerson's *North to Canada, Hell No, We Won't Go* consists of twenty separate life-histories of Vietnam War resisters who settled in areas across Canada. Perhaps because Haig-Brown hails from the west coast himself, more than half of these profiles consider the experiences of resisters whose journey from the United States led them to the city of Vancouver or more remote locales on Vancouver Island or in the interior of British Columbia. Yet while he provides fascinating insight into the events and influences that led each person to leave the United States and later remain in Canada, Haig-Brown's approach has one crucial drawback. Presented in no particular order or according to any overarching theme, there is no attempt to connect or draw comparisons between the individual narratives. Characterizing his subjects as “wonderfully diverse,” Haig-Brown simply notes in his introduction that “if they have anything in common, it is a determined individualism that still recognizes community responsibility.”²⁹ In fact, a closer look at their profiles reveals a preponderance of common themes which suggest far more substantial connections between these people, connections which go beyond even a shared opposition to American involvement in Vietnam. Using the technique that makes Haig-Brown's

²⁷ According to Kasinsky, more than two-thirds of her direct observation was done in Vancouver. Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*: 8.

²⁸ Alan Haig Brown, *Hell No, We Won't Go: Vietnam Draft Resisters in Canada* (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 1996).

²⁹ Haig-Brown, 5, 4.

profiles so engaging – oral history – I hope to build on this example and illuminate the factors in my sample of resisters that led them on their paths to Canada.

Though a history of the American Vietnam War migration to Vancouver could be constructed using only traditional documentary sources, doing so would significantly limit our understanding of this historical movement. Documentary evidence of the migration of war resisters to Vancouver can be found in both the mainstream and alternative media of the time, and scattered accounts of individual draft resisters and deserters who arrived on the west coast were also recorded in a number of works published in the early 1970s.³⁰ However, relying only on these sources does not allow for the depth of understanding that is possible through personal interviews, particularly regarding individual motivations for leaving the United States. Most importantly, this approach overlooks the fact that men in danger of military service in Vietnam were not the only Americans who left the United States for Canada during this period.

It is to include some sense of this element of the American exodus to Canada that this study has been built around oral history. As Paul Thompson notes in *Voice of the Past*, “the primary merit of oral history is that, to a much greater extent than most sources, it allows the original multiplicity of standpoints to be recreated.”³¹ Thus, while contemporary sources not surprisingly focused on the more sensational story of the possibly permanent exile of draft-age American men, tens of thousands of draft-exempt American men, women, and children made the same move with little notice or inquiry as to why. A few recent works have incorporated the experiences of women who accompanied their draft resister or deserter partners into exile, as well

³⁰ These include Frank H. Epp, ed., *I Would Like to Dodge the Draft Dodgers, But...* (Waterloo: Conrad Press, 1970); Richard L. Killmer, Robert S. Lecky, Debrah S. Wiley, *They Can't Go Home Again: The Story of America's Political Refugees*, Introduction by the Honorable Edward I. Koch (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1971); Roger Neville Williams, *The New Exiles: American War Resisters in Canada*, Foreword by William Sloane Coffin, Jr. (New York: Liveright Publishers, 1971); Jim Christy, ed., *The New Refugees: American Voices in Canada* (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1972); Kenneth Fred Emerick, *War Resisters Canada: The World of the American Military-Political Refugees*, Foreword by Monsignor Charles Owen Rice (Knox, PA: Pennsylvania Free Press, 1972).

³¹ Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 6.

as those who came to Canada on their own.³² The first work to focus particularly on the issue of American women who migrated to Canada during the Vietnam War, however, is the recently published “‘Women United Against the War’: Gender Politics, Feminism, and Vietnam Draft Resistance in Canada” by Lara Campbell. Campbell places the topic within the larger framework of the gendered politics of antiwar activism, including the connection between antiwar work and the development of the women’s liberation movement in both Canada and the United States, as well as how women’s and men’s bodies – specifically, women’s sexuality and men’s masculinity – were placed at the centre of debates related to draft resistance in Canada.³³ Incorporating contemporary sources like newspapers and letters with oral histories, Campbell’s preliminary research suggests that despite the marginal place that women migrants have occupied in previous historical accounts, women played a leading role in the American Vietnam Era migration to Canada. According to Campbell, American women were critical of U.S. foreign policy and frustrated at the failure of protest in the United States to achieve political change, and initiated immigration within families and couples, or moved on their own as “political protestors in their own right....due to their own ethical and political beliefs.”³⁴ Using oral history, this thesis explores the experiences of two women in the latter category, as well as one man who faced no threat of service in Vietnam. Supplementing sparse documentary evidence to explain what motivated such Americans to leave the United States and later remain in Canada, oral history offers a way of bringing such matters to light through the lens of individual experience.

³² Hagan, *Northern Passage*, 29-32; Haig-Brown, *Hell No, We Won't Go*, 42-56, 127-134; Dickerson, *North to Canada*, 1-22. Dickerson, for his part, openly admits that the only reason he included a chapter on women (or rather on one woman, Diane Francis) was because he received several letters from women who criticized him for not considering the “contributions of women” in an earlier piece he had written on the migration of Americans to Canada during the Vietnam War. See Dickerson, xvi.

³³ Lara Campbell, “‘Women United Against the War’: Gender Politics, Feminism, and Vietnam Draft Resistance in Canada,” in Karen Dubinsky et al., eds., *New World Coming: The Sixties and the Shaping of Global Consciousness* (Toronto: Between The Lines, 2009), 339-346.

³⁴ Campbell, “‘Women United Against the War,’” 345.

Finally, as Bret Eynon suggests in his article “Cast upon the Shore: Oral History and New Scholarship on the Movements of the 1960s,” oral history also holds special potential for further study of the dynamic period of the 1960s in particular. As a “documentation of memory that provides clues to subjectivity and consciousness,” Eynon notes how oral testimony could be used to better illuminate the roots of activism, the links between movements, and the different perspectives of participants, from movement leaders to the rank and file, to those who watched from the sidelines.³⁵ This potential of oral history is realized in this thesis, revealing how the men and women profiled in chapter one were influenced by the movements of the 1960s and how their participation in these movements was frequently interrelated. It also allows for a greater understanding of how these Americans arrived at their decisions to leave the United States, by tracing the development of the critical consciousness that underlay each person’s choice. These fresh perspectives serve to cast this migration in a whole new light.

In chapter two, the perspectives afforded by oral history serve to complicate the persistent image of Canada as a “refuge from militarism” during this period, by illuminating how the situation in Vancouver affected differences in experience based on economic class. Class is a central category in this thesis because of the role it played in shaping the composition of this group of migrants, as well as their ability to integrate into Canadian society. In the first place, economic class was a central factor in forming the two main categories of men who looked to Canada as a haven from prosecution for refusing to serve in the Vietnam War: draft resisters and deserters. Generally characterized as middle-class and working-class, respectively, these groups owe this distinction to the United States Selective Service System, or draft, and its policy of granting deferments from service to men attending college or working in skilled professions such as

³⁵ Bret Eynon, “Cast upon the Shore: Oral History and New Scholarship on the Movements of the 1960s,” *Journal of American History* 83 no. 2 (September 1996), 560-570.

science, engineering, or education. Conceived as a comprehensive manpower policy known as “channelling,” the threat of induction into the armed forces was used to exert “pressurized guidance” to encourage young men to go to college and enter into occupations deemed “in the national health, safety, and interest.” As college attendance was a pursuit available mainly to those who had the funds to pay for it, this deferment scheme had the effect of inducing middle- and upper-class young men to pursue higher education while the sons of the working-class were left to fill the ranks of the army. When opposition to the Vietnam War became more common and men began refusing to participate, two distinct classes of war resister emerged: middle-class, college-educated draft resisters, who were faced with the threat of induction upon the expiration of their college deferment, and working-class, uneducated deserters, who left the armed forces after having already been inducted.³⁶

As I explain in detail in chapter two, this disparity in education between draft resisters and deserters resulted in widely divergent experiences in Canada, because Canada’s immigration policy was weighed heavily in favour of applicants with skills and post-secondary education. There are of course exceptions to these class categorizations, as my own sample attests. Ngoma Wajembae, one of the deserters in my group of resisters, came from a working-class background but attended college as a result of Upward Bound, a War on Poverty program designed to equalize access to education for lower-income youth.³⁷ The expansion in post-secondary education in the 1960s also made opportunities for higher education more widespread than ever before: historian Christian Appy reports that by 1970, around 25 per cent of American soldiers in Vietnam had some college education. This figure, however, represents an increase from earlier in the decade, taking

³⁶ Lawrence Baskir and William A. Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance: The Draft, the War, and the Vietnam Generation* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1978) 15-16. Quotes are from the Selective Service System’s 1965 memorandum, “On Manpower Channelling,” reprinted in the 1966 issue of *Ramparts*, cited in Baskir and Strauss, 261.

³⁷ For privacy, this interviewee asked to be referred to by his adopted African name, Ngoma Wajembae.

into account the increase in draft calls and the end to most graduate school deferments in the late 1960s. Moreover, it was still significantly less than the 50 per cent of Americans between the ages of 18 and 21 who had been to college in the population as a whole.³⁸ Thus at the least it is fair to say that the majority of deserters who came to Canada to refuse military service would have come from working-class backgrounds with little or no post-secondary education. The definition of “middle-class” as it relates to draft resisters, moreover, realistically refers to a wide range in economic background, with access to post-secondary education in order to delay induction representing the crucial factor.

As it relates to the men and women whose lives inform this thesis, the labels of class that I use to describe their backgrounds are largely ones that they have ascribed themselves. They are included to give some sense of the worlds in which these expatriates grew up, and to demonstrate the variety in real class background that characterized this particular sample of people. To borrow from Michael Zweig, class in this sense corresponds to the power and authority which their parents had in their jobs and in the wider society.³⁹ With the exception of Ngoma Wajembae, who was raised by a single parent under the welfare system, all of the men and women in this sample hail from the broadly defined middle-class, in which their parents held some power over their own work or the work of others, but were not independent of higher management, professional associations, or market forces dominated by large corporations.⁴⁰ There is a substantial range in family income represented in this sample, with “lower middle class” being used to describe the backgrounds of Michael Goldberg, whose family were shopkeepers, and Larry Kuehn, whose mother was a teacher. Neither had a lot of money growing up, and both went to college entirely or largely

³⁸ Christian Appy, *Working Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 25-26.

³⁹ Michael Zweig, *The Working Class Majority: America's Best Kept Secret* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 1-3.

⁴⁰ Zweig, *The Working Class Majority*, 20-27.

through scholarships.⁴¹ Nevertheless, as Appy points out, “education, along with occupation and income, is a key measure of class position,” and so the fact that college was in their sights is also a key indicator of their economic class.⁴² At the other end of the spectrum are James Leslie and Bonnelle Strickling, whose backgrounds are described as “upper middle class,” because their fathers earned substantial salaries as a securities analyst and corporation lawyer, respectively.⁴³ Besides providing some context to their lives in the United States, however, as with the class categorization of draft resisters as a whole, the significance of these class labels in terms of their experiences in Canada relate particularly to the opportunity for post-secondary education which they afforded.

As in the United States as a whole, however, class in this project is also complicated by race. Specifically, the class division in the group of men and women whose experiences inform this thesis also corresponds to a racial divide, with the only working-class voice also representing the only non-white perspective. Ngoma Wajembae is an African-American, and while comparatively little evidence exists on black war resisters who went to Canada, estimates suggest that they comprised a very small minority among both middle-class draft resisters and working-class deserters. Writing in 1970, Roger Neville Williams provided the “rough estimate” of five hundred to a “less-likely thousand” black war resisters in Canada, although their numbers and the particular circumstances they experienced in the city of Toronto, at least, were enough to prompt three black draft resisters to establish the Black Refugee Organization (BRO) in the spring of 1970, an aid group geared towards helping black resisters become settled in Canada and avoid isolation

⁴¹ Michael Goldberg, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 27 January 2005; Larry Kuehn, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 24 February 2005.

⁴² Appy, *Working Class War*, 25.

⁴³ James Leslie, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 22 February 2005; Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 15 February 2006.

by linking them with Toronto's local black community.⁴⁴ In both his motivations for leaving the United States and his experiences in Canada, Ngoma's perspective as a black, working-class deserter is an important addition to discussions of a movement that is understood to have been overwhelmingly white.

Finally, a word on terminology. The preferred term in most recent literature for the men who left the United States in order to refuse military service in Vietnam is "war resister," which encompasses both draft resisters and military deserters. It is the term I use in this thesis when referring to this group as a whole, because it is inclusive and explicitly frames the decision to refuse military service as an act of resistance. It also avoids the negative connotations that sometimes accompany the terms "dodger" and "deserter," but both of these terms also appear in this thesis. "Draft dodger" was the term most commonly used during the Vietnam War to describe men who had refused induction, frequently without any pejorative meaning, and it appears when invoked by one of my sources. "Deserter," likewise, was the term most commonly used at the time for and by the men who had left active duty in the armed forces, and it continues to be used today. As I recognize both draft refusal and military desertion as choices informed in most cases by deeply held political and moral beliefs, I do not intend any pejorative meaning from the use of these terms.

This thesis is organized in two chapters. Chapter one considers the political and social context in which the American migration to Canada took place, profiling six men and women who left the United States between 1967 and 1973. Their experiences provide insight into the composition of this unprecedented exodus, as well as the broader circumstances and motivations that informed it. Their testimonies demonstrate that migration to Canada was an expression of a profound alienation from American society rooted in the social and political realities of this period,

⁴⁴ Williams, *The New Exiles*, 339-40; Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 101.

rather than a straightforward reaction against the Vietnam War. Chapter two considers the political and social context into which Americans arrived in Vancouver, and shows that the city's own political and social upheavals in this period created a climate of hostility that, when coupled with the Canadian government's policy towards American war resisters, resulted in a serious disparity in experience among Americans that corresponded directly with economic class. Canada was a haven only for those Americans fortunate enough to have the education and skills required to legally immigrate. For those who did not, a group comprised almost exclusively of working-class deserters, their inability to become established made them targets of Vancouver's sustained efforts against the city's transient youth counterculture. Taken as a whole, I hope this project will serve to challenge static conceptions of this migration, and Canada's persistently positive image as a "refuge from militarism."

Chapter 1: Love it or Leave it

With their ten children in tow, in May 1970 Jean and Charles Argast gathered their belongings, left their comfortable home in an Indianapolis suburb, and set out to begin new lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.¹ Featured in an article in the July 17, 1970 issue of *Life* magazine entitled “An Indiana Family Leaves the US for Good,” the Argasts’ story at first glance appears unusual. An affluent, well-established family with deep roots in Indiana, the Argasts hardly fit the stereotype of the average emigrant. Indeed, in the country to which generations of immigrants have flocked in pursuit of the “American Dream,” the Argasts lived a life to which others aspired. Charles Argast was his own boss, the head of a successful family business, and had amassed enough wealth to own his own home and support a growing family. He and his wife were also active members of their community, and had developed a close-knit circle of life-long friends they were leaving behind.²

By 1970, moreover, emigration to Canada had become synonymous with one thing: draft evasion. Five years into the Vietnam War, the press was rife with stories about the thousands of “draft dodgers” and, increasingly, military deserters, who had crossed the border to Canada to avoid compulsory military service in Vietnam, as well as the prison sentence which accompanied their refusal. Yet at 46 years old, Charles Argast was in no danger of being drafted. What then would induce a middle-aged couple with ten children to make the same life-altering move?

In fact, though the attention focused on draft evaders and deserters during this period would suggest otherwise, the majority of Americans who immigrated to Canada during the Vietnam War era were people just like the Argasts, who faced no personal danger of military service in

¹ “An Indiana Family Leaves the US for Keeps,” *Life* vol 69 (3), 42a.

² “An Indiana Family Leaves the US for Keeps,” *Life* vol 69 (3), 42a.

Vietnam. More than 250,000 Americans immigrated to Canada between 1964 and 1975, and while the numbers surrounding the migration of draft resisters and deserters to Canada remain obscure, even the most generous estimate of 60,000 accounts for just one-quarter of the total.³ Previous studies of this migration, however, have focused almost exclusively on these groups, looking to reasons for opposition to the war in the particulars of American involvement in Vietnam to explain the movement of Americans across the northern border.⁴ These reasons, to be sure, were manifold. American forces engaged in particular brutality in Vietnam, raining millions of tons of bombs and chemical defoliants across the countryside, destroying civilian villages and food sources. Coupled with the knowledge that the United States had propped up a corrupt, pro-capitalist regime in South Vietnam rather than allow a communist government come to power through democratic channels, draft-eligible men had more than enough reason to migrate to Canada rather than risk their lives in defense of such a conflict.

What has been overlooked, however, is the broader nature of this migration, as well as the attitudes which informed it, not only for the tens of thousands of draft exempt American men and women who relocated to Canada during this period, but also for those young men facing service in Vietnam. Occurring during one of the most socially and politically dynamic times in American history, the Vietnam War was only one of several crucial issues confronting Americans in the 1960s. Witnessing a convergence of transformative popular movements such as the civil rights movement, the New Left, and the counterculture, a widespread re-evaluation of American society

³ F.C. Leacy, ed., "Series 385-416. Immigration to Canada by Country of Permanent Residence, 1956-1976," *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983); Joseph Jones, *Contending Statistics: The Numbers for U.S. Vietnam War Resisters in Canada* (Vancouver: Quarter Sheaf, 2005), 34.

⁴ These include Renée Goldsmith Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism: Draft-Age Americans in Canada* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1976); David Surrey, *Choice of Conscience: Vietnam Era Military and Draft Resisters in Canada* (New York: Praeger, 1982); John Hagan, *Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Frank Kusch, *All American Boys: Draft Dodgers in Canada from the Vietnam War* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2001); James Dickerson, *North to Canada: Men and Women Against the Vietnam War* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1999).

occurred during this period, as millions of Americans, and young Americans, in particular, began to recognize and speak out against glaring examples of suffering, subjugation, and injustice in a nation whose founding principles promised equality, liberty, and justice for all.⁵ This chapter explores the Vietnam War migration to Canada through the oral histories of six American men and women who moved to Vancouver, British Columbia, between 1967 and 1973. Comprised of both the draft-exempt and draft-eligible, their testimonies indicate that while the Vietnam War was a significant factor in their decisions to leave the United States, it was not the sole reason for their emigration. Born between 1941 and 1949, in the years preceding their moves the lives of these young Americans are marked by an acute awareness of injustice and intolerance in American society and a desire to effect change through participation in the democratic struggles that sought to transform the United States during this period. Considered within this context, for these men and women migration to Canada was the end result of a deep alienation from the realities of American society in the 1960s and the underlying system of authority that sustained it.

Coinciding with the cresting of the demographic explosion known as the baby boom, the presence and participation of youth was central to the vitality of the social and political movements of the 1960s. Their disproportionate representation, however, owes as much to the nature of the economic and political atmospheres in which they were raised as it does to the size of their age bracket. In 1945, the United States emerged from the Second World War as the world's most economically and militarily powerful nation. Unscathed by the physical destruction that scarred Europe and Asia, American industry entered a period of sustained expansion in the postwar period, bolstered by reconstruction contracts in Europe, the release of pent-up consumerism at home, and continued military spending towards the United States' nascent Cold War with the Soviet Union.

⁵ Wini Breines, "Of this Generation: The New Left and the Student Movement," in *Long Time Gone: Sixties America Then and Now*, Alexander Bloom ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 16.

The result, writes historian Robert Griffiths, was that “for most Americans, the 1950s were a decade of unprecedented prosperity, economic growth, [and] high employment.”⁶ The ranks of the middle class swelled, and millions of men and women who grew up during the hard years of the Depression now possessed, in the words of Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, “a tangible slab of the American dream.”⁷

Prosperity also furthered the mood of national self-celebration which pervaded the postwar years, inspired by victory in Europe and Japan, and intensified by pervasive Cold War rhetoric that trumpeted the United States’ role as defender of democracy around the globe. As media magnate Henry Luce had predicted in *Life* magazine in 1941, it appeared as though the “American Century” was dawning, and Americans in all walks of life were surrounded by a dominant cultural imagery which presented a “selectively distorted vision of America as a dynamic, classless, and benignly consensual society.”⁸ For most of the young men and women who came of age amid this postwar plenty, the material substance of their lives gave them little reason to question the popular consensus. Yet beneath the veil of prosperity and contentment, contradictions abounded in the daily oppression suffered by blacks and other minorities in the United States, and the appalling poverty that persisted for some segments of the population despite declarations of unprecedented affluence.

The civil rights movement in the American South in the late 1950s and early 1960s is generally credited for first opening the eyes of white America, and young white activists in particular, to the injustices prevalent in American society through its exposure of the suffering of

⁶ Robert Griffith, “American Society in the 1950s,” in *Major Problems in American History Since 1945*, Robert Griffith, ed. (Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1992), 199.

⁷ Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 12.

⁸ Terry H. Anderson, *The Sixties* (New York: Longman, 1999), 1; Griffith, *Major Problems in American History Since 1945*, 199.

poor southern blacks. According to Edward Morgan, for both the activists who joined the struggle for racial justice in the South and those youth who witnessed it from a distance, “what had once been vague and abstract, even invisible, became more immediate and concrete as oppressive conditions came to the surface.”⁹ In addition to African-Americans still living under segregation in the South and under *de facto* segregation in the North, there were the millions of poor who made up what Michael Harrington would call “the other America” in 1962: “the unskilled workers, the migrant farm workers, the aged, the minorities, and all the others who live in the economic underworld of American life.”¹⁰ For Michael Goldberg and Bonnelle Strickling, two Americans who immigrated to Vancouver in 1967 and 1971 respectively, it was exposure to this “other America” that first planted the seeds of their disassociation with the United States. Far from being “vague and abstract,” as adolescents Michael and Bonnelle were confronted with the injustices and inequalities suffered by minorities and the poor in the United States in their daily lives. In both cases these experiences served as catalysts for the political and social activism that would ultimately contribute to the circumstances of their emigration.

Draft resister Michael Goldberg was born in 1943 and raised in a lower middle class Jewish household in Denver, Colorado. Michael’s father passed away when he was young, and although his family did not have a lot of money, in 1961 he entered Monmouth College in Illinois on a scholarship. In 1963 he returned to Denver and continued his education at the University of Colorado, taking night classes while he worked during the day. In the years preceding his move to Canada, Michael was dedicated to organizing resistance to the Vietnam War as the leading spokesman of the Denver chapter of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the most important

⁹ Edward P. Morgan, *The 60s Experience: Hard Lessons About Modern America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 19.

¹⁰ Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: MacMillan, 1962), cited in Griffiths, ed., 306.

New Left organization of the 1960s. Founded in 1960 by students at the University of Michigan, after the escalation of American involvement in Vietnam, SDS became one of the leading antiwar organizations in the United States. However, it was originally conceived as a vehicle for articulating a broader political and economic critique of American society, with a particular emphasis on what its founders recognized as the profoundly undemocratic nature of American capitalism.¹¹

It was in this capacity that Michael was first attracted to SDS. Michael's grandparents were shopkeepers, and he spent much of his early life working at their store in one of Denver's poorest neighbourhoods. Located in what had previously been Denver's Jewish ghetto, over time the area had become a primarily black and Hispanic ghetto of people with very low income. Taking in his surroundings, Michael gained a critical awareness of poverty in the community, and, in particular, the connection between economic and racial inequality in the United States. Disturbed by this injustice and motivated to act, in the fall of 1965 Michael initiated his first major activist effort by joining with Denver's Mexican-American community in their campaign to support the first grape boycott organized by Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers union in California.¹²

A veteran community activist and former migrant farm labourer, Chavez organized the UFW in 1962 in order to lobby for the rights of migrant farm labourers, who were among the most exploited workers in the United States. According to Isserman and Kazin, migrant farm workers were unprotected by federal or state labour laws and "typically earned no more than minimum wage and endured painful and often dangerous working conditions to plant and harvest the fruits and vegetables Americans consumed daily."¹³ The UFW was the first union of farm workers to be

¹¹ Wini Breines, "Of This Generation: The New Left and the Student Movement," *Long Time Gone*, Alexander Bloom, ed., 26.

¹² Michael Goldberg, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 27 January 2005.

¹³ Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 125.

established since the Depression and was the only one ever controlled by Mexican-Americans. In September 1965, the UFW initiated a strike and boycott against the grape growers of California's San Joaquin Valley, demanding higher wages and better working conditions. Quickly growing into a peaceful uprising of Mexican-Americans, they brought attention to "La Causa" through mass demonstrations, including a 300 mile march to Sacramento, the state capital. Chavez called the movement a "plea for social change" and it inspired Mexican-Americans throughout the Southwest to become politically involved where before they had been silent.¹⁴

The Denver Mexican-American community was no exception, and it was in the context of Michael's budding activism and understanding of the human exploitation inherent in the American capitalist system that he was led to SDS. He explains, "There were a number of things that were happening for me and SDS seemed to be really comfortable. I thought that a socialist solution was one that in fact could be achieved in North America and, particularly in the United States, that there needed to be a greater involvement of workers and a better division of how wealth was distributed among people. The obscene riches and obscene poverty just made no sense."¹⁵ Michael thus particularly appreciated SDS's stance with respect to the Vietnam War, which viewed it not just as a brutal and unjustified conflict which had to be stopped, but as a symptom of the same malignant economic system which engendered racial and class oppression in the United States.¹⁶ After being introduced to SDS through a Vietnam War teach-in at the University of Colorado, Michael immediately set about organizing a chapter. Continuing with his previous commitment to the grape boycott, he mobilized the new group to get involved, and made the events taking place in Colorado's Mexican-American community one of the major class issues occupying the Boulder

¹⁴ Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 126.

¹⁵ Michael Goldberg, interview by author, 27 January 2005.

¹⁶ See, for example, Paul Potter, "The Incredible War" and Carl Oglesby, "Trapped in a System," in *Takin' it to the Streets: A Sixties Reader*, Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 214-229.

chapter of SDS. Eventually, however, leaders in the Mexican-American community came to assume control of the struggle, and agitating against the Vietnam War came to consume most of Michael's efforts within SDS.

Unfortunately, it was Michael's antiwar activities with SDS that put him at odds with his draft board, and ultimately hastened his migration to Canada. Like millions of other draft-age men in the United States, attending college had won Michael a student deferment, which delayed the onset of his military obligations until after the completion of his undergraduate degree. The University of Colorado, however, was located in a notoriously conservative region, and as a result of the numerous and highly visible demonstrations organized by Michael's chapter of SDS, he earned a reputation as an agitator and was presented with a draft notice at the beginning of his fourth year of studies.¹⁷ Michael managed to extend his deferment by signing on with the Peace Corps, for which he had applied on a whim several months earlier, but from his earliest training he suspected that he would not fit well within its highly bureaucratic structure. Looking ahead at his options should the Peace Corps not work out, in the spring of 1967 Michael travelled to Canada, which by that time had become a widely recognized alternative for men looking to refuse the draft.¹⁸ He explains: "I wasn't sure whether I wanted to go into the Peace Corps. I was really torn, and so I explored my options about coming up [to Canada]. I knew I wasn't going to go jail, and I knew I wasn't going to go in the military. And Sweden seemed too far away, and it had a different language, and I already had enough trouble with the languages I was learning [for my Peace Corps

¹⁷ After one particularly disruptive protest at the University of Michigan in October of 1965, the director of the Selective Service, General Hershey, authorized the removal of student deferments as a means of punishing protesters. In 1970 the Supreme Court ruled such action illegal. George Q. Flynn, *The Draft: 1940-1973* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 183-184; Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 24-5.

¹⁸ The option of immigrating to Canada to escape the draft began circulating through antiwar organizations on college campuses in 1965, when draft calls began to increase in response to successive American military escalations in Vietnam. By 1967 mainstream media sources like *The New York Times* and *Ladies' Home Journal* were publishing articles about the increasing number of American men leaving the United States for Canada. Roger Neville Williams, *The New Exiles: American War Resisters in Canada* (New York: Liveright Publishers, 1971), 24.

trip]. And so I decided to see what Canada was like. I mean it was really a choice between Canada and jail, or going underground. Those were the three things that I had in mind.¹⁹

Michael drove to Canada from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he was employed as a youth worker at the city's Jewish Community Centre. He visited Winnipeg, Calgary, and finally Vancouver, exploring his options with respect to employment and actually landing a job in Vancouver similar to that which he held in Milwaukee. He then returned to the United States, and left for India to work with the Peace Corps in the summer of 1967. After four months, however, his concerns about the Peace Corps' bureaucracy proved accurate, and he was sent home. He was then faced with a choice. Michael recalls, "I was *really* now exploring. I wasn't sure I wanted to go to Canada. I mean, as much as I loved Canada, I was thinking, okay, can I go for Conscientious Objector [status] and get out of it, try another way? I wanted to stay and change things. I knew I couldn't do that in jail."²⁰ Thus, during a stopover in Chicago on his way home from India, Michael visited the American Friends Service Committee, a pacifist organization affiliated with the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers, in order to learn more about being a Conscientious Objector. The AFSC was heavily involved in draft counseling as a part of the larger draft resistance movement, and some counselors led Michael through the questions one is asked with respect to attaining Conscientious Objector status. Michael explains, "They asked questions like 'Okay, it's [World War II], would you fight the Germans if they were coming into Warsaw?' And I said, 'Yeah, I'd be one of the *fighters* in the Warsaw Ghetto!' And, you're not a Conscientious Objector if you say that, so I guess I'm not a Conscientious Objector. And I wasn't."²¹

¹⁹ Michael Goldberg, interview by author, 27 January 2005.

²⁰ Michael Goldberg, interview by author, 27 January 2005.

²¹ Michael Goldberg, interview by author, 27 January 2005.

Instead, the people at the AFSC encouraged him to consider Canada, explaining that with his offer of employment in Vancouver, he would have no trouble immigrating.²² Equipped with this advice, Michael returned to Denver, where just thirty-six hours later he received a special-delivery letter from the US military indicating that he had failed to inform his draft board of his change in status and was therefore ordered to report immediately for induction. With his options clear before him, Michael packed up his car, and drove to Vancouver.

Arriving four years later in the fall of 1971, Bonnelle Strickling faced none of the same pressures with respect to the draft that led Michael Goldberg to leave the United States. Nonetheless, a similar exposure to instances of racial and class injustice while growing up set her on the same path towards Canada. Bonnelle was born in 1942 in Huntington, West Virginia. A part of what she calls the “serious South,” the system of racial segregation that prevailed throughout the American South in the 1940s and 1950s was well entrenched in Huntington while Bonnelle was growing up. The daughter of a corporation lawyer and a former stage singer, Bonnelle was raised in an upper middle-class home, complete with black house servants, until the age of nine. This resulted in crucial exposure to the conditions in which blacks in Huntington lived. She explains, “the black part of town I saw, of course, because our housekeeper, Edith...we took her home. ... I would ride with my mother and we would go to the black part of town, and it was plain as plain could be that there wasn’t any nice part of the black part of town. All those people lived in very bad – I mean, not *horrible shacks*, but there weren’t any nice houses like ours. I could see that. And I was this thoughtful little kid....I was trying to figure out why all this was. ... So I took it all in, and I thought that was unfair.”²³

²² See Chapter 2 for an in-depth discussion of the regulations surrounding immigration to Canada after 1967.

²³ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 15 February 2006.

Raised as a member of the Southern Conference of the Presbyterian Church, Bonnelle also noticed quite early the contradictions between the teachings of her conservative Christian upbringing and the treatment of blacks in the South, particularly with respect to the commandment “love your neighbour as yourself.”²⁴ Regarding the intolerance she witnessed towards blacks, she explains that in the South, “what you’re actually looking at is racial hatred. It’s not just prejudice; it’s hatred. And...that’s not very Christian.”²⁵ Furthermore, while other whites in Huntington considered the inferiority of blacks to be self-evident, Bonnelle found the acceptance of racist attitudes illogical. She notes that while she was aware of the history of slavery and segregation in the South, “the reasons that people would give [regarding the inherent inferiority of blacks] seemed inadequate, to say the least. I’ve got a logical mind, and it just didn’t make any sense to me. I couldn’t get anybody to give me any reasons that actually made any sense.”²⁶ She was equally baffled, therefore, at the response of whites in her town to any suggestion of racial equality: “When people talked about that stuff when I was growing up, the *rage* around any suggestion of integration or any of that was just palpable.”²⁷ In 1957, this rage was dramatically acted out on the lawn of the local high school where white segregationists burned a cross to protest the school’s integration. It clearly sent a message, for out of 385 students in Bonnelle’s 1960 graduating class, only three were black.²⁸

In addition to the injustices experienced by blacks in Huntington, many whites in the town also suffered from appalling poverty. As Bonnelle describes it, “Huntington combined the disadvantages of southern-ness with the disadvantages of...the north part of West Virginia,”²⁹

²⁴ Matthew 22:36-40.

²⁵ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 15 February 2006.

²⁶ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 15 February 2006.

²⁷ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 15 February 2006.

²⁸ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 15 February 2006.

²⁹ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 15 February 2006.

which was one of the most economically depressed regions in the United States.³⁰ Coal mining had historically been the main industry in the area, but as Bonnelle explains, “the mines were ceasing to be profitable and were closing down, and all these little towns were *entirely* dependent on mining...and so there was massive unemployment.”³¹ Bonnelle, therefore, was witness to the suffering of both poor blacks and poor whites in Huntington, though she notes she often felt alone in her perception of the situation: “There [were] many times when I would have just given anything not to notice, because when I was a kid, I used to feel kind of like I must be crazy, because I was seeing all this stuff that really made me feel terrible and other people seemed to see these things and not feel so bad. But of course I realized that they had some sort of interpretation...some sort of way of wrapping it up. They could justify it, and I never could. I just thought, ‘this is awful.’”³²

When John Kennedy entered the race for the presidency in 1960, like millions of American youth Bonnelle responded with enthusiasm to his promises to deliver what Isserman and Kazin call a “liberal wish-list of bold initiatives” in the domestic sphere in order to alleviate the terrible poverty and degradation that continued to plague millions of Americans in the midst of the era’s plenty. Given the conditions she witnessed in Huntington, Bonnelle recalls, “when John Kennedy came along, I thought, ‘Gee, this man has a lot of real good ideas,’ because these people were talking about...*helping* people! He was talking to people about Medicare...and I thought you just had to look *around* you to see that people needed help!”³³ Among Kennedy's promises were pledges to raise the minimum wage, provide government health insurance for the elderly, and to vigorously enforce existing civil rights legislation. Though she was too young to vote, Bonnelle signalled her

³⁰ Miller, *On our Own*, 126.

³¹ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 15 February 2006.

³² Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 15 February 2006.

³³ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 15 February 2006. The scenes of economic destitution which Kennedy witnessed in West Virginia had a profound effect on him, too. According to Isserman and Kazin, his memories of his time there in part prompted the drafting of the antipoverty legislation that became the basis for Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty. Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 111.

support for the presidential candidate by joining a small group called Students for Kennedy in order to help advance his campaign to win the West Virginia Primary.

With this first foray into political activism, Bonnelle spent most of the next decade participating in movements for social change in the United States. In 1964, after earning an undergraduate degree in philosophy at Ohio University, she became involved with the civil rights movement, spending the next year and a half as a neighbourhood organizer for the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in a poor black neighbourhood in St. Louis, Missouri. Founded in 1942 by members of the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation at the University of Chicago, CORE was a northern-based interracial direct action group that was crucial to advancing the cause of civil rights in the 1960s. CORE organized the 1961 Freedom Rides aimed at enforcing integration in interstate transportation in the Deep South and joined with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee in the effort to end segregation and enfranchise southern blacks through the voter registration drives that culminated in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.³⁴ As critical as these victories were, however, they did nothing to improve conditions in the North, where the majority of the nation's blacks now lived. Thus, after the passage of the Voting Rights Act, the civil rights movement shifted its focus to the North, where by the mid-1960s, as Douglas Miller attests, "increasing numbers of northern blacks languished in urban ghettos, victimized by discrimination, police brutality, low-paying jobs, and political neglect."³⁵ Bolstered by funding made available as a result of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the legislative equivalent to the War on Poverty, these ills were precisely what the St.

³⁴ David Chalmers, *"And the Crooked Places Made Straight": The Struggle for Social Change in the 1960s*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 22.

³⁵ Miller, *On Our Own*, 102, 106-117.

Louis chapter of CORE was working to correct when Bonnelle became involved in the fall of 1964.³⁶

Working with local black politicians to try and get members of the community involved in the effort to improve conditions in the neighbourhood, in St. Louis Bonnelle first encountered resistance from the established authorities towards such efforts to change the status quo. She recalls, "I think the police at that time in St. Louis were connected, I do not doubt, to various politicians, [and] nobody liked any of this stuff that we were doing. Nobody liked some of these black politicians very much, nobody liked this money coming in to these neighbourhoods very much, nobody liked any of that. Cops didn't like us very much, all these white people going down there. It was all really edgy."³⁷ The police eventually succeeded in closing down the youth centre that was CORE's base of operations for the neighbourhood, but as Bonnelle would learn, this interference was nothing compared to that which she would meet as an active member of the antiwar movement.

After the youth centre closed down in early 1966, Bonnelle and her husband returned to Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, where she began a Masters degree in philosophy. "And then," recalls Bonnelle, "then, there was the draft."³⁸ Like Michael Goldberg in Denver, Bonnelle helped to found Ohio University's chapter of SDS, and became heavily involved in the antiwar movement, focusing her efforts towards draft resistance in particular. According to Bonnelle, her activities "consisted of things like handing out leaflets, standing on monuments with black armbands on, and when [people like] Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara came around making speeches, going in large bodies to these things looking stern and disapproving...and getting up and making speeches and generally making ourselves conspicuous...all the things that people were doing then –

³⁶ Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 114.

³⁷ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 23 February 2005.

³⁸ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

demonstrating and standing in the way of things and, you know, just basically making ourselves obnoxious, I suppose.”³⁹ As a result of these activities, however, Bonnelle believes she became a target of government surveillance. She is certain that her phone was tapped and that her mail was opened, some of which was coming from radical organizations like SDS.

According to historian Tom Wells, the FBI and local police Red Squads throughout the United States had been conducting antiwar surveillance since the movement’s inception, but in 1967, as more Americans became aligned against the war, the Johnson administration intensified its surveillance of peace activists. By late summer of that year both the CIA and the U.S. Army had established domestic surveillance operations of the antiwar movement that included wiretaps, mail openings, burglaries, and infiltration of antiwar groups by intelligence agents.⁴⁰ From Bonnelle’s perspective, it seemed absurd that anyone could have thought that she posed a threat. She declares, “it just *boggles* my mind to think about the fact that the FBI took interest in this stuff....[but] they obviously thought I was a dangerous revolutionary. I mean, there’s no question about it! They obviously did think that.”⁴¹

Unnerved by this harassment and discouraged by the obstinacy of the men in power, when Bonnelle moved to Iowa City in 1969 to finish her Master’s degree at the University of Iowa, she took a step back from politics. She explains, “When we went out to Iowa City I was really kind of worn out with political stuff. I just, I was so tired, and it seemed to me like nothing was happening....I mean, I had basically been involved in politics in one form or another, up and down,

³⁹ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005. Dean Rusk was Secretary of State between 1961 and 1969 and Robert McNamara was Secretary of Defense between 1961 and 1968. They were two of the chief architects behind America’s escalating involvement in Vietnam in the mid-1960s.

⁴⁰ Tom Wells, *The War Within: America’s Battle Over Vietnam*, with a Foreword by Todd Gitlin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 183. By 1974 the CIA had secret files on approximately one thousand groups and more than three hundred thousand individuals, while the FBI had collected information on more than one million Americans. Miller, *On Our Own*, 255.

⁴¹ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

since 1964-ish. And when we went to Iowa, it was '69. So I wasn't feeling very hopeful."⁴² The following year, events in Iowa City served to confirm her despair, as well as generate a feeling of intense anxiety. On April 30, 1970, in the face of promises that he was taking steps to end the war in Vietnam, President Richard Nixon announced that the United States had in fact expanded its theatre of operations and invaded Cambodia. Hundreds of protests erupted across the country in the following days, particularly on college campuses. The University of Iowa was no exception. The reaction of the local community to these protests, however, shocked and horrified Bonnelle: "All these farmers came in from these adjoining communities and asked to be deputized so they could go after these hippies, and there was this really ugly streak that manifested itself in these nice civilized people."⁴³

Four days later, on May 4, 1970, four students at Kent State University in Ohio were shot and killed when National Guardsmen opened fire on a crowd of demonstrators protesting the Cambodian invasion. In response, writes Tom Wells, "America's campuses exploded. Student protest swept like an out-of-control brush fire across the country."⁴⁴ While most of the protests were peaceful, some turned violent. In Iowa City, radicals lashed out at the representatives of authority by trying to blow up a police station. For Bonnelle, this shift towards physical violence served as a turning point. She explains, "I remember standing there – I was a Teaching Assistant, and a bunch of my students were involved in this, and I remember standing there on the sidewalk looking at this hole in the police station and I thought, 'Bonnelle, you gotta get out of here. This is

⁴² Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

⁴³ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

⁴⁴ Wells, *The War Within*, 425-26.

getting crazy.”⁴⁵ A few days later, Bonnelle reports, the building that housed the University’s Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) was burned to the ground.⁴⁶

With her office located in an adjoining building, Bonnelle’s front-row seat to the destruction prompted some serious self-evaluation: “I thought, there is something that at some point, if I was going to be a political person – and I couldn’t picture myself not being any kind of political person – that I was going to have to take some kind of side.... Was I going to be forced to become some kind of radical maniac or some weird Nixonian? Plus which, everyone seemed to me to be going completely insane. And then it all just seemed so *sad*, you know? There was just something so awful in general going on.”⁴⁷

Bonnelle’s grief and her more generalized sense of alarm at the violent turn events were taking transformed into an intense, personalized fear when the Iowa Board of Regents, the governing body for all of the public universities in the state, started sending out questionnaires to randomly selected students at the University of Iowa. These questionnaires included questions like, “do your professors ever talk about politics in your classes, and if they do, what do they talk about?” Bonnelle reacted with panic. She recalls,

I was really horrified, because first of all, teaching philosophy, my God, you better be talking about politics in class in times like these, right? So I started going around to my colleagues – not so much my grad student colleagues but the professors in the department saying, “listen, see this? Don’t you think this is kind of disturbing? I mean, doesn’t this bother you?” [But] nobody seemed to be bothered! [And] that bothered me even more. Both things bothered me, because I thought, are we looking at another McCarthy era here? Is this what’s coming? And I thought, Oh shit, because if we’re looking at another McCarthy period here, I’m gonna be in deep doo-doo...because my name is for sure on those lists. I

⁴⁵ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

⁴⁶ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005. The Reserve Officers Training Corps is a college-based officer-commissioning program of the United States Military. As representatives of the military on campus, during the Vietnam War ROTC programs and buildings became targets of antiwar activists across the United States. According to Tom Wells, in the first week of May 1970 more than four ROTC buildings a day were bombed or set on fire. Wells, *The War Within*, 426; Miller, *On Our Own*, 173.

⁴⁷ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

know that my name is on those lists because I know people were opening my mail and tapping my telephone. And [I thought], I'll be black-listed and I'll never be able to teach in a university again! That'll be it for me!⁴⁸

Born in 1942, Bonnelle was around 11 years old when Senator Joseph McCarthy's anticommunist crusade reached its peak around 1953, and remembers watching his interrogations of suspected communist members of the United States Army on television during the Army-McCarthy hearings, which were broadcast to the public in April and May of 1954. Though she was fairly young at the time, these memories were such that her fear of political persecution in 1970 was considered not in abstract terms, but as a very real threat with concrete historical antecedents. The paranoia induced by the government's overt surveillance and repression of political radicals served to heighten these fears; one rumour which Bonnelle heard claimed that the government was planning to round up political radicals and put them in concentration camps. She explains, "It was a very paranoid time, and you really couldn't tell what was craziness and what was real, because there was so much hatred around of radicals and, you know, all these bumper stickers on cars of 'America: Love it or Leave it.' And everybody was so polarized; [even] people in my own family were manifesting a certain amount of dislike, and so I was very anxious and worried and wondering whether I would even would have a future as a teacher."⁴⁹

Bonnelle thus began entertaining the idea of leaving the United States and moving to Canada. However, she recalls, "it seemed like a really radical choice to me. I mean, lots of people were talking about it: 'Oh, let's go to Canada,' you know, at the time, and of course a lot of people I knew *did* [go there] to get out of the draft." Ultimately, she explains, "I just had this gut feeling that America was not a good place for me to be.... I was very, very worried about another McCarthy era.... And I was worried in a kind of general way about the United States becoming a fascist

⁴⁸ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

⁴⁹ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

state.”⁵⁰ In the summer of 1970, therefore, much as Michael Goldberg had in 1967, Bonnelle took an exploratory trip to Canada, driving from Iowa to Ontario, and then into the Maritimes, to see what Canada was like. Impressed with what she saw, she applied to the University of Western Ontario to do a PhD in Philosophy. As coincidence would have it, however, that fall in Iowa she befriended a visiting professor from the University of British Columbia. Appealing to her love of warmer climes, he convinced Bonnelle to move to Vancouver. In making this decision to leave, however, Bonnelle is careful to clarify that she did not feel like she was “packing her bags and fleeing” when she left. Rather, she explains,

I felt like I was doing something that was like all the other things that I had done. I felt like I was doing something that mattered. ...All those bumper stickers that said, ‘America: Love it or Leave it’... I felt like I was going, “Fine. I’m leaving.” And I felt like it meant something. It felt like, “well, you know...I’m not an insignificant person. I’m a thoughtful, well-educated person who is going to make a contribution and I’m leaving because this is intolerable. This will not do and this ought not be and I am not going to participate in this anymore.” There was no way that I could participate with integrity in what was going on there. That’s how I felt. I mean, I really felt like I had just run out of options. There was no place for me to be there.⁵¹

Thus, in the fall of 1971, Bonnelle Strickling left the United States and moved to Vancouver.

Debby, the other woman in this group of six expatriates, also immigrated to Canada in the early 1970s.⁵² Like Bonnelle, she was an active antiwar protester, and was similarly affected by the increasing violence exercised by the forces of authority in order to silence dissent during this period. Debby’s rejection of the United States, however, was compounded by a profound sense of betrayal, absent in Bonnelle’s case, that stemmed directly from Debby’s upbringing immersed in the myths of postwar America.

⁵⁰ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

⁵¹ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

⁵² For privacy, this interviewee has requested that her last name not be used.

Seven years Bonnelle's junior, in many ways Debby's experience typifies that of the younger generation of '60s dissidents, who came to an awareness of the political and social realities of the country late in the decade, as the tensions between the forces of reform and those of the status quo were coming to a head. Born in 1949 and raised in the suburbs of Omaha, Nebraska, Debby's family exemplified the corporate, conservative, and conformist white middle-class mold of the postwar era. Debby was the daughter of an IBM sales executive and a suburban housewife, and her childhood and adolescence were marked by a strict adherence to traditional social and political norms. Utmost among these was patriotism. Debby's father was a WWII veteran and a staunch supporter of the Democratic Party, and from a very young age he impressed upon her the notion that "the President is always right." "Even if there's a Republican President," she remembers being taught, "there is honour in that office. You don't have to love the president but you love the office."⁵³ As a result, she recalls, "I never questioned the authority of my parents or the leaders of our country. I loved being an American!"⁵⁴

Debby's perspective changed irrevocably, however, after she and her family moved to Chicago in the summer of 1968, and circumstance intervened to give her a front-row seat to the pandemonium surrounding the infamous 1968 Democratic National Convention. Debby was eighteen years old, and her father had gotten her a job as a file clerk in the downtown IBM office, located on Michigan Avenue in the same vicinity as the hotels and parks that would make up the hub of political activity during the convention in late August. By that time, the war in Vietnam had been a fixture on the political scene for three years, and after the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King only months before, the forces of peace and reform were growing increasingly desperate. Thousands of young people descended on the streets of Chicago for the

⁵³ Debby, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 13 June 2005.

⁵⁴ Debby, "American Daughter, Canadian Mom," Essay Assignment, Geography 265, Simon Fraser University, 8 July 1997.

convention, some in support of the long-shot antiwar candidate Eugene McCarthy; others, most notably the Yippies, followers of the Youth International Party, came to show their disdain for the traditional American political process.⁵⁵ All, however, were ardent in their opposition to President Johnson's persistent escalation of the war and front-runner Hubert Humphrey's support for this policy.⁵⁶

But Vietnam had not been a topic of conversation at Debby's middle-class high school, or during her freshman year at the conservative University of Nebraska. As Debby describes it, wandering Michigan Avenue during her lunch hours over the week of the convention was like stumbling into a parallel universe. She recalls, "really, truly, I was a numbskull. I had *no* idea what was going on. ... I just sort of watched, and I was listening, but it was like it was a foreign language. But what was interesting was, all of a sudden, I knew how much I didn't know, and I knew there was something really big going on. And then when Mayor Daley had the shoot to kill order and all of that, I still didn't understand what was going on or *why* this was going on."⁵⁷ Mayor Richard Daley's "shoot-to-kill" order had actually been issued during the riot which erupted in Chicago – as in 167 other U.S. cities – in the wake of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4, 1968.⁵⁸ Debby's memory of sanctioned police violence against the protesters in Chicago, however, is not misplaced. In preparation for the planned demonstrations, including one by the New Left-led umbrella antiwar organization National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (Mobe), Daley placed a ban on all protest rallies or marches, while mobilizing all 12,000 of the city's police and holding in reserve 6000 National Guardsmen and 7500 regular Army

⁵⁵ William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since WWII* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 374.

⁵⁶ Anderson, *The Sixties*, 120-1.

⁵⁷ Debby, interview by author, 13 June 2005.

⁵⁸ Miller, *On Our Own*, 229.

troops.⁵⁹ On the opening day of the convention, August 25, 1968, Chicago police responded with tear gas, mace, and swinging clubs when a crowd of protesters refused to leave one of the city's parks. Three days later, in what an investigative commission would later label a "police riot," the violence reached a climax when a combined force of police and National Guardsmen similarly attacked 10,000 peaceful Mobe marchers on their way to the convention hall, beating without discrimination demonstrators, politicians, journalists, and even elderly bystanders.⁶⁰

Broadcast live to an estimated 90 million American viewers by television news cameras stationed outside the convention hall, the violence in Chicago served to polarize Americans as much as any political event of the 1960s.⁶¹ Radicalizing millions of young Americans against the forces of authority in the United States, the majority of ordinary citizens indicated support for Chicago's police in their attempts to maintain "law and order," signaling the beginning of the conservative backlash that would ultimately overwhelm the movements for reform.⁶² Debby and her father embodied this divide, with Debby attributing the beginnings of her disassociation with the United States, and the beliefs with which she had been raised, to an explosive argument they had over her criticism of Mayor Daley. She recalls, "I was nineteen years old and for the first time I defied my step-father's authority in siding with the demonstrators."⁶³ Looking back she says, "the American daughter was beginning to leave home."⁶⁴

Debby's final departure from the United States, both physically and emotionally, occurred five years later, spurred by the allegations against President Nixon regarding the Watergate scandal, as well as the general level of violence she saw in the world around her. After her abrupt

⁵⁹ Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 243-5.

⁶⁰ Miller, *On Our Own*, 239; Anderson, *The Sixties*, 122-3.

⁶¹ Anderson, *The Sixties*, 123; Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 245.

⁶² Miller, *On Our Own*, 240-1.

⁶³ Debby, "American Daughter, Canadian Mom," 6.

⁶⁴ Debby, "American Daughter, Canadian Mom," 6.

political awakening in Chicago, Debby was increasingly drawn towards the flourishing American youth counterculture, whose associated ethos and lifestyle she had also witnessed for the first time in the thousands of “hippies” she encountered during her time in the city. Representing the antithesis of middle-class respectability and conformity, the counterculture expressed young people’s alienation from the dominant postwar culture by rejecting its materialism, competition and careerism while embracing communalism, personal and spiritual exploration, intuitive wisdom, and immediate gratification.⁶⁵ Suddenly uncertain about the integrity of the values with which she had been raised, as for millions of American youth during these years, this alternative way of life seemed to offer Debby a possible solution.

In January 1970, Debby and a girlfriend packed up their lives and drove west to Berkeley, California. The first mass student upheaval of the 1960s, the Free Speech Movement, had taken place at the University of California, Berkeley, between September 1964 and January 1965, and in the following years both the university and the town became hubs of radical political and countercultural activity. Debby took a job as a telephone operator, and, as she describes, became “totally involved in the “peace, love, and good vibes” scene and the “make love not war” scene.”⁶⁶ With her liberated lifestyle, however, also came a sense of dislocating despair. She explains,

Already at this point I obviously had turned my back a lot on what had happened in my family, but I still had some basic sort of Midwestern beliefs. But in Berkeley? Oh My God...In Berkeley...anything goes. And at that time it was anything anything. It was just bizarre to exciting to weird. And what happened was that I lost all faith in what I had been brought up to believe....So there was always this feeling of, well, what is real then? Like, what do I grasp on to? How do I fill up those places that I’ve said don’t matter anymore? ...So I went through a real cycle of despair there, not knowing what to believe.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Anderson, *The Sixties*, 96; Morgan, *The 60s Experience*, 171.

⁶⁶ Debby, interview by author, 13 June 2005.

⁶⁷ Debby, interview by author, 13 June 2005.

Debby's turmoil was compounded by her increasing awareness of American actions in Vietnam, the administration's relentless commitment to "stay the course," and the violence that consistently accompanied citizens' attempts to voice opposition to these policies in the years following Chicago '68. Campaigning on the claim that he had a "secret plan" to end the war in Vietnam, as president, Richard Nixon in fact escalated the conflict in Indochina, ordering massive air strikes against the neutral countries of Laos and Cambodia without consulting Congress, while making every effort to conceal these actions from the American public.⁶⁸ Increasingly frustrated at the refusal of the administration to acknowledge their concerns, demonstrators became more vehement in their opposition to the war, while the forces of authority exercised harsher reprisals. When Debby arrived in January 1970, relations between the Berkeley radical community and the establishment were particularly polarized, thanks largely to the violence that had surrounded the dismantling of the infamous "People's Park" in Berkeley in May 1969.

In April 1969 a coalition of hippies, radicals, professors, students, and long-time neighbourhood residents joined together to transform a derelict plot of University of California-owned land, located in the heart of Berkeley's "hip" district, into a usable community space. Opposed to the appropriation of university property, however, four days after the "People's Park" was completed, university officials authorized its demolition. When several thousand protestors began a march to the park to halt its destruction, State police stunned the community and the nation by firing buckshot into the crowd, wounding 110 and killing one. California Governor Ronald Reagan declared martial law in the city, and for 17 days three thousand National Guardsmen occupied the city, creating a legacy of bitterness among the Berkeley radical community.⁶⁹ Events in Berkeley prompted an increase in nationwide student radicalism and opposition to the Vietnam

⁶⁸ Miller, *On Our Own*, 266.

⁶⁹ Miller, *On Our Own*, 291-2; W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989, 157-164.

War, but no more than in Berkeley itself. Debby's arrival coincided with some of the more violent antiwar street marches to take place in the city, including those which followed the announcement of the American invasion of Cambodia on April 30, 1970. Having been awakened to the horrors of the conflict after the events in Chicago, Debby participated in many of these demonstrations, though she admits, "I was never a brave warrior when faced with a line of policemen carrying guns."⁷⁰ Instead, she explains, "I was the first one to run and hide when the police showed up, because I did not want to get shot, and I did not want tear gas."⁷¹ The deaths of the four students shot by National Guardsmen at Kent State drove home the legitimacy of these fears.⁷²

While Debby acknowledges that this constant and pervasive violence was a factor in her decision to emigrate, when asked if there was one particular event that influenced her to leave for Canada, her answer was unequivocal: Watergate. With charges ranging from sabotage and espionage to blackmail, bribery and obstruction of justice, the investigation into the events surrounding the cover-up of a break-in at the Democratic National Committee's offices at Washington's Watergate hotel revealed to the nation the lengths to which Richard Nixon was willing to go to undermine his political adversaries. Raised to respect and trust in the office of the president above all else, for Debby these allegations represented the last straw in her alienation from the structure of authority in the United States. She recalls, "Just that lack of faith, feeling betrayed by what I had been brought up in and realizing that it wasn't true... I just wanted out of that country. I knew I could *not* be there any longer."⁷³ In Berkeley, Debby had heard stories about people going to Canada, "about it being a place of peace, and about [Canadians] opening their

⁷⁰ Debby, "American Daughter, Canadian Mom," 7.

⁷¹ Debby, interview by author, 13 June 2005.

⁷² Ten days later police similarly opened fire on a student gathering at Jackson State University in Mississippi, killing two. Miller, *On Our Own*, 293.

⁷³ Debby, interview by author, 13 June 2005.

arms to draft dodgers.”⁷⁴ Thus, in July 1973, only three months after the Watergate hearings began, Debby jumped in a van with three friends and headed north to Canada.

For Larry Kuehn, who left the United States in 1968, migration to Canada was the result of a similar alienation from the realities of contemporary American society, in addition to a refusal to cease agitating for change. As a result of student deferments and employment in the domestic Peace Corps, Larry remained ineligible for the draft while in the United States, and so never faced the prospect of serving in Vietnam. However, he was an active member of the antiwar movement, and even spent one summer in Washington lobbying against the war as an intern with the American Friends Service Committee, the pacifist organization that had counselled Michael Goldberg about his eligibility for Conscientious Objector status. According to Larry, his decision to leave the United States was prompted not by the spectre of the draft, but a feeling of profound alienation from American society that began, to a large degree, when he was just sixteen years old.

Born in 1944 and raised in a lower-middle class home in a small town in eastern Oregon, Larry recalls growing up in an atmosphere infused with the dominant Cold War discourse of fervent anticommunism. As a child during the 1950s, for example, he remembers how every week his father would go and take his turn at a nearby forest observation tower, scouting the skies for oncoming Russian bombers. Larry’s father was a civilian volunteer for “Operation Skywatch,” a program established by the US Air Force to ensure immediate notification in the event of a Russian air attack. Between 1952 and 1959, over 800,000 volunteers from the Ground Observation Corps stood watch at 16,000 24-hour observation posts across the United States.⁷⁵ Explains Larry, “This was before NORAD existed, or the DEW line, so that literally people were [under constant fear of

⁷⁴ Debby, interview by author, 13 June 2005.

⁷⁵ “The Ground Observer Corps,” www.radomes.org/museum/documents/GOC/GOC.html.

attack by the Russians].⁷⁶ You know, the paranoia in society was so high [with] this anticommunist thing, and in this little town that nobody could find, let alone bomb, nor had any reason to bomb!”⁷⁷ Larry, for his part, was an avid student of history, and vividly remembers the stories he was told in school regarding Stalin’s efforts to erase particular aspects of Russian history through photographic manipulation.⁷⁸ Yet when he was just sixteen years old, Larry made a discovery that revealed to him some disturbing parallels between his country and their communist enemy that planted the first seeds of his disaffection with the United States. Exploring a university library one day while his mother attended classes, Larry stumbled across a copy of John Dos Passos’ *USA* trilogy, which discussed the history of the radical union the Industrial Workers of the World and the socialist tradition in the United States, aspects of American history of which he was completely unaware. Taken aback by this discovery, Larry recalls, “what it said to me was, what’s happening when I’m interested in American history – which I was as a kid; I was always reading and interested in it – and I don’t know anything about this! And so what I saw was that what the claims about what happened, of what the communists were doing, were in fact what was happening to my own country and *in my own country*.”⁷⁹

Instilled by his mother with values based in the Christian social gospel, which emphasizes the application of Jesus’ teachings to combat injustice and suffering in society, Larry had been taught from a young age the importance of helping those less fortunate than himself. As a young

⁷⁶ The Distant Early Warning Line was a system of radar stations, established between 1954 and 1957, that stretched across the Arctic from Alaska to Baffin Island in order to detect incoming Russian bombers. The North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, was established in 1958 to provide a unified air command for North America. Alvin Finkel and Margaret Conrad, *History of the Canadian Peoples 1867 to the Present*, vol. 2, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Addison Wesley Longman, 2002), 348.

⁷⁷ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 24 February 2005.

⁷⁸ At Stalin’s command, censors famously employed photographic manipulation techniques to edit particular figures, such as those targeted during the purges of the 1930s, out of Russian history. In one such instance, Stalin had his political adversary Leon Trotsky removed from several photographs that featured both him and communist leader Vladimir Lenin. See, for example, David King, *The Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin’s Russia* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997).

⁷⁹ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

man, his newfound critical awareness towards mainstream political discourse thus translated into a specific focus on advancing the cause of social justice in the United States. In 1962, Larry began a degree in political science at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, a school with a strong radical social and political tradition. It was this tradition that initially attracted Larry to Reed, but also had the effect of reinforcing his interest in social justice, as he became exposed to and educated about the different political causes on campus, including, in particular, the civil rights and antiwar movements. Explains Larry, “[Reed] was very much an activist kind of place. ... SDS was active on campus, many people went in '64 to the Freedom Summer in Mississippi...so that was very much the environment that I was in.”⁸⁰

Another consequence of his college education, of course, was a deferment from the draft. Explains Larry, “my mother was a teacher. We didn’t have very much money – I managed to go to Reed entirely on scholarships, but the reality was that if you could get to university and successfully stay there, that was a way of being deferred from the draft. That wasn’t why I went to university, but it was one of the side effects of it.”⁸¹ Graduating in 1966, Larry had planned to go on to law school, and was accepted at the Hastings School of Law in California, which had a special focus on social justice law. Instead of going directly back to school, however, Larry decided to take a year off to go into VISTA, a domestic version of the Peace Corps. VISTA, or Volunteers In Service To America, had been established in 1964 as part of President Johnson’s War on Poverty, enlisting young recruits to go and work on a variety of different social-uplift projects in poverty-

⁸⁰ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005. Freedom summer was a voter-registration drive, organized in concert by the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, the Southern Christian Leadership, the NAACP and CORE, that enlisted some 1000 northern white students to come to Mississippi to help register black citizens to vote in the summer of 1964. Anderson, *The Sixties*, 51-54.

⁸¹ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

stricken areas across the United States.⁸² Like the Peace Corps, moreover, employment with VISTA also allowed men deferments from military service.

In keeping with his interest in social justice law, Larry was appointed to work out of the public defender's office on a bail-bond project at the Dade County Jail in Miami, Florida. His job was to intervene with the courts to allow the release of persons deemed reliable of making their court dates but too poor to pay their allotted bails. With another VISTA volunteer, however, Larry also began an education program for inmates at the correctional facility, and in the course of this work soon became convinced that education, rather than law, was the best way to combat poverty and have an impact on social justice. The Dade County Jail was an immense institution that housed thousands of mostly black prisoners, and Larry was particularly struck by the example of a father and son who, in jail at the same time, came to attend his classes together. Seeing how patterns of disadvantage are perpetuated, Larry came to recognize that education was the best way to provide people with different opportunities to change their lives for the better, because, he realized, "most of the folks who are in prison are there because of a *lack* of education, and a *lack* of ability to participate in some positive way in society."⁸³

Shifting his sights from becoming a lawyer to becoming a teacher, it was in fact Larry's desire to teach that ultimately led to his departure from the United States just over a year later. In the fall of 1967, Larry returned to Portland and entered the teaching program at Reed College, specializing in American history. Drawing on the experience of his own education and, in particular, his awareness of the influence which the advancement or suppression of information can have on young people, during his term as a student-teacher Larry focused on two aspects of American history that were not generally covered in the national curriculum: slavery and the

⁸² Miller, *On Our Own*, 125-6.

⁸³ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

genocide of America's aboriginal peoples. It just so happened, however, that the two times his principal came to observe him teaching was when he was teaching around those areas. In the first instance, he had organized a role playing exercise to explore what might have happened if the British had won the Revolutionary War, "to try to get the kids to think about the way in which history is really the history of winners, and also, to get them to think implicitly about what was going on in Vietnam." He explains, "the kids that I was teaching, most of them were going to be in the military, or their boyfriends were going to be in the military, within a year of coming out of my class. So I wanted to try, without directly doing it, to create situations that made them think about these kinds of issues in relationship to war."⁸⁴ The next time the principal came to observe Larry, he was teaching a unit on the effects of American westward expansion. Using the lyrics to Buffy Sainte Marie's song "Now that the Buffalo's Gone," which speaks about the broken treaties and dispossession of land suffered by Native Americans in the United States, Larry again tried to challenge his students' assumptions about American history, getting them to think "about the cowboys and Indians movies they had seen on the one hand versus the story Buffy was telling in that song."⁸⁵ Larry's principal seemed to take issue with his teaching style, however, for when Larry began to apply for jobs after the completion of his degree, he found that he could not get a single interview, save for one at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Obtaining a copy of his record, Larry discovered that his principal had written in his reference that "[Larry] would do well teaching Negroes or Indians, but will not fit into American public schools."⁸⁶

To save his career as a teacher in the United States, Larry was advised by the head of his teacher education program to abandon his controversial choices of curriculum and even to shave off his beard in order to better fit within the existing education system. Recalls Larry, "[He] told me

⁸⁴ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

⁸⁵ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

⁸⁶ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

once, 'you can teach anything you want as long as you don't have a beard. What you do is challenge, and that's not going to get you into the system as it works here.'⁸⁷ Feeling an obligation to be working towards social justice, Larry refused to conform, and he looked to Canada as an alternative. He had several friends who had moved to Vancouver to avoid the draft, and one had been hired almost immediately to teach in the town of Ucluelet, on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Working from a copy of the *Vancouver Sun* that his friend had sent, Larry applied for a few teaching positions, and a week later received a job offer from the superintendent in Kitimat, British Columbia. Explains Larry, "I was in a place where I really *did* want to teach, and it was pretty clear that I wasn't going to be able to do that in the US."⁸⁸ By this time, moreover, any faith he still had in the United States seemed to have run its course. Going back to his first political awakening at the age of sixteen, Larry's understanding of matters of race, class, and foreign policy in the United States had alienated him to the degree that he now felt, in his own words, "un-American." Recognizing constant contradictions to the values he had been taught and believed in about freedom, justice, and the rights of citizens, Larry explains, "I became un-American in the sense that the country is right regardless of all of these kinds of things....and why I think that in 1968 I was perfectly happy to say, "Well, I'll go and try somewhere else!"⁸⁹ Thus, in the fall of 1968, Larry and his wife relocated to Kitimat, spurred not by the prospect of service in Vietnam, but by an overriding sense of social responsibility and commitment to social justice that had proved too challenging for mainstream American society.

For James Leslie, the first of two military deserters interviewed for this project, the path to Canada began when he entered basic training for the United States Reserves in May of 1964 at Ford Ord, California. At the time the issue of Vietnam had not yet entered the national

⁸⁷ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

⁸⁸ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

⁸⁹ Larry Kuehn, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

consciousness: the “incident” in the Gulf of Tonkin that would ultimately form the basis for American prosecution of the war did not occur until several months later.⁹⁰ Rather, James had just completed a BA at Stanford University, and with his student deferment from the draft coming to an end, he reasoned that being a cook in the Reserves was preferable to a three-year commitment should he be drafted. The son of a Wall Street securities analyst, this was not the typical form of draft evasion practiced by most upper-middle-class young men in the early 1960s. According to James, usually “you planned to go straight on through to graduate school until you were 26 and no longer eligible to serve.”⁹¹ In university at Stanford, however, he had not found what he had been looking for when he first left the privileged world in which he had grown up.

James was raised in Greenwich, Connecticut, and attended the prestigious Phillips-Exeter Academy, the prep school of choice for generations of America’s political and financial elite. There he recalls being presented with a view of America as a meritocracy, where structures existed to “equalize opportunity so that those who wanted to struggle and work hard could find their way into positions of leadership if they were virtuous and intelligent.”⁹² Looking back on it, James says that this was “the best part of the American myth that was fed to us, because it was such a nice elitist place, you didn’t get too many insights into the true corruptions of the country.”⁹³ Even in Greenwich, however, rubbing shoulders with people such as the Rockefellers, James saw that many of the people in the world around him had not arrived there because of merit. For the rest,

⁹⁰ The closest the United States ever came to declaring war on North Vietnam was through the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, passed almost unanimously by both houses of Congress in August 1964 in response to a supposed North Vietnamese torpedo attack against two U.S. naval destroyers that were patrolling North Vietnamese waters in the Gulf of Tonkin. No damage was suffered nor any hostile vessels glimpsed during the “attack,” but President Johnson nevertheless charged North Vietnam with “open aggression on the high seas,” and asked Congress to pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, to give him sweeping powers to “take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression” from North Vietnam. Miller, *On Our Own*, 157.

⁹¹ Alan Haig-Brown, “James Leslie: Flight from Privilege,” in *Hell No, We Won’t Go: Vietnam Draft Resisters in Canada* (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 1996), 155.

⁹² Haig-Brown, “James Leslie: Flight from Privilege,” 155.

⁹³ Haig-Brown, “James Leslie: Flight from Privilege,” 155.

this struggle to the top seemed all-consuming, and the example of his father, who had achieved the mantle of “self-made man,” convinced him that such material success was not something he aspired to. “I didn’t see people living well,” he recalls, “and I looked at my father, who I respected and feared, and....particularly when he was in that world, he was one of those ulcerated people who was just kind of miserable a whole lot of the time.”⁹⁴

“Breaking the mold,” James chose to attend Stanford University in California instead of one of the more customary east coast universities like Yale or Princeton. In effect, however, he only traded one upper class environment for another and felt as alienated as ever during his time at Stanford. When he graduated, he resolved not to begin another degree just because it would save him from being drafted. He explains, “I wanted to be able to choose what I wanted to do. So I thought, ‘I’ll go into the Reserves, it’ll be fine.’”⁹⁵ Whatever injustice he believed had existed in the American class structure before, however, paled in comparison to that which he witnessed in army basic training. Describing his experience as a “crash course in class politics,” James was subject to a kind of control he had never experienced before in the “prison-like,” world of the army. He explains,

Particularly if you’ve been this nice, bourge-y⁹⁶ kid where the world is textured and filled with all sorts of stuff, and you get to pounce on these adventures and always think that you can do anything....you get in the army and all of a sudden you’re in this completely blighted world. It’s all the same color, everybody is pushed [around] – it’s like the worst summer camp you ever could imagine. And it’s prison-like. And it is prison-like, because you know that if you decide, “screw this, I’m going home,” well, then they’ll put you in jail. And they very carefully make sure that people who have gone AWOL or screwed up, they’re kept on the base and they go around and do duty and are watched over by guys with shotguns. So that’s to tell you, “you screw up, you’ll be like them.”⁹⁷

⁹⁴ James Leslie, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 22 February 2005.

⁹⁵ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

⁹⁶ That is, “bourgeois,” or a member of the property-owning middle class.

⁹⁷ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

Almost as horrifying for James, however, was discovering the degree to which the lives of his fellow trainees were scripted as a result of their class. He recalls, “you sit there, and you talk with all these guys – and most of the people who were in were draftees or regular army people – and you get them talking about their view of their lives and their time in the military and the choices they get to make, and you start seeing that, of course, they *don’t* have choices, and their general view of things is just an acceptance of ‘shit happens and this is part of it, and I’ll do this and get on with my life.’ But no sense of any resistance to it. And, you know, [it was like], *shit*, I *knew* that, but [it was one of] those experiences where it gets into your bones. And somehow it seemed really oppressive to me, horrendously oppressive to me, the way that things work.”⁹⁸

When an outbreak of spinal meningitis hit the camp, however, James realized how truly malign was the system of state control over the lives of men drafted into the military. Meningitis is an infection that flourishes in places like Fort Ord in Southern California, where a relatively wet climate and rapid changes in temperature are combined with overworked people living in close quarters. James notes, “it would be one of those [conditions] that you would watch carefully, if you *cared* about people, but they didn’t!”⁹⁹ According to James, the attitude of the Army was, “we’ll let it blow up and we’ll lose some people and we’ll carry on.’ So I started thinking, well, this isn’t just a passive thing of coming here and doing this sort of annoying duty, one of those sort of mindless things....guys were dropping dead on the drill field!”¹⁰⁰ With a mounting death toll, it was only when the girlfriend of a soldier who had gone home on leave suddenly died of the illness that camp authorities investigated the situation and took the necessary measures to contain the disease.

Witnessing this blatant disregard for human life, when James got off active duty, he made a commitment never to wear the uniform again, even though he was bound by the terms of his

⁹⁸ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

⁹⁹ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

¹⁰⁰ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

Reserve contract to rejoin a unit at some time in the future. He explains, "That was my commitment. I had almost deserted while I was in – I almost said, 'screw it, I'm not going to finish this thing off,' just as *my* protest, but, [I realized], that was stupid and it wouldn't help anybody. [So] when I left I thought, well, I can't support this, I won't, so my approach was that I was not going to join a unit."¹⁰¹

James completed basic training in October 1964, when there was still little inkling that Vietnam would escalate into the full-scale conflict it was to become just six months later. Indeed, in the November 1964 presidential election, President Johnson won an overwhelming majority by campaigning as the peace candidate against Republican Barry Goldwater, assuring the American public that he wanted "no wider war," and pledging to neither deploy American troops to fight in South Vietnam nor extend the war by bombing North Vietnam.¹⁰² By February 1965, however, Johnson had authorized the systematic bombing of North Vietnam with Operation Rolling Thunder, a massive escalation in warfare that was closely followed by a build-up of American ground forces. Draft calls began to steadily increase to meet the demands of this developing military commitment. By December 1965, American troop strength in South Vietnam had reached 185,000; a year later, the total stood at 385,000. By December 1967, nearly half a million American troops were stationed in Vietnam.¹⁰³

It was at this point that the army finally caught up with James Leslie. Moving around the San Francisco Bay Area and continually changing addresses, for three years James had managed to avoid being called back to the Reserves. During this time he had continued to develop his critical perspective of the United States military, becoming an active member of the antiwar movement after learning about the true motives for American involvement in Vietnam and the

¹⁰¹ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

¹⁰² Miller, *On Our Own*, 157.

¹⁰³ Miller, *On Our Own*, 158-163.

brutal conduct of the war. Thus, though James' original quarrel with the military had nothing to do with Vietnam, when he finally received orders in the winter of 1967 to "join a unit or join up," the implications of returning to the military had significantly changed. Explains James, "the issue was never *me* going to 'Nam, because there was never a reserve call-up and there was really no threat of reserve call up."¹⁰⁴ Rather, whereas his original objection had focused on the military's control over and fundamental indifference towards soldiers' lives, with the escalation of warfare in Vietnam, the intersection between the abuses of the military and the injustice of the American class structure that saw disproportionate numbers of working class men drafted into its ranks had reached its highest point ever, with thousands of soldiers not only suffering the abuses of basic training, but also fighting and dying in a war based on fraudulent and immoral grounds. Rejoining a reserve unit and thereby taking part in the military now meant not only condoning a system that exercised a basic disregard for human life, but also one which sacrificed powerless men to an unjustified, belligerent cause. James recalls,

My view was that it was only the luck of the class draw that I got to go in and be in a reserve unit...because most of the working stiffs, they got drafted. They didn't know about playing the reserve game, and they also lived more sedentary lives and they didn't know that they could play the game to the extent that us university kids could. ... But that was just luck of the draw, so that's why I said, well, okay, it's lucky that I'm on the periphery of this thing, but I'm as implicated as anybody...and my principles tell me that I have to say no. That's the line that, it seemed to me, was the one that I had to draw, having come to my awareness about the way things operated.¹⁰⁵

Resolving not to answer his orders to rejoin a reserve unit, James was then faced with the choice of going to jail, going underground, or leaving the country. Refusing to grant legitimacy to the military's authority by submitting to the constraints that going to jail or living underground would

¹⁰⁴ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

¹⁰⁵ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

require, James decided to leave the United States. In December 1967 he set his sights north and headed for Vancouver.

The nature of the American military system was also a major factor in the migration of another deserter, though his objections stemmed from different sources than those of James Leslie. Drafted into the army in 1969 at the age of nineteen, Ngoma Wajembae is the only African-American whose experiences inform this thesis. For Ngoma, service in the military proved fundamentally incompatible with his most basic beliefs as a Christian and as a supporter of the black struggle for racial equality in the United States.

Ngoma was born in 1949 and raised in the small southern town of Carthage, Tennessee. During a time when the legal system of racial segregation was still firmly entrenched throughout the South, according to Ngoma Carthage was in fact a place that resisted the inherent racism of southern life. He explains, "The KKK, as you know, was born in Tennessee, and it was small towns like Carthage that actually fought them off, or at least changed the dynamics in how they would threaten the stability of each community."¹⁰⁶ According to Ngoma, this resistance to racism, and the way it was translated by his mother to he and his siblings, was instrumental to his personal development and his beliefs in later life. As a devout Baptist Evangelical, moreover, Ngoma's mother also rooted her children's spiritual foundations deep within the principles of the Black Baptist Church. His mother, in fact, was a child evangelist who gave Bible lessons to children in their community, first in Carthage, and later in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where his family moved when he was a child. This vocation had a significant effect on Ngoma and his siblings, who often had to sit through her lessons and thus could recite whole Bible passages by the time they were in junior high school. Though at such a young age he admits to not understanding the "inner workings of it all," this in-depth instruction in the principles of the Christian faith imprinted Ngoma

¹⁰⁶ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, tape recording, Richmond, British Columbia, 15 June 2005.

with a “fundamental belief system and a *literal* belief system that was deep rooted in the Church.” As a result, basic to Ngoma's world view were values centered on Jesus' teachings of peace, compassion, brotherhood, and above all, love.¹⁰⁷

Concurrent with his religious education, another key influence in Ngoma's early life was exposure to the different and often conflicting worlds of black and white culture in Milwaukee. Raised in a black working-class housing project, at the age of six Ngoma was recognized as having exceptional musical talent, and was trained as a classical violinist throughout his youth. This pursuit, however, brought him up against the de facto racial segregation that existed in many institutions in Milwaukee in the late 1950s and early 1960s. As a young musician, one of his earliest experiences was being refused entry to a youth orchestra, and even the opportunity to take private lessons in an all-white school, because of his race. Nevertheless, by the time he reached high school, he was an accomplished violinist, a member of the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music and was either concert master or soloist in the orchestras in which he played. But, explains Ngoma, “I was basically the only black. I was the black violinist in Milwaukee.... [And] I wasn't really accepted in the orchestras, except by my talent.”¹⁰⁸ In the black community, meanwhile, his musical pursuits were looked on with similar disfavour – precisely because of their association with white culture. Recalls Ngoma, “in the black community [the attitude was], 'what's he doing hanging out, playing in orchestras with white people and playing white music?’”¹⁰⁹ According to Ngoma, the consequence of playing an instrument and style of music that was not normally accepted in the black community, and of being exposed to that particular segment of white society, was that he had to “walk a line” between black and white cultures: “In the Black Baptist Church, the Salvation Army, all of the these things that we got involved with, I was always walking a line between two

¹⁰⁷ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹⁰⁸ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹⁰⁹ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

cultures, [and it] eventually came down to the question of, 'well, why am I doing this, and what is my faith and my belief system?'¹¹⁰

As he struggled with this race-related conflict in his personal life, Ngoma also became more aware of political and social developments taking place on a national scale in the United States when he was selected to take part in the Upward Bound program in the summer of 1965. A War on Poverty program designed to equalize access to higher education for children of the working class, Upward Bound offered “promising but impoverished high schoolers a chance at college” through summer-semester college preparation programs at universities across the country.¹¹¹ Ngoma spent two summers at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, where, in addition to his studies, he was introduced to the political views of Students for a Democratic Society through the university volunteers who ran his Upward Bound program. Serving as mentors to guide students like Ngoma through their college preparation, these men and women opened Ngoma's eyes to the New Left issues of the day, including the war in Vietnam. He recalls, “Over those two summers I started hearing things, I started trying to develop things, and prepare myself, because during those two years was an escalation that began saying 'you have a choice.' And that choice was to go to university, or get drafted.”¹¹²

Coming from a black, working-class family, this choice would not have been open to the vast majority of Ngoma's peers, as college and the educational deferment from service it afforded were beyond the economic reach of most working-class youth. According to historian Christian Appy, over the period from 1966 to 1971, roughly 80 per cent of the men who went to Vietnam had

¹¹⁰ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹¹¹ Miller, *On our Own*, 126.

¹¹² Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

no more than a high school education.¹¹³ As a result of his involvement in Upward Bound, however, in addition to his musical talent, when Ngoma graduated from high school he had scholarships for prestigious schools such as Juilliard and Boston University. Instead, he chose to attend a small school in Chicago, the comparatively unknown VanderCook College of Music. For Ngoma, perhaps the biggest draw of VanderCook was that it was located on Chicago's South Side, the historical center of one of the United States' largest and most vibrant black communities. He explains, "by the time I got to Chicago, I had already formulated some independence in my mind about choices, about the war, [and] about what was happening in the civil rights movement and the black community."¹¹⁴ Choosing VanderCook reflected Ngoma's increasing focus on black issues and the continuing struggle for racial equality in the United States. Ngoma arrived in Chicago in the fall of 1967, by which time the civil rights movement had shifted its focus to the North, where institutionalized racism continued to persist despite the landmark passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which finally granted southern blacks equality before the law. Indeed, a decade of civil rights successes had seen no improvement in the daily injustices suffered by northern blacks, who continued to experience job and housing discrimination, de facto segregation of neighbourhoods and schools, police brutality, and naked hostility from whites.¹¹⁵ The resulting anger and frustration was manifested in a series of urban rebellions in northern cities in the summers of 1966 and 1967, as well as increasing support for messages of black nationalism and "Black Power." As the Congress of Racial Equality's national director Floyd McKissick observed in 1966, among young blacks in particular a new consciousness had formed in which the

¹¹³ Christian Appy, *Working Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 25.

¹¹⁴ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹¹⁵ Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, "Say It Loud, Say It Proud": Black Nationalism and Ethnic Consciousness," in *Takin' it to the Streets: A Sixties Reader*, Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 135-136.

ghettoes came to be seen “as a colony, controlled, dominated, and exploited by the white society.”¹¹⁶

The idea of black nationalism stretches back to the nineteenth century and focuses on the belief that black people can achieve liberation only through the control and maintenance of black institutions established to serve the best interests of black people, exclusive of whites. The slogan “Black Power” was first uttered during the June 1966 “March Against Fear,” a 220-mile civil rights march from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi. In frustration against repeated attacks by state troopers during the march, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) organizers Willie Ricks and Stokely Carmichael exhorted the crowd of marchers to abandon efforts for white acceptance and instead adopt a strategy of “Black Power.” As historian Jeffrey Ogbar explains, while the concept of Black Power came to mean different things to different people, its primary thrust was black nationalism, with the concurrent themes of black pride and black self-determination transcending most definitions.¹¹⁷

Ngoma Wajembae shared in this new racial consciousness, and it only grew stronger during his time in Chicago. Racism in that city was particularly virulent, and efforts to end discriminatory practices such as closed housing, which kept the black community confined to overcrowded inner city slums, were met with vicious white resistance. According to Ogbar, it was precisely because of Chicago's record of “overt institutionalized racism” that Martin Luther King, Jr. considered the city to be the ideal place to start his northern campaign for racial equality. However, the racial hatred expressed by white Chicagoans in response to his attempts to protest closed housing in the city was to a degree that even King had never experienced before,

¹¹⁶ Floyd McKissick, *A Black Manifesto – CORE* (New York, 1966), p.5, cited in Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004),63.

¹¹⁷ Ogbar, *Black Power*, 2-3; 61-62.

remarking, “I have never seen as much hate and hostility before, and I have been on a lot of marches.”¹¹⁸

During his time in Chicago, Ngoma became active with the Black Panther Party, one of the most important organizations to emerge from the new spirit of black nationalism and radicalism. Originally founded in Oakland, California in 1966 in order to resist and protect the black community from police brutality, the Panthers' party platform spoke directly to the problems of northern black life.¹¹⁹ Initially called the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, Panther founders Bobby Seale and Huey Newton espoused the teachings of black anti-colonial and revolutionary theorist Frantz Fanon, who argued that violence against one's oppressor was necessary in order to effectively liberate the oppressed from the physical as well as the psychological bonds of oppression. Armed with shotguns and law books, party members formed patrols to “police the police” in black communities in order to prevent police misconduct and inform black citizens of their legal rights.¹²⁰

In a comprehensive Ten Point Program, the Black Panthers compiled a list of demands for black people, including full employment, decent housing and education, an end to police brutality, freedom for black prisoners, and exemption from military service. More than anything else, however, the Panthers gained support in black communities nationwide through their sustained efforts to alleviate conditions of poverty in urban ghettos and meet the most basic needs of urban black people.¹²¹ Avowedly Marxist-Leninist, the Panthers proclaimed themselves the party of the “lumpenproletariat”: the poorest of the urban poor, or in the words of Panther Eldridge Cleaver, the

¹¹⁸ Ogbar, *Black Power*, 146-148.

¹¹⁹ Bloom and Breines, foreword to “The Black Panther Platform: 'What We Want, What We Believe,’” in *Takin' it to the Streets*, p. 164.

¹²⁰ Ogbar, *Black Power*, 85; Paul Alkebulan, *Survival Pending Revolution: The History of the Black Panther Party* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007), 5.

¹²¹ Ogbar, *Black Power*, p. 90.

“forgotten people at the bottom of society.”¹²² Across the country Panther chapters initiated a series of “survival programs” that provided an array of essential social services to black communities, including medical care and testing for sickle cell anaemia, legal assistance, breakfasts for school children, clothing distribution, and even maintenance and plumbing services to improve housing conditions. All services were provided free of charge, staffed by volunteer labour and funded by donations from local businesses.¹²³

For his part, Ngoma was a firm believer in the Ten Point Program, and was especially involved in the Chicago chapter's free breakfast for school children program. According to Ngoma, these efforts were essential in helping him realize and recapture his identity as a black American, which had become disconnected as a result of his immersion in the white classical music world. He explains, “I actually had to find a way to create a blend of authenticity, not by my color, but by my *participation*, in saying that because I have adapted a lot of the white culture, by playing classical music and all that stuff in my *personal* work, I had to break that boundary. So therefore [being involved with black issues] helped subsidize, in one, my authenticity and who I was really trying to be in my personhood in coming home to the black community.”¹²⁴

In the spring of 1969, Ngoma decided to leave Chicago and VanderCook College and return to his family in Milwaukee, intending to continue college there. During the brief period in which he was out of school, however, Ngoma was drafted. He was sent to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, for basic combat training, and within the structure of the army was suddenly confronted

¹²² The Panthers' definition of the lumpen-proletariat was broader than the traditional Marxist definition, however, as it included the working poor as well as the criminal element and those on society's fringes. Ogbar, *Black Power*, 98

¹²³ Other programs included a Free Bussing to Prisons Program and the Angela Davis People's Free Food Program, in which 20,000 bags of groceries were distributed to black families nationwide. On a more ad hoc basis the Black Panthers promoted voter registration, protested the eviction of black tenants, provided counselling to welfare recipients, and supported residents in dealings with school and government officials. The Panthers also operated liberation schools in which children were educated in African American history, current events, and Panther ideology. William L. Van Deburg, *New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 160; Paul Alkebulan, *Survival Pending Revolution*, 33-34.

¹²⁴ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

with a situation that betrayed his beliefs as a black American committed to achieving racial equality in the United States. Ngoma's attitude towards service in the military was that "in proportion to the [rest of the] population, black people, black males, were asked to fight, to liberate a people in a land [in which] we were not even liberated ourselves."¹²⁵ This feeling was shared by many black Americans, and was most famously articulated by Martin Luther King, Jr. during his April 4, 1967 speech "Beyond Vietnam," in which he confirmed his opposition to the Vietnam War. King declared that his second of seven major reasons for opposing the war in Vietnam was the realization that it was sending the sons, brothers, and husbands of the poor "to fight and to die in extraordinarily high proportions relative to the rest of the population," taking "the black young men who had been crippled by our society and sending them 8000 miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in Southwest Georgia and East Harlem."¹²⁶ From the moment he was drafted, Ngoma struggled with the contradiction between his commitment to the civil rights movement and the role he was playing in maintaining the current system by passively acquiescing to the demands of the state.

Equally as important, however, was the conflict he felt between his duties as a soldier and his beliefs as a Christian. With the support of a group of like-minded men in his company, Ngoma did his best to mentally resist the abuse they faced as trainees, as well as the violence and aggression that necessarily accompany preparation for a combat role. Training became a game he was forced to play, and Ngoma earned himself a reputation for being a good soldier and an excellent sharpshooter. At a certain point, however, he recalls, "I knew I had the capacity to cross the line. I knew I had the capacity to cross the line and kill somebody, by what I had learned." Yet, he explains, "I could never reconcile, even in the service with the pastors, how they or anybody

¹²⁵ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹²⁶ Martin Luther King, Jr., "Beyond Vietnam" (Riverside Church, New York, NY, 4 April 1967).

[could] reconcile the teachings of Jesus Christ or *anyone* who has love and compassion with a war situation where you are destroying them. I could never reconcile that at *all*. Everything told me from what I was trained that there was nothing but dehumanization.”¹²⁷

Ngoma finished basic training in the summer of 1969 and received orders for Vietnam. With a week's leave before he was set to embark, he returned to Milwaukee to visit his family and traveled to Appleton, Wisconsin, to visit his girlfriend, whom he had met while he was a student in Upward Bound at Lawrence University. Ngoma's girlfriend was a New Left activist, and while he was in training had been sending him brochures about immigrating to Canada. She was active in the draft resistance movement and urged him not to go to Vietnam, telling him that if he wanted to leave the United States, she knew people who could help him. But Ngoma could not yet bring himself to make that decision, and returned to Milwaukee to say good bye to his family. He recalls, “I just thought, ‘well, these are the cards.’ They all but brainwashed me, I guess, if I make this decision, [but] I got a younger brother going into the buddy system in the navy, and I just decided I [was] going to go.”¹²⁸ Ngoma boarded the bus for the airport, and was on his way when two black women on the bus started singing in harmony, “You don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord,” words to the classic soul spiritual “People Get Ready” by Curtis Mayfield and the Impressions.

This lyric is the closing line of the song's chorus:

People get ready, there's a train a-comin'
You don't need no baggage, you just get on board
All you need is faith to hear the diesels hummin'
You don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord.¹²⁹

This song was written in the year after the March on Washington and is rooted in the black gospel tradition, expressing with unyielding optimism the message that, through faith, the dream of racial

¹²⁷ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹²⁸ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹²⁹ Curtis Mayfield, “People Get Ready,” *People Get Ready*, 1965, ABC-Paramount ABC 505-LP.

equality in the United States would be realized.”¹³⁰ It spoke directly to Ngoma’s guiding principles of Christian faith and commitment to the black struggle for freedom, and in that moment he was faced with a choice. When one of these women turned to him and, seeing him in his army uniform, said, “No, don’t go. My brother was just killed [in Vietnam],” Ngoma got off the bus. He phoned his girlfriend in Appleton, and by that evening was on his way to Madison, where he lived underground until the resistance raised enough money to get him across the border to Canada.

The experiences of these men and women suggest that the prevailing understanding of the American Vietnam War migration to Canada requires reconsideration. While the Vietnam War was certainly a significant factor in the circumstances surrounding their migrations to Canada, particularly for Michael Goldberg and Ngoma Wajembae, who were faced with the prospect of having to serve with American forces in Vietnam, their decisions to leave the United States, like those of Bonnelle Strickling, Debby, James Leslie and Larry Kuehn, were informed by broader concerns rooted in the social and political conditions of the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Distinguished as active participants in the civil rights movement, the New Left, the counterculture, and the antiwar movement, their testimonies reveal a profound disaffection with the prevailing structure of American society during this period and its betrayal of the nation’s founding principles of justice, liberty, and equality. Manifest in matters of race and class, and in institutions like the military, the educational system, and even the office of the president, these men and women reacted to the injustices and oppression they saw around them with the ultimate protest, “voting with their feet” and leaving the country of their birth. Rather than simply representing one

¹³⁰ “People Get Ready’: Song Inspired by March on Washington Carries Enduring Message,” 26 August 2003, NPR, <http://www.npr.org/news/specials/march40th/people.html>; For more on this song and Curtis Mayfield’s music, as well as the importance of music to the civil rights movement, see Brian Ward, “People Get Ready’: Music and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s,” *History Now* 8 (June 2006), http://www.historynow.org/06_2006/historian2.html; Craig Werner, *A Change is Gonna Come: Music, Race, and the Soul of America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 144-151.

reaction to the United States' misguided adventure in Vietnam, therefore, the experiences of this group of American expatriates suggest that the American Vietnam War migration to Canada should be considered one important legacy of the all-encompassing democratic vision that sought to revolutionize American society in the 1960s. As the following chapter demonstrates, however, while many Americans found the haven they had hoped for in moving to Canada, others found themselves shut out of Canadian society and the refuge it promised.

Chapter 2: Class and Canada as a “Refuge from Militarism”¹

In 1969 the Flying Burrito Brothers released the pioneering country-rock album “Gilded Palace of Sin,” featuring the draft dodger anthem “My Uncle,” which tells the story of a young man faced with a draft notice who chooses to head to the city of Vancouver in Canada rather than join the United States Army. Raising issues of class, the morality of the conflict in Vietnam, and duties of American citizenship, the song’s chorus “So I’m heading for the nearest foreign border, Vancouver may be just my kind of town, ‘cause they don’t need the kind of law and order that tends to keep a good man underground,” expresses the appeal of Vancouver as a place of freedom from the forces of authority that confronted and repressed American youth in the 1960s.²

Popular images of Vancouver would seem to support the Burrito Brothers’ assessment. Indeed, Canada’s persistent reputation as a liberal utopia was significantly bolstered by the fact that migration to Canada was a widely acknowledged alternative to forced military service in the United States for tens of thousands of draft-age American men opposed to participating in the Vietnam War. Vancouver, meanwhile, was home to a thriving youth counterculture and radical political scene in the 1960s and early 1970s, and is still known interchangeably as the “left coast” and “lotus land,” famous for the longstanding strength of progressive political movements in the region, as well as a certain laid-back, hedonistic attitude supposedly exhibited by its inhabitants.³ As the largest city in western Canada, moreover, Vancouver was a popular destination for Americans seeking to escape the social, political, and military pressures of their country by moving

¹ An earlier form of this chapter appears in Joseph Jones and Lori Olafson, eds., *War Resisters in Retrospect: Papers from the 2007 Our Way Home Peace Event and Reunion* (Vancouver, Las Vegas: Joseph Jones; Lori Olafson, 2009), 85-92.

² Gram Parsons and Chris Hillman, “My Uncle,” *Gilded Palace of Sin*, 1969, A&M SP 4175-LP.

³ Miro Cernetig, “The Far Side of the Rockies: Politics and Identity in British Columbia,” in David Taras and Beverley Rasporich, eds., *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st Century* (Scarborough, Nelson Thompson, 2001), 413.

to Canada. It was the logical destination for those Americans arriving from western parts of the United States – including, most significantly, California, the most populous American state and one of the foremost centres of antiwar activity. It was also the closest Canadian city to the west coast American ports of embarkation for Vietnam.⁴ Among members of the antiwar and anti-draft community, Canada came to be known as the “North Country Fair,” in reference to a lyric from Bob Dylan’s song, “Girl from the North Country.”⁵ In 1970, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau himself solidified the vision of Canada as a progressive haven free from the political and social unrest unfolding in the United States when he uttered the words that are still cited today as evidence of Canada’s compassion towards Americans who opposed participation in the Vietnam War: “Those who make a conscientious judgment that they must not participate in this war...have my complete sympathy, and indeed our approach has been to give them access to Canada. Canada should be a refuge from militarism.”⁶

A closer look at Canadian policy towards the Americans who sought refuge in Canada during the Vietnam War reveals that Canada’s acceptance of thousands of American war resisters was facilitated not by the magnanimity of the Pearson or Trudeau governments – no matter where their personal sympathies may have lay – but rather by the ability of most of the new arrivals to meet Canada’s particular immigration requirements. Though Trudeau’s public statements may

⁴Edward Cowan, “Some US Resisters Find Canada an Uneasy Haven,” *The New York Times*, 5 February 1970.

⁵ This song first appeared as the second track on Dylan’s 1963 album *The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan*. A duet version with Johnny Cash was the first track on 1969’s *Nashville Skyline*. Bob Dylan, *The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan*, 1963, Columbia Records KCS 8786-LP; Bob Dylan, *Nashville Skyline*, 1969, Columbia Records KCS 9825-LP. Sources which refer to Canada as “the North Country Fair” include Roger Neville Williams, *The New Exiles: American War Resisters in Canada* (New York: Liveright Publishers, 1971), 354; Kenneth Fred Emerick, *War Resisters Canada: The World of the American Military-Political Refugees* (Knox, PA: Pennsylvania Free Press, 1972), ix; Renée Goldsmith Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism: Draft-Age Americans in Canada* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1976), 6.

⁶ Quoted in John Hagan, *Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), v. The origins of this quotation have been disputed by Joseph Jones in his 2008 paper “Misquotation: Pierre Trudeau’s Views on U.S. Vietnam War Resisters.” Joseph Jones, *Happenstance and Misquotation: Canadian Immigration Policy 1966-1974, the Arrival of U.S. Vietnam War Resisters, and the Views of Pierre Trudeau* (Vancouver: Quarter Sheaf, 2008).

have indicated otherwise, the men who followed their consciences to Canada during the Vietnam War were never considered to be or treated as anything other than ordinary immigrants by the Canadian government.⁷ The consequence of a complex blend of diplomatic and economic considerations, this approach would have significant implications for the Americans who looked to Canada as a refuge from military service, because Canada's immigration policy, designed to develop its expanding and increasingly specialized industrial economy, was weighed heavily in favour of educated and skilled applicants. Corresponding to the institutionalized class bias of the United States draft, which offered deferments from service to men attending college while filling the ranks of the armed forces with men too poor to pursue post-secondary education, this policy meant that college-educated, mostly middle-class draft resisters had little trouble gaining entry to Canada, while uneducated, working-class deserters were effectively excluded from becoming legal immigrants.⁸

This class-based disparity resulted in a significant divergence of experience between those Americans who were able to become legally established in Canada and those who were forced by the prospect of deportation and imprisonment to eke out a living under the table. As the following chapter demonstrates, in Vancouver this divide was exacerbated by the presence of the very social and political elements that, on the surface, made it appear like the ideal location for young Americans refusing service in Vietnam and inspired sentiments like those expressed in the Flying Burrito Brothers' song. Thus, while the presence of a large antiwar and countercultural community

⁷ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 60.

⁸ The class analysis of the United States Selective Service System and its correlation to the Canadian Immigration Act for Vietnam War resisters was most thoroughly explored by Melody Killian and Rick Ayers in "The Exploitation of Youth," an article published in the Fall 1969 issue of *Our Generation* magazine. Killian came to Canada from the United States in 1965 and was active in left-wing politics and with Vietnam War resisters in Vancouver. Ayers was a draft resister who came to Canada in 1967 and was active with American deserters in Vancouver. His brother, Bill Ayers, was one of the founders of the radical militant organization the Weatherman. Melody Killian and Rick Ayers, "The Exploitation of Youth. Manpower Channelling: U.S. Draft, Canadian Immigration and Education," *Our Generation* 6, no.4 (Fall 1969): 111-147.

in Vancouver initially helped many of the new arrivals feel more at home in the city, the strange dress, open sexuality, drug use, and rejection of linear career paths exhibited by the followers of the youth rebellion also triggered a fierce conservative backlash on the part of Vancouver's "establishment" and "straight" community that had serious adverse consequences for the most vulnerable of American war resisters. Identifying all American draft "dodgers" and deserters as part of the larger youth "problem" plaguing the city of Vancouver, those who had already been relegated to the margins of society by their inability to attain legal status or find work in Canada also became targets of the city's sustained effort to rid Vancouver of "hippies" by harassing and often arresting transient youth. Middle-class, educated Americans, on the other hand, responded with enthusiasm to the environment they encountered. For them Canada and Vancouver offered the reprieve they had hoped for in leaving the US; for Americans relegated to the lower classes, the "refuge from militarism" proved beyond their reach.

American migration to Canada reached its highest numbers in the early 1970s, as social and political unrest in the United States related to the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement and the conservative backlash continued to intensify.⁹ In Canada a similar upheaval was taking place, and while much of the context was different, the stark generational divide that marked these battles was the same. Vancouver was a focal point of this conflict in Canada, and thus the influx of thousands of fugitive American youth to Vancouver during this period has to be considered within the context of the wider clash of generations which gave the Sixties so much of its unique flavour.

Experiencing the same demographic explosion and wave of postwar prosperity as its larger southern neighbour, a similar shift in values took place among Canadian youth during the late 1960s and early 1970s, as they embarked on much the same journey of re-evaluation and

⁹ Statistics Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Profiles U.S.A.: American Immigrants in Canada," *Immigration Research Series* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996), 3.

exploration as baby boomers south of the border. Exposed to the same cultural influences that spread the message of generational revolt thanks to the saturation of the Canadian cultural scene with imports from the United States, while sharing similar anxieties about issues such as racism, poverty, and nuclear war, North American youth looked to the world around them and rebelled not only against the political orthodoxy that perpetrated injustice against minorities, women, the poor, and peasants in third world countries, but also against what they saw as the scripted, stifling conformity of their comfortable yet seemingly empty lives.¹⁰ Eschewing “respectability” and a life course ruled by the accumulation of wealth and property, a significant minority of vocal and colorful youth embraced lifestyles liberated from the restrictive mores of mainstream society. Rejecting the exploitive, competitive nature of capitalism, American and Canadian youth celebrated “sex, drugs, and rock n’ roll,” and searched for ways to live in more loving communion with others, favoring community over individualism, cooperation over competitiveness and participatory democracy over hierarchical authority.¹¹

Forming a new and distinct youth culture that transcended the 49th parallel, this “counterculture” began to transform into a mass social movement around 1967, just as protest to the Vietnam War and the concurrent migration of draft-age Americans to Canada began to increase. The first Vietnam War draft resisters began arriving in 1966, with increasing numbers each year thereafter. By the summer of 1969, the arrival of deserters began to eclipse that of draft

¹⁰ The importance of popular music and its role in articulating the ethos of the youth counterculture and radical politics cannot be understated. Folk music and its traditional entreaties towards peace and social justice, in addition to rock n’ roll with its unbridled sexuality and glorification of drug culture, together communicated a message that resonated with the experiences and changing values of millions of young men and women who came of age during the 1960s. See, for example, “The Times They are A-Changin’,” and “Sex, Drugs, and Rock n’ Roll: The Rise of the Counterculture” in Chapter 7, “The Movement,” Douglas T. Miller, *On Our Own: Americans in the Sixties* (Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1996), 181-184 and 199-206.

¹¹ Miller, *On Our Own*, 210.

resisters.¹² Vancouver was home to one of the most vibrant centres of countercultural activity in Canada. Dubbed “Hippie Hollow,” according to historian Tina Loo, the Kitsilano district on the city’s west side was a kind of “Haight-Ashbury North,” where Canadian youth flocked by the thousands to experience “on a smaller but no less earnest scale” the same alternative lifestyle that drew tens of thousands of American youth to the streets of that famous San Francisco neighborhood during and after 1967’s “Summer of Love.”¹³ Indeed, just three months after the “Gathering of the Tribes for the First Human Be-In” took place in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park on January 14, 1967, the event which launched the Summer of Love, Vancouver’s hip community held its own Be-In on March 26, 1967, at Ceperley Meadow in Stanley Park.¹⁴ “Hitting the road” like the heroes of the Beat generation before them, Canadian youth, like those in the United States, crowded the highways with outstretched thumbs, hitchhiking from one urban centre to the next. As Myrna Kostash details, in each new city they would “live in communal houses, work at odd jobs, deal dope, hustle gigs and just hang out,” joining “precisely the same hippie society they had left behind.”¹⁵ Vancouver, writes Loo, “became the mecca for kids from all over Canada, with ‘going out west’ their great life adventure.”¹⁶

¹² Roger Neville Williams reported that during 1969 and 1970, two deserters arrived in Canada for every draft resister, while Killmer et al. asserted that by 1971 almost two-thirds of the draft-age men immigrating to Canada were deserters. A November 1969 article in the University of British Columbia’s student newspaper, *The Ubyssy*, meanwhile, quoted the director of the Vancouver American Deserters Committee, Steve Watters, as saying that an average of twenty to thirty deserters were arriving in Vancouver every week, outweighing the numbers of new draft resisters. Williams, *The New Exiles*, 7; Richard Killmer et al., *They Can’t Go Home Again: The Story of America’s Political Refugees* (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1971), 25; John Andersen, “‘I Ain’t Marchin’ Anymore,’” *The Ubyssy*, 4 November 1969. See also John Kifner, “‘Underground Railroad’ Aids Deserters to Canada,” *New York Times*, 5 October 1969.

¹³ Tina Loo, “Flower Power in Lotus Land,” *The Beaver* 78, no. 1 (February/March 1998), 37. W.J. Rorabaugh reports that as many of 75,000 youth visited Haight-Ashbury during the Summer of Love. W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 144.

¹⁴ “Festivals and Happenings: Vancouver’s Human Be-in”. *The CBC Digital Archives Website*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Last updated: 28 June 2005. <http://archives.cbc.ca/society/youth/clips/3160>.

¹⁵ Myrna Kostash, *Long Way From Home: The Story of the Sixties Generation in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1980), 121.

¹⁶ Loo, “Flower Power in Lotus Land,” 37.

Creating a scene almost identical to that which would have existed in most American cities at the time, complete with frequent visits by popular American bands and countercultural icons – the Byrds and the Grateful Dead headlined the 1969 Vancouver Pop Festival, and Allen Ginsberg appeared at a series of benefits to raise money for the underground newspaper, the *Georgia Straight*, for example¹⁷ – the thriving hip community was a great comfort to many Americans arriving in Vancouver in the late 1960s. Draft resister Bob Rosen was a self-identified hippie who had come to his decision of refusing the draft partly as a result of his involvement with the youth counterculture in Los Angeles and his exposure to its powerfully antiwar stance.¹⁸ As in the United States, however, the counterculture elicited a powerful negative response from mainstream Canadian society which, given the timing of the American influx, proved to have significant adverse consequences for war resisters less fortunate than Rosen.

As Pierre Berton explained in his book on Canada's centennial year, *1967: The Last Good Year*, "by 1967 the word "hippie" was well entrenched in the argot of the day, being used as a pejorative by most adults. Anybody in jeans who wore long hair, played the guitar, and had no visible means of support was a hippie and, by definition, an alien."¹⁹ Nowhere was this truer than in Vancouver, where the size of the city's hip community prompted a strong conservative backlash by members of the "straight" community and the city's "establishment," in particular. As Loo explains, in the eyes of many Vancouverites, hippies were "scuzzy, doped-up, sex-crazed freeloaders, and their vaunted 'alternative lifestyle' the antithesis of all that was good and wholesome."²⁰ Fears abounded that Kitsilano was turning into a "psychedelic slum." The Kitsilano Ratepayers Association called hippies a "communist menace" who were hurting business revenues by hanging

¹⁷ Ron Verzuh, *Underground Times: Canada's Flower-Child Revolutionaries* (Toronto: Deneau Publishers, 1989), 64-5.

¹⁸ Bob Rosen, interview by author, 9 March 2005.

¹⁹ Pierre Berton, *1967: The Last Good Year* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1997), 162.

²⁰ Loo, "Flower Power in Lotus Land," 37.

around storefront sidewalks in their dirty clothes and long hair, frightening away women shoppers.²¹ “Hip-looking” youth were frequently denied service in public establishments, while so-called “hippie enterprises,” like the Advance Mattress coffeehouse in Kitsilano, suffered constant harassment by city police.²² Vancouver Alderman Halford Wilson even suggested that the hippie population be ghettoized in a rundown east-end part of the city where they would be less of an annoyance and more easily watched over by police.²³

These attitudes affected American war resisters in a number of ways. According to Canadian Unitarian Minister J. McRee Elrod, a central figure in the effort to aid American war resisters arriving in Vancouver, Canadian immigration officials often denied or applied increased scrutiny to “hip types” seeking entry from the United States. For example, whereas “straight” applicants might be granted a one-week visitor’s pass or be allowed to enter without having to prove financial solvency, “hip types” would receive only three days and be required to physically show officers \$10 for every day they planned to stay in the country²⁴ As a result, Elrod’s advice to young Americans hoping to immigrate to Canada was to be clean cut and “straight-looking” when arriving at the Canadian border and while applying for jobs. Immigration Aid to Refugees of Conscience, the organization established by the Unitarian Church to help American war resisters in the Vancouver area, even prepared a short leaflet entitled “Hair is Beautiful But...,” which warned of the “strong and growing antipathy on the part of many older Vancouverites (including personnel and immigration types) towards longer hair,” noting that “there is a frequent conscious or subconscious identification between hair and drugs/sex/and-who-knows-what.” Young Americans

²¹ Loo, “Flower Power in Lotus Land,” 38.

²² One well-publicized incident resulted in a traffic-stopping demonstration at the White Spot restaurant on Larch Street and Broadway, led by staff of the newly founded *Georgia Straight*, after two casually-dressed youths were refused service “because they dressed like hippies.” Berton, 1967, 192.

²³ Berton, 1967, 188; Loo, “Flower Power in Lotus Land,” 38.

²⁴ Letter from Mac Elrod to Edward Butler, 23 September 1970; letter from Mac Elrod to Junius H. Morris, 25 November 1969, J. McRee Elrod Fonds, University of British Columbia Archives.

were thus advised to cut their hair if they hoped to get a job offer in Vancouver's tight job market. According to the handout, "sideburns below the middle of the ear and a moustache below the corners of the mouth" could cost a war resister job offers and personal assessment points at the border.²⁵

No one in Vancouver was more averse to hippies than Tom "Terrific" Campbell, the city's mayor from 1967 to 1972. Referring to hippies interchangeably as "scum" and "parasites on the community," Campbell drew a direct link between Vancouver's flourishing countercultural scene and the influx of American war resisters. Expressing the belief that the "cowardly" acts of draft evasion and desertion were other manifestations of the same harmful, lazy, countercultural ethos, Campbell repeatedly identified "draft dodgers" as a major part of the city's broader "youth problem." As he explained during an interview with CBC television in 1968,

We've got a scum community, that have organized, have decided to grow long hair, and decided to pretend to be hippies. They want to take everything and give nothing. Half of them are American draft dodgers who won't even fight for their own country, who are up here for protection; if they were in their homeland they would be in jail. Now if we were in trouble, if they wouldn't fight for their mother country, what do you think they would do for their adopted country? Nothing, which is exactly what they're doing now. Nothing.²⁶

This hostility towards war resisters, however, was not universal, and was mediated by class. Indeed, the Canadian government's official decision to recognize war resisters as it would any other prospective immigrant, rather than as political refugees, resulted in the development of two distinct classes of war resister: those who possessed the skills and education to legally remain in the country, and those who did not. Definitions of what constitutes a refugee vary, but all generally agree on the pushed or impelled nature of a refugee's migration as a result of some

²⁵ Immigration Aid to Refugees of Conscience, "Hair is Beautiful, But..." J. McRee Elrod Fonds, University of British Columbia Archives.

²⁶ "City Politicians Averse to Hippies". *The CBC Digital Archives Website*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Last updated: 14 Aug. 2003. http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-69-580-3202/life_society/hippies/clip1.

critical change or event in their native country, ranging from natural disasters to war, internal revolution, state repression, political or religious persecution, and other such forms of socio-political upheaval. The international movement of non-refugee, or “pulled,” immigrants, on the other hand, is generally considered more voluntary, corresponding to what Yossi Shain calls “positive original motivation,” in which individuals or groups settle abroad in pursuit of advantages like greater economic opportunity.²⁷ Given the social and political unrest that wracked the United States during the Vietnam era, an argument could be made that all Americans who migrated to Canada during this period technically qualified as refugees. This is especially true, however, for those men who traveled north to escape prosecution for refusing military service in a conflict widely seen as unjust and immoral. Yet as J. McRee Elrod deplored during a December 1970 interview with CBC radio, the position of the Canadian government was that “by definition, you can’t be a refugee from the United States in Canada.”²⁸ “Mac” Elrod was one of many in Canada, particularly on the Christian Left, who argued for Vietnam War resisters' official recognition as political refugees by the Canadian government. In fact, Prime Minister Trudeau’s pronouncement that Canada should be a refuge from militarism was made during a meeting with a delegation from the Canadian Mennonite Central Committee, who had approached the prime minister to urge that the government officially grant American war resisters political asylum in Canada.²⁹ This appeal was hardly without precedent: Canada had willingly admitted people fleeing political oppression in the past, such as in

²⁷ Yossi Shain, *The Frontier of Loyalty: Political Exiles in the Age of the Nation State* (Middletown, CT.: Wesleyan University Press, 1989), 8. See also William Petersen, “A General Typology of Migration,” *American Sociological Review* 23, no.3 (June 1958), 256-266; Art Hansen and Anthony Oliver Smith, *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of Dislocated People* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982); Egon F. Kunz, “The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement,” *International Migration Review* 7 (Summer 1973), 125-146; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

²⁸ “Destination Vancouver: Draft Dodgers Head North”. *The CBC Digital Archives Website*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Last updated: 10 June 2004. http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-71-348-1932/conflict_war/draft_dodgers/clip1.

²⁹ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 83; Killmer, et al., *They Can’t Go Home Again*, 90.

1956-1957, when the Canadian government took unprecedented steps to resettle almost 38,000 Hungarians fleeing Soviet repression of the Hungarian Revolution, as well as in 1968-1969, when 12,000 Czechs were granted political refuge in Canada following the similarly crushed Prague Spring.³⁰ In both of these cases the usual restrictions to immigration were removed, and these people were granted landed immigrant status whether or not they were officially qualified according to the Canadian Immigration Act.³¹

The disparity in the Canadian government's official position towards Vietnam War resisters, as Mac Elrod explained, lay precisely in the fact that the men seeking refuge in Canada came from the United States. For this reason alone, American draft and military resisters could not be considered to be seeking political asylum in the same way that Hungarian and Czech refugees had done. As Tom Kent, Deputy Minister of Citizen and Immigration between 1966 and 1968, explained,

Common usage of the term [political asylum] suggests that it really has no application to citizens of friendly countries, particularly those having democratic forms of government similar in principle to our own. The connotation surely is that someone seeking asylum aims to escape from political persecution by a regime having vastly different standards than ours. A deserter from the American forces is liable to penalties, as of course a Canadian deserter would be in this country, but he could not be said to be exposed to political persecution.³²

American Vietnam War draft and military resisters were thus not considered to be politically persecuted because they came from a friendly, similarly democratic country.

Indeed, the nature of the "friendly" relations between Canada and the United States during this period were such that Canadian recognition of American Vietnam war resisters as refugees

³⁰ Valerie Knowles, *Forging Our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900-1977* (Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2000), 74-76; Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 61-62.

³¹ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 62.

³² Tom Kent in a letter written 31 January 1968 to MP Herbert Herridge. Cited in Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 62.

fleeing political oppression would have had significant diplomatic consequences. One instance of official Canadian criticism of American policy in Vietnam played out almost comically in 1965, when Prime Minister Lester Pearson delivered a speech at Temple University in Philadelphia in which he cautiously suggested that the United States suspend its bombing of North Vietnam in favour of pursuing a diplomatic resolution to the conflict. Meeting with President Johnson at Camp David the following day, Johnson famously confronted Pearson by seizing him by the shirt collar and shouting, "You pissed on my rug!"³³ More than a tongue-lashing, however, criticism of American policy stood to hurt Canada economically.

Replacing Britain as Canada's chief trading partner, the United States' Cold War with the Soviet Union proved immensely profitable for Canada. American investment in Canadian industries had steadily increased during the interwar period, establishing a pattern of economic integration which only grew stronger as the two countries became military allies during WWII. Yet as historians John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall assert, "with dizzying rapidity, the American-led struggle against the Communist specter brought a degree of intimacy between Canada and the United States that the war against Germany had never demanded."³⁴ The threat of Soviet nuclear weapons and long-range bombers seemed to necessitate cooperation in continental defence, while a rapidly expanding American arsenal and military complex provided an insatiable outlet for Canadian raw materials.³⁵ Canada's economy boomed in the postwar period, stimulated in part by Cold War defence production. In 1958, for example, Canada and the United

³³ John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*, 3rd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 234.

³⁴ Thompson and Randall, *Canada and the United States*, 184.

³⁵ Thompson and Randall, *Canada and the United States*, 184. Between 1949 and 1957, three radar defence systems were built in Canada to provide early detection of Soviet air attack against North America, including the Distant Early Warning Line, or DEW Line, which stretched from Alaska to Baffin Island. In 1958, the United States and Canada signed the North American Air Defence Agreement, or NORAD, to produce a unified North American air command. Alvin Finkel and Margaret Conrad, *History of the Canadian Peoples 1867 to the Present*, vol. 2, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Addison Wesley Longman, 2002), 348.

States signed the Defence Production Sharing Agreement, which allowed Canadian defence firms to bid for American military contracts on an equal basis with American companies. The Vietnam War was especially lucrative for the Canadian defence industry; Canadian-manufactured products used by the American military between 1965 and 1973 ranged from aircraft engines and passenger vehicles to Agent Orange and napalm. Even the famed green berets worn by U.S. Special Forces were made in Canada.³⁶ Chastened by Johnson's rebuke at Camp David, Pearson thus underscored the danger inherent in any Canadian criticism of American foreign policy in a 1967 interview: "We can't ignore the fact that the first result of any open breach with the United States over Vietnam, which their government considers to be unfair and unfriendly on our part, would be a more critical examination by Washington of certain special aspects of our relationship from which we, as well as they, get great benefit."³⁷ In other words, Canadian economic prosperity depended on the maintenance of harmonious relations with the United States.

Concern over damaging relations with their primary trading partner did not appear to carry over to the fact that draft evaders and deserters were considered "fugitives from justice" in the United States, however. Selective Service and military violations were not among the twenty-two offences listed in the extradition treaties between Canada and the United States, so Canada had no diplomatic obligation to return draft evaders or deserters to the US to face penal sanction. Indeed, since Canada had no draft, refusing to comply with draft legislation was not a crime in Canada.³⁸ What is more, as John Munro, Parliamentary Secretary to the Department of Manpower and Immigration told the House of Commons in June 1967, "an individual's status with regard to compulsory military service in his own country has no bearing on his admissibility to Canada either

³⁶ "Supplying the War Machine". *The CBC Digital Archives Website*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Last updated: 5 Oct. 2004. <http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-71-1413-9128/conflict_war/vietnam/clip1.

³⁷ Kari Levitt, *Silent Surrender: The Multinational Corporation in Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1970), 2-3, cited in Finkel and Conrad, *History of the Canadian Peoples, 1867 to Present*, 345.

³⁸ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 60-61.

as an immigrant or as a visitor.”³⁹ The Canadian Immigration Act made no reference whatsoever to questions of conscription and military service in the selection or refusal of prospective immigrants, and thus, by law, American draft-age applicants were to be considered without regard to their military status.

Besides diplomatic considerations, however, the governments of Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau also had good reasons of national self-interest that explain the decision to officially regard American war resisters solely as prospective immigrants. In response to the rapid pace of technological innovation, Canada’s economy underwent significant change in the postwar period, resulting in a growing need for skilled labour and a corresponding decline in demand for unskilled workers.⁴⁰ Compounding the problem, Canada’s better-educated citizens continued to out-migrate, creating a “brain drain” that reached its peak in the early 1960s.⁴¹ As it had in the past, the Canadian government looked to immigration to redress the imbalance in its labour supply, tightening its immigration requirements to reflect its demand for skilled and educated applicants. As it explained in the 1966 “White Paper on Immigration,”

Some people conclude that we should open our doors wide to a very large flow of immigrants. ... The fact however is that economic conditions have changed. We do not have a frontier open to new agricultural settlement. Our people are moving off the land, not on to it. ... Despite its low population density, Canada has become a highly complex, industrialized and urbanized society...If those entering the work force, whether native-born or immigrants do not have the ability and training to do the kinds of jobs available, they will be burdens rather than assets. Today (and in the foreseeable future) Canada’s expanding industrial economy offers most of its employment opportunities to those with education, training, skill⁴²

³⁹ *Commons Debates*, 12 June 1967, 1445-1447, cited in Jim Wilcox, “...they are up against the Canadian border,” in *I Would Like to Dodge the Draft-Dodgers But...*, ed. Frank H. Epp, (Waterloo: Conrad Press, 1970), 51.

⁴⁰ Knowles, *Forging Our Legacy*, 83.

⁴¹ David Surrey, *Choice of Conscience: Vietnam Era Military and Draft Resisters in Canada* (New York: Praeger, 1982), 108.

⁴² *Canadian Immigration Policy* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1966), cited in Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 67.

Assessment of an applicant's suitability was accomplished through the implementation of a "points system," introduced in 1967, in which at least fifty out of one hundred units of assessment were needed to gain landed immigrant status. Five out of the nine categories of assessment related to skills and occupation, with a possible sixty points awarded on the basis of education, occupational skill, and occupational demand.⁴³

Coinciding with the abolition of Canada's previously racist immigration policy, which had placed extensive restrictions on immigrants applying from non-white and non-English-speaking countries, the point system officially tabled in 1962 was ostensibly designed to "achieve universality and objectivity in the selection processes" by eliminating discrimination "by reason of race, colour, or religion."⁴⁴ As Renée Kasinsky points out, however, the new regulations effectively traded bias according to race or national origin with bias according to class.⁴⁵ The heavy emphasis on skills and education virtually eliminated working- and lower-class applicants as prospective immigrants, while those hailing from middle- and upper-class backgrounds usually possessed the advanced training necessary for acceptance. Indeed, the assessment scale was so steep that even college-educated applicants often needed a bona fide job offer in Canada, verified in writing, to gain an additional ten points in order to raise their total over the required fifty.⁴⁶

For American Vietnam War resisters, this policy had significant implications, because draft resisters and deserters were divided by tangible differences in class and levels of education and occupational skill as a result of the inherent class bias of the United States Selective Service System, or draft. Having delayed induction by capitalizing on the educational deferments offered by the Selective Service System, draft resisters were predominately college-educated sons of the

⁴³ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 67-68.

⁴⁴ *Canadian Immigration Policy* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1966), cited in Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 67.

⁴⁵ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 67.

⁴⁶ "Destination Vancouver: Draft Dodgers Head North." The CBC Digital Archives Website. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

middle-class or upper-class who travelled to Canada when faced with the imminent expiration of their student deferment. Deserters, on the other hand, generally hailed from lower-income and working class backgrounds and had volunteered or been inducted into the armed services straight out of high school, lacking the access to post-secondary education enjoyed by the sons of the middle- and upper-classes and the deferments from compulsory military service this entailed.⁴⁷ The overall effect of the Canadian government's decision to regard these men solely as potential immigrants, therefore, was that unskilled, uneducated deserters failed to satisfy Canada's elite immigration standards, while college-educated draft resisters met them with little difficulty, matching precisely the type of immigrant Canada had been hoping to attract. Canada thus at once managed to circumvent diplomatic conflict with the Americans, while facilitating the receipt of its largest, best-educated group of immigrants ever.⁴⁸

The notion that Canada was a "refuge from militarism" for Vietnam War resisters was thus vastly overstated, if not downright false. For most of those Americans who were able to become legally established, though, Canada did seem to live up to its reputation as a haven from the social and political turmoil wracking the United States. Such was the case for John Randall and Bonnelle Strickling, members of one of the most fortunate groups of Americans to immigrate to Canada during the Vietnam War, those accepted to study at Canadian universities.⁴⁹ Both PhD candidates in philosophy at the University of British Columbia, their recollections regarding their first years in Vancouver are overwhelmingly positive. A draft resister from Virginia, John decided to move to Canada after the Selective Service System ended deferments for graduate students in the spring of 1968. He recalls having good feelings about the prospect of emigrating, as "politically, of

⁴⁷ Lawrence M. Baskir and William A. Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance: The Draft, the War, and the Vietnam Generation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 16.

⁴⁸ Knowles, *Forging our Legacy*, 90-91.

⁴⁹'John Randall' is a pseudonym. For privacy this interviewee asked not to be identified.

course, Trudeau was prime minister, and everybody knew that Trudeau was a little left-leaning and was not antagonistic to war resisters.”⁵⁰ Awarded a full scholarship at UBC, his almost idyllic description of his first year living in the city’s Kitsilano district relates that his expectations about Canada were confirmed. He recounts, “during that first year I was living at 1st Avenue and Stephens, for \$125 a month, on the second floor of a house that had a balcony and an *amazing* view of the bay and sunsets and stuff, seeing the sun reflecting off the mountains....It felt like it was a very exciting time; it felt like there were enormous compensations [for leaving the United States], and I felt like, on the whole, it was not a sacrifice in my case.”⁵¹ John is quick to point out, however, that he realized how privileged he was because of his association with the university: “I knew that there were many other people who were not so well off. It was mainly because of the University association that I was alright.”⁵² He was also received warmly by the Canadians he met, recalling that he never encountered any overt hostility or even frowning on him for being a draft evader. Even his professors in the philosophy department, though some of them were quite conservative, never showed any disapproval. “They were glad,” he recalls. “They were getting the best students they’d ever gotten.”⁵³

Bonnelle Strickling was another one of these students, arriving in Vancouver in 1971 after completing her MA at the University of Iowa. In the United States Bonnelle had been involved with the organized draft resistance movement through Students for a Democratic Society, and as a result knew more about Canada than perhaps most Americans at the time. Familiar with such things as Canada’s system of socialized medicine and its multi-party parliamentary political system, her sense of Canada as an “interesting, more progressive place,” was most affected by what she

⁵⁰ John Randall, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 11 March 2005.

⁵¹ John Randall, interview by author, 11 March 2005.

⁵² John Randall, interview by author, 11 March 2005.

⁵³ John Randall, interview by author, 11 March 2005. According to John, more than half of the PhD students in the philosophy department at UBC during this time were Americans.

interpreted as the welcoming attitude of the Canadian government towards draft resisters. Personally acquainted with several men who had moved to Canada to avoid the draft, she explains, “to me, it was so amazing how Canada had taken in all these draft resisters, such a totally different attitude to the whole thing than this awful, bitter, nasty, ‘love it or leave it’ kind of thing. It was just a completely different kind of [attitude] and just a reasonableness – you know, [like] there really might be a *reason* that you don’t want to go some place where people don’t want you and start killing people. I mean, just a kind of basic *sanity*.”⁵⁴

Repulsed by the reactionary polarization that was taking place in the United States on the part of both the forces of authority and the leftist opposition in the months after Kent State, Bonnelle was drawn to Canada after recognizing a similar sense of “sanity” among ordinary Canadians during her first visit in 1970. With an idea of applying to PhD programs in Ontario, she and her husband took an exploratory trip up the east coast of the United States and into the Maritimes. In contrast to the atmosphere in the United States, Bonnelle was immediately impressed by the general air of calm and level-headedness among the people she encountered. She explains, “We just wanted to see what Canada was like, and I really liked it. I thought it was really quite nice and people seemed so pleasant – you know, the usual things Americans say about Canada: ‘Oh, it’s so clean and people are so nice.’ But everyone seemed so *sane*. That was the thing that struck me about it – people seemed so sane. Americans are just so hysterical....I mean, there’s just some craziness inherent in American politics.”⁵⁵

Resolved that she could no longer stand the “craziness,” Bonnelle decided to leave the United States. She was accepted as a PhD candidate at the University of British Columbia, and when she arrived in Vancouver remembers experiencing a sense of belonging in the city that she

⁵⁴ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 23 February 2005.

⁵⁵ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

had never felt before in the U.S. She recalls, “when I came here I thought, I actually had this feeling, [that] this is the place I was always meant to be....I thought, *this* is the place I was always *supposed* be. It was like love at first sight.... It was just...magical. And I just thought, I guess I must have been a Canadian all along!”⁵⁶

Bonnelle’s enthusiasm for Vancouver is strikingly similar to that described by Michael Goldberg, the draft resister from Denver, Colorado. Michael first visited Vancouver in 1967 on a kind of reconnaissance mission to explore his options for the imminent expiration of his student deferment. Following the mantra “Go West, Young Man!” he had driven up from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and had already visited Winnipeg and Calgary before travelling to Vancouver. Prior to his trip he had been doing community development work in the inner city of Milwaukee, and arriving in Vancouver one evening in early June, noticed a palpable difference between the two cities. He recalls, “[it was] one of those nights [where] it’s light until 10:15, [and] you’ve got people walking in Stanley Park. You have to imagine, coming from a place like Milwaukee where there were riots – you just didn’t walk in a park at night, *any* park at night. You were really vulnerable in the dark. And seeing all these people just walking in the park at dusk, and women on their own and people feeling safe – it was like, liberation. It was just amazing. I couldn’t believe this could *exist* anywhere.”⁵⁷

Michael was a counsellor at the Jewish Community Centre (JCC) in Milwaukee, and during that first visit was offered a job as a counsellor at the Vancouver JCC, which he accepted when he decided to return to Canada permanently several months later. Echoing Bonnelle, Michael recalls, “There was a magic about Vancouver in ‘67.” For Michael, this magic took several forms. First was the warm reception he received from the Canadians he met. He recalls that one of the things

⁵⁶ Bonnelle Strickling, interview by author, 23 February 2005.

⁵⁷ Michael Goldberg, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 27 January 2005.

he found living in Vancouver was that, as a war resister, “people really respected the choices that you made.” Draft resistance “wasn’t perceived as a cop-out,” and, what was more, people realized that “there were penalties....and that you were paying a fair price for your stand.” Even people who may not have agreed with his political position, he remembers, “nonetheless respected that it was a heart-felt decision.”⁵⁸ Within a year and a half of landing in Vancouver, Michael had met his future wife, a Canadian woman, and they welcomed their first child in 1971.

When Michael arrived in Vancouver, he stayed with the president of the board of the Jewish Community Centre, the man who had hired him during his first visit to the city. This gave him the chance to find his bearings while he looked for a more permanent place to live, which he found shortly after, rooming with a war resister from Seattle. Arriving with a job already lined up and a place to stay, Michael, like Bonnelle and John, who had the security of the university to rely on, had a considerable advantage over those Americans who arrived in Canada with no connections and frequently little information about how to become established or where to go for help.

This difference was one of the most significant consequences of the Canadian’s government’s decision to regard American draft resisters and deserters as ordinary immigrants: without official recognition as refugees, the Canadian government was not obliged to provide essential services to help with their transition to Canada. New immigrants often draw on community networks established by earlier migrants from their home country, and frequently even by members of their own family. These social networks assist with such critical transitional concerns as finding employment or a place to live, not to mention the emotional stress involved in

⁵⁸ Michael Goldberg, interview by author, 27 January 2005.

leaving one's home for a new country.⁵⁹ Refugees might draw on such networks, too, and often receive aid from the host government or international community to assist with the difficult task of resettlement. With the exception of the period in question, however, immigration to Canada from the United States has historically been minimal.⁶⁰ In the early years of the Vietnam-era influx at least, this meant that most of the men and women who chose to relocate to Canada did so without any beaten path to follow, and that no firmly established American national communities existed from which the new arrivals could draw essential resources.⁶¹ That the majority of draft-age men made the move to Canada alone, or at the most with a wife or girlfriend, only compounded their isolation.

In order to address these difficulties, ad hoc aid groups dedicated to supporting the new arrivals sprung up in every major Canadian population centre, with twenty-six such organizations in operation across the country at the height of the American influx in 1969 and 1970.⁶² Though American war resisters themselves came to play a large part in the functioning of these groups, most of the earliest were independent projects by concerned Canadian citizens. Acting as bridges between the new arrivals and the wider Canadian community, the aid groups worked to help American war resisters become established in their new country. Tending to their most immediate needs of food, shelter, and even clothing, every aid centre compiled lists of sympathetic Canadian

⁵⁹ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Guilford Press, 1998), 26.

⁶⁰ According to Statistics Canada, immigrants from the United States comprised between just 2% and 7% of all immigrants to Canada in the years preceding the 1960s. Statistics Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Profiles U.S.A.: American Immigrants in Canada," *Immigration Research Series* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996), 3.

⁶¹ Castles and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 26.

⁶² Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 139.

families willing to house war resisters during their first days in Canada while they found their bearings.⁶³

The best-known aid group was the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme (TADP). Established in 1966, it grew out of the Toronto Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA), the first “genuinely ‘new left’ formation in Canada.”⁶⁴ Much of its renown derived from its publication of the *Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada*, which became the hand book of the American exile movement.⁶⁵ Published by the fledgling House of Anansi Press, the *Manual* was the most complete source of information on immigrating to Canada produced during the Vietnam era. Between 1968 and 1970, five editions were issued, with a total of 65,000 copies sold.⁶⁶ In fact, its first edition drew heavily on the work of the founders of Vancouver’s equivalent to the TADP, the Vancouver Committee to Aid American War Objectors (VCAAWO). Also formed in 1966, what came to be known simply as “The Committee” was first established through the combined efforts of six University of British Columbia professors, their wives, and one local attorney. Gathering information on the Canadian Immigration Act, the extradition treaties between Canada and the United States, and other legal aspects related to the status of fugitive Americans in Canada, the Committee used this research to counsel young Americans on immigrating to Canada in person and by mail. It also published several fact sheets on immigration for distribution to student organizations across Canada and the United States which were later incorporated into the *Manual*. One of the earliest, a pamphlet entitled “Immigration to Canada and Its Relation to the Draft” was authored by Meg Brown, a native

⁶³ Killmer et al., *They Can’t Go Home Again*, 28.

⁶⁴ SUPA, in turn, was established in 1964 out of the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, established in 1959 to agitate for peace and against nuclear weapons. Myrna Kostash, *Long Way From Home*, xxii-xxv.

⁶⁵ Mark Satin, ed., *Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada* (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1968).

⁶⁶ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 86. According to Roger Neville Williams, by mid-1968 the *Manual* was a best-seller in the United States and was written up in both the *New York Times* and the *London Observer*. Williams, *The New Exiles*, 67.

New Yorker, and her husband, Benson Brown, a mathematics professor at UBC, in association with Vancouver lawyer Doug Sanders. Two hundred were mailed to individuals and antiwar groups in the United States.⁶⁷ As Renée Kasinsky points out, this research was crucial, “since there were no recent precedents involving this type of political refugee.”⁶⁸

The experience of Bob Rosen, a draft resister from Montebello, California, illustrates the critical role which the Committee to Aid American War Objectors played in helping young Americans become established in Vancouver. Bob first learned of the Committee from a Unitarian draft counsellor in Whittier, California, whom he had approached for advice after the unexpected loss of his student deferment during his second year of college. Bob had visited Vancouver as a child with his family and had positive memories of the experience, but he chose the city as his destination simply because it was the most logical place to go from California. Bob contacted the Committee from California and, he recalls, “they gave me instructions about what to do. They told me to come by train because there was less hassle at the border; they told me to have a certain amount of money – I think it was \$300. They told me to say I was staying for a week or two or whatever certain amount of time. And they told me to come see them when I arrived.”⁶⁹ As an indication of economic self-sufficiency, applicants for landed immigrant status needed a minimum of \$300 to present to their immigration officer. According to the US Census Bureau, in 1969 the mean annual income of a white American male between 20 and 24 years of age was \$4206, making the \$300 fee just under a month's worth of wages.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 92-3. See also Williams, *The New Exiles*, 56-58.

⁶⁸ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 92.

⁶⁹ Bob Rosen, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 9 March 2005.

⁷⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-60, No. 75, “Income in 1969 of Families and Persons in the United States,” U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1970, p. 107, <http://www2.census.gov/prod2/popscan/p60-075.pdf>.

Following the Committee's instructions to the letter, Bob arrived in Vancouver in early 1968, and on his first day in the city went immediately to visit their office, located in a rundown old warehouse on East Georgia Street, close to Chinatown. He recalls, "they were just great. Like, they were really good at what they did. They knew what people's needs were, they were really well connected, and they were very dedicated."⁷¹ Bob's counsellor was Meg Brown, and according to Bob, the first thing she did was to explain to him his legal situation, going over the immigration point system, and explaining that in order to attain landed immigrant status, he would have to secure a job offer. Equally important, she arranged for Bob to stay with a Vancouver family while he went about finding work. He explains,

She gave me a choice. She said, you can stay with other draft dodgers, and the benefit of that is that they'll be people you have things in common with. But they probably won't want you to stay that long, because they're used to having other draft dodgers and you won't be welcome for that long – you'll need to move on.... The other choice was with these Unitarians who lived in West Vancouver, who were very straight [and] they had never done this before – they had never had a draft dodger. And she said, they're going to be pretty straight, but you could probably stay there longer. I said, well, I'm going to go for practicality here: I'm in a difficult situation. So, somebody came and drove me and my gear up to West Van, and I stayed with [this family]....They were English. Very nice people, very middle class people. He was a chartered accountant, he had an office downtown. And they lived in this sort of really fancy house way up on Palmerston Avenue in West Vancouver, way high up on the mountain....They fed me, and they never asked for any money, and I stayed there for probably about three weeks. And I went out looking for a job – that was the key.⁷²

Bob ended up being hired at the Jewish Community Centre in a position similar to Michael Goldberg's, and shortly thereafter began renting a house with Michael and another draft resister also employed at the Vancouver JCC. Armed with the all-important letter of employment, Bob now had enough assessment points to attain landed immigrant status. This he did with no difficulty, traversing the path familiar to thousands of other American war resisters during the Vietnam

⁷¹ Bob Rosen, interview by author, 9 March 2005.

⁷² Bob Rosen, interview by author, 9 March 2005.

period, driving back down to the border to re-enter Canada, where border guards still had the authority to bestow legal status on newly-arrived immigrants.⁷³

Thus, within the span of a month, Bob was landed, had a means of financial support, and a place to live. He had also begun a relationship with a Canadian woman, a development that may have been assisted by his fugitive status. Reflecting on his reception by Canadians, he explains, “it was pretty cool being a draft dodger in 1968 in Vancouver. Lots of *girls* liked it. It was sort of like...it was popular. I mean, there were some people that were against it, but most Canadians were against the war and sympathetic. And certainly the kinds of people I would meet – sort of young, long-haired people – were certainly sympathetic, and it was sort of cool being an American exile.”⁷⁴

Ranging in background from lower-middle class to upper-middle class, John, Bonnelle, Michael, and Bob were all college educated Americans who, as a result of university appointments and white collar job offers, were able to become landed, and thus established, with little difficulty. While this was certainly not the case for all middle-class, college educated Americans – particularly in the later years of the influx, when work was harder to find due to a downturn in the Canadian economy – in general their situation was easier than that faced by their uneducated, working class counterparts, who for the most part crossed the border after being drafted and subsequently deserting some branch of the United States Armed Forces.

Deserters in Canada were disadvantaged in a number of ways. In the first place, the stigma cast on deserters as cowards and shirkers of responsibility was stronger even than that which accompanied the derisive title of draft “dodger.” Until the spring of 1969, for example, though the Canadian Immigration Act made no reference whatsoever to questions of conscription

⁷³ Bob Rosen, interview by author, 9 March 2005.

⁷⁴ Bob Rosen, interview by author, 9 March 2005.

and military service, immigration officials, a large proportion of whom were former military servicemen, often used their discretionary powers to reject draft resisters solely on the basis of their military status, no matter how qualified. The exclusion of military deserters, however, was not a matter of discretion. It was policy, outlined in a written directive included in successive internal immigration department memorandums beginning in 1966. As John Hagan outlines in *Northern Passage*, immigration officials were told in clear language that deserters were not suitable immigrants, a 1968 revision of the department's operational regulations manual explicitly citing "military deserter" as an example of a person to be excluded from the country for failing to keep "moral and contractual obligations."⁷⁵

In the early years of the American influx to Canada, even resister aid groups refrained from openly offering aid to deserters because of the stigma they carried. According to draft resister Roger Neville Williams, author of the 1971 book on the American exodus, *The New Exiles*, prior to 1969, "resister aid groups didn't want to have anything to do with" deserters, fearful that too much contact with them would impair their established function of aiding draft dodgers.⁷⁶ Renée Kasinsky reports in her 1974 study that in the early years the aid groups simply refused to admit giving aid to deserters for fear of negative public reaction. Assuming at first that deserters could not legally remain in Canada because of their military status, Kasinsky explains that even when it was discovered that this assumption was false, groups like the TADP continued to keep their aid to deserters under wraps, afraid that it would negatively impact public support for their efforts to help draft resisters. By 1969, however, discrimination against deserters at the border had become so

⁷⁵ Hagan, *Northern Passage*, 44. For an in-depth account of the controversy surrounding the Canadian Immigration Department's covert policy with respect to military deserters, see Chapter 2, "Opening the Gates," in Hagan, *Northern Passage*, 34-65. For a detailed discussion of the campaign to end discrimination against war resisters at the border, see Chapter 5, "The Struggle for Equal Status in the Treatment of Deserters," in Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 111-127.

⁷⁶ Williams, *The New Exiles*, 104.

blatant that aid groups embarked on a campaign to bring the issue of immigration discrimination to the attention of the Canadian public and Members of Parliament.⁷⁷

Sparking a public outcry, these restrictions against war resisters were corrected in May 1969. Even after this improvement, however, deserters continued to confront considerable obstacles in Canada as a result of their class and military background. Indeed, in its original assessment of deserters, the immigration department effectively articulated an attitude held by many Canadians with respect to these men. James Leslie, who deserted from the Army Reserves in 1967, experienced the effects of the deserter stigma first hand while working at his first job in Canada, as a substitute teacher on the Sunshine Coast in 1968.⁷⁸ Given the choice of going to the library or having an open period, his students chose to stay in the classroom to have a discussion. He recalls, "For me I thought [this] was great, because I thought [that in Canada] I could talk politics in a way that you couldn't in the States..., and I just started telling them how neat it was to be in a place where you could be a communist without getting thrown in the slammer."⁷⁹ James learned afterwards, however, that the librarian in the school had planned to refuse him entry if he had decided to bring his students there, "because he wouldn't let a goddamn coward deserter into their library."⁸⁰ "After that," explains James, "apparently I wasn't going to be getting any more substitute teaching gigs in the secondary school."⁸¹

The crippling effects of the deserter stigma confronted American deserters in other ways. Once they made the decision to leave the armed forces and go absent without leave, deserters were fugitives, on the run from the law. Often arriving with little more than the clothes on their

⁷⁷ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 109-117.

⁷⁸ Hailing from an upper-middle-class background and educated at Stanford, Leslie was an atypical American deserter in that he was able to attain landed immigrant status, and thus the ability to work legally, with no difficulty. James Leslie, interview by author, tape recording, Vancouver, British Columbia, 22 February 2005.

⁷⁹ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

⁸⁰ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

⁸¹ James Leslie, interview by author, 22 February 2005.

backs, those who were able to enter the country usually received no financial or emotional support from their families, so devastating was the disgrace which accompanied the act of desertion. Indeed, hailing from mostly working-class backgrounds, even in the absence of familial condemnation, most deserters' families would not have had access to funds with which to support their sons in Canada. As Ngoma Wajembae, a deserter who arrived in Canada in 1969, explained, "it was right when people said it was a two-tiered system, because a lot of the draft dodgers could *afford* to come up here. They had cars, some of them had finances, nice apartments.... You know, it was almost like a vacation in a way, for some of them, and I think that they really conscientiously protested the war, but they could *afford* to do that, in some way or the other."⁸²

The psychological toll exacted on deserters as a result of their families' rejection, the fear they carried from being on the run, and the brutal treatment they experienced in the military widened this disparity. Ngoma Wajembae's memories of his first days in Canada, for example, differ sharply from those of Michael, Bonnelle, and John. Ngoma deserted the army in 1969, just days before he was to ship out to Vietnam, and spent several weeks living underground in Madison, Wisconsin, where he was protected and supported by a group of radical activists until they raised the \$300 necessary to get him across the Canadian border. Crossing at Windsor, Ontario, he was taken to a draft resister's hostel in Toronto where, immediately upon arrival, he was told to throw down his bags and join his hosts at a concert featuring John Lennon and The Doors.⁸³ This drastic shift in attitude and atmosphere was unsettling for Ngoma, who had been immersed for months in an environment of violence followed closely by one of fear. He explains, "One thing that I had not done was to make a full commitment to understanding how I could

⁸² Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, tape recording, Richmond, British Columbia, 15 June 2005.

⁸³ This concert was called Live Peace in Toronto, and took place on September 13, 1969 at Toronto's Varsity Stadium. A crowd of 20,000 people listened to performers including The Doors, the Plastic Ono Band, Bo Diddley, Chicago Transit Authority, Alice Cooper, Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry, John Lennon and Eric Clapton. http://beatles.ncf.ca/live_peace_in_toronto_p1.html.

transplant, transform myself from a violent person in to a peaceful person, and *wanting* to be a peaceful person again, based upon the love of humanity. I really had to work on that.”⁸⁴ Later, while visiting Montreal, he recalls, “I was on a tour, walking around downtown, checking out the sights, and I could not understand what people were laughing about, and happy about, in this country. There was a seriousness about people dying that never left me during this period.”⁸⁵

Finally, Ngoma recalls being afraid as a result of his fugitive status. “A lot of [deserters] had a lot of fear,” he explains. “I would have nightmares, literally nightmares, where I would be riding a bus, for instance, in Milwaukee, and somebody would look back and say, ‘There he is! He’s the deserter!’”⁸⁶ According to Jack Todd, a deserter from Scottsbluff, Nebraska, this fear was such that even years after immigrating, many deserters “still cringe[d] at the sight of a uniform, even on a postman.”⁸⁷ For men like Todd and Ngoma, the cumulative effect of such emotional turmoil was that it often prevented them from receiving the same kind of assistance offered to the more stable, middle-class draft resisters by sympathetic Canadian families. As Todd explained in his memoir, *Taste of Metal*, “draft resisters are less angry, less explosive, more welcome in the homes of Canadian liberals opposed to the war. Deserters are different. We tend to make people nervous. Antiwar Canadians who open their homes to draft dodgers often draw the line at deserters, who tend to be less educated, more troubled, and infinitely more likely to make off with the silverware – and quite possibly the youngest daughter’s virginity.”⁸⁸ Thus, whereas Bob Rosen was placed with an affluent Unitarian couple who fed and housed him free of charge for three weeks while he went out to look for work, deserters, presumed to be emotionally scarred and unstable, were assessed to be a liability to the Vancouver families on the Committee’s housing list,

⁸⁴ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

⁸⁵ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

⁸⁶ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

⁸⁷ Jack Todd, “The Young Americans Who Can Never Go Home,” *Vancouver Sun*, 11 July 1970.

⁸⁸ Jack Todd, *The Taste of Metal: A Deserter’s Story* (Toronto: HarperFlamingo Canada, 2001), 145.

and were placed in one of the several hostels run by the Committee or the Vancouver chapter of the American Deserters Committee.⁸⁹ Indeed, according to Ngoma, the Committee's hostel on 7th Avenue, where he lived when he first moved to Vancouver in 1970, was dubbed "the hostile," as a reflection of the disposition of most of its tenants.⁹⁰

While living in such an environment gave deserters the opportunity to interact with others who had experienced similar traumas in the process of exile, it also denied them the interaction with established Canadians so crucial to the process of acculturation and transition to life in a new country. Immersed in a community of American exiles, the difficulty deserters faced breaking away from this group was further compounded by the inability of most to attain landed immigrant status as a result of their lack of skills and education. Unable to work legally, deserters often sought out unskilled work under the table, which was usually temporary and poorly paid.⁹¹ An insecure existence at the best of times, the situation for American deserters was made even more precarious by the fact that they arrived in the greatest numbers in 1969 and 1970, when the Canadian economy was entering a recession. In Vancouver, the problem of finding work was particularly acute, for the city was already notorious for its dearth of employment opportunities. As Steve Vernon, a member of the American Deserters Committee explained in a 1969 interview with the *Georgia Straight*, "It's always hard to find jobs in Vancouver, no matter what nationality you are; but if you're a deserter it's about twice as hard."⁹² In June 1970 British Columbia had the highest

⁸⁹ Williams, *The New Exiles*, 248. It should also be noted, however, that "well-adjusted" war resisters sometimes opted to live in the hostels, too, preferring the freedom and community they offered to the more restrictive atmosphere of private homes. Williams, *The New Exiles*, 248.

⁹⁰ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

⁹¹ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 197; Edward Cowan, "Some U.S. Resisters Find Canada an Uneasy Haven," *New York Times*, 5 February 1970.

⁹² Mark Sprague, "U.S. Deserters Like Vancouver...But Feel Oppression," *Georgia Straight*, 24 October-5 November 1969.

jobless rate in Canada, with 9.7% of its workers unemployed.⁹³ Young workers in Canada were the hardest hit, with double the unemployment rate of other workers in the country as a whole.⁹⁴

Competing with Canadian youth for scarce resources, even the more qualified American resisters faced considerable difficulties finding work.⁹⁵ A February 1970 article in the *New York Times*, for example, speaks of three resisters with landed immigrant status who had been able to find only temporary employment in Vancouver: one had worked for a janitorial services company, another had picked up golf balls at a driving range for fifty cents an hour, less than half the minimum wage of \$1.25, while the third, a plumber, had found some contract work with the help of the Vancouver local of his United States-based union. At the time of the interview, all three were “unemployed, shabbily dressed, and hard pressed for cash,” as were three other resisters who had had not qualified for landed immigrant status and thus were unable to work legally. Living in a “small, sagging frame house, sleeping in an alcove off the living room and on mattresses in the cellar,” according to the article’s author, Edward Cowan, these men were “typical of the many youths who have had prolonged difficulty in getting jobs and breaking away from the American-exile milieu.”⁹⁶ Rex Weyler, a draft resister and one of the founders of the environmental activist organization Greenpeace describes living in similar conditions upon his arrival in Vancouver in 1972. According to Weyler, he and his wife Glenn slept by the furnace in the cellar of a Vancouver hostel for American war objectors and between them had only their sleeping bags, a change of clothes, forty-seven dollars, “and a wrinkled piece of paper with the names of Canadian peace

⁹³ This figure was more than twice as high as the unemployment rate for the previous June, representing 87,000 jobless workers. Ian MacDonald, “B.C. jobless rate worst in Canada,” *Vancouver Sun*, 16 July 1970.

⁹⁴ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 194.

⁹⁵ “300 Wait ‘Like Criminals’ for Welfare,” *Vancouver Sun*, 26 June 1970; Immigration Aid to Refugees of Conscience, “Report #2,” 8 October 1970, J. McRee Elrod Fonds, University of British Columbia Archives; Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 194.

⁹⁶ Edward Cowan, “Some U.S. Resisters Find Canada an Uneasy Haven,” *The New York Times*, 5 February 1970.

activists who might help us.”⁹⁷ Cowan does not specify the military status of the resisters in his article and so it is impossible to comment on the difference in experience between draft resisters and deserters in this case. With respect to employment, however, it is safe to say that if landed resisters were struggling to find work, unskilled, uneducated deserters, who carried the added burden of the deserter stigma, would usually be the last to be hired, if they were hired at all.

Many deserters in Canada thus found themselves in an impossible situation, forced to live a life of destitution in Canada or return to the United States to face the stockade and service in Vietnam. In the summer of 1973 some relief was offered when the Canadian government established the Immigration Adjustment of Status Program, an initiative designed to clear up a backlog of cases before the Immigration Appeal Board and deal with the growing number of people who were living in the country illegally. A 60-day immigration “amnesty” period was declared in which illegal immigrants who could prove their entry to the country before November 30, 1972 would be granted landed immigrant status under relaxed immigration criteria. This program was not specifically directed towards American war resisters living underground, but it did have the effect of equalizing the ability of working-class resisters to legally immigrate to Canada. It was estimated that of an approximately 50,000 illegal visitors processed by the program across Canada, 2500 were American war resisters.⁹⁸ For these men this effort by the Canadian government allowed them to establish stable lives in Canada. Yet for thousands more who arrived in the preceding years, it would have been too little, too late.

In Vancouver, in particular, the situation for illegal war resisters in the years preceding the immigration amnesty was made even worse by the antipathy of city authorities against the blossoming youth counterculture. Unable to gain a foothold in Canada and establish new, stable

⁹⁷ Rex Weyler, “Waves of Compassion: The founding of Greenpeace. Where are they now?” *UTNE Reader*, 10 August 2001.

⁹⁸ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 200-204; *AMEX* November/December 1973, 24.

lives, unemployed war resisters in Vancouver unwittingly fell into the offending transient youth underclass. In the spring of 1968, Mayor Tom Campbell initiated what would be a years-long personal vendetta against Vancouver's countercultural community when city police began to use vagrancy laws to get hippies off the streets.⁹⁹ As Pierre Berton explained, "any person without a fixed address and having no visible means of support would be jailed. In Vancouver as in Toronto, it was a crime to be poor."¹⁰⁰

Unemployed, transient war resisters thus became direct targets of Vancouver police. According to Tina Loo, during this time "anyone found without ten dollars and who 'could not give a good account of himself' was liable to be fined and put on the next bus out of town."¹⁰¹ Poor war resisters caught in this net, however, could find themselves deported to the United States and into the hands of American state or military officials. Such was the case with Robert Wilder, an American deserter arrested for vagrancy in the Simon Fraser University rotunda in March 1969. Detained in Oakalla Provincial Prison for a week, the immigration department then issued a deportation order to send him back to the United States.¹⁰²

In fact, any infraction of the law could result in a deportation order for Americans, even if they were fortunate enough to hold landed immigrant status.¹⁰³ Particularly dangerous for war resisters, therefore, was the constant pressure exerted by police regarding the principal sacrament of the counterculture, drug use. Larry Martin, director of the Committee's 7th Avenue hostel, for example, stressed the importance of keeping drugs out of the house. Explained Martin, "the neighbourhood is really hot, like the Haight-Ashbury of Vancouver." His constant refrain, therefore,

⁹⁹ "City Politicians Averse to Hippies". *The CBC Digital Archives Website*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Last updated: 14 Aug. 2003. http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-69-580-3202/life_society/hippies/clip1.

¹⁰⁰ Berton, 1967, 190.

¹⁰¹ Loo, "Flower Power in Lotus Land," 38.

¹⁰² Melody Killian, "Canadians Know, Even if Germans Didn't," *The Ubyyssey*, 14 March 1969.

¹⁰³ According to Roger Neville Williams, landed immigrants were subject to deportation until they became citizens. Williams, *The New Exiles*, 251.

was that “twenty-five deserters equals 125 years in prison for one joint of marijuana” – that is, five years in the stockade for every deserter deported to the United States as a result of a drug possession charge.¹⁰⁴ This warning was not without merit; according to Renée Kasinsky, drug charges were one of the two most common offenses leading to the arrest and subsequent deportation of deserters in Canada.¹⁰⁵

But as “draft dodgers” had already been explicitly identified as part of the city’s hippie problem, in addition to being targeted as regular members of the local youth counterculture, those war resisters who were the most visible – namely, lower class war resisters concentrated in hostels – also suffered almost constant harassment, not only by Vancouver city police but also the RCMP and the Canadian Immigration Department. Renée Kasinsky reports that during her time in Vancouver in 1969 and 1970, two of the war resister hostels in Vancouver were under constant police surveillance; one, supervised by the Vancouver American Deserter’s Committee, was raided seven times by police in the nine month period from April to December 1969.¹⁰⁶ Journalist Clive Cocking, meanwhile, noted in 1970 that the hostel run by the Vancouver Committee was raided by the RCMP at least ten times in 1969. Presenting a writ of assistance to search for drugs or entering under the auspices of “doing an immigration check,” several such raids led to the deportation of deserters who had entered the country on visitors’ visas and were discovered to be in Canada illegally.¹⁰⁷

Over the next several years, the authorities’ antipathy towards war resisters would only intensify, spurred in particular by an increase in radical political activity in the Vancouver area. Draft dodgers and deserters were not only lazy hippies it seemed, but troublemakers as well. As in

¹⁰⁴ Williams, *The New Exiles*, 251.

¹⁰⁵ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 214.

¹⁰⁶ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 210.

¹⁰⁷ Clive Cocking, “How Did the Canadian Mounties Develop their Unfortunate Habit of Deporting People they Don’t Happen to Like?,” *Saturday Night*, June 1970, 30.

major cities across North America during the late 1960s and early 1970s, protests and demonstrations regarding a variety of issues – including, for example, Canadian complicity in Vietnam, nuclear weapons testing, and aboriginal rights – occurred regularly in Vancouver and were attended by crowds of varying size, peopled primarily by long-haired youth inspired by the broad-based democratic vision which underlay the new left politics of the Sixties. Following two “winters of discontent” on Burnaby mountain in which Simon Fraser University students waged protracted battles against the university administration, the spring and early summer of 1970 witnessed what one reporter called a “true renaissance of radicalism in Vancouver.”¹⁰⁸ Young people took to the streets almost daily, and several protests, such as those in response to the American invasion of Cambodia, ended in violent clashes with police. On May 8, 1970, for example, after a crowd of several hundred demonstrated against the United States’ invasion of Cambodia and the killing of four student protestors at Kent State by smashing windows and burning an American flag at the US consulate in downtown Vancouver, angry demonstrators clashed with police outside the Main Street police station later that evening in a confrontation that would prompt Mayor Campbell to replace the police force’s regular 26-inch night sticks with 36-inch riot sticks. The following day some 600 demonstrators staged an “invasion” of the United States, crossing the border at Blaine, Washington, and marching as far as the town’s main street, where they clashed with local police and destroyed civic property.¹⁰⁹

As with the composition of the city’s “hippie” community in general, American war resisters again provided a convenient scapegoat. According to Roger Neville Williams, “the talk of American radicals, draft dodgers and deserters being behind the Vancouver demonstrations had become a

¹⁰⁸ Loo, “Flower Power in Lotusland,” 40; Robert Sarti, “Yippies behind rash of street actions here,” *Vancouver Sun*, 27 June 1970, 12.

¹⁰⁹ “Canadian Mob Invades Blaine,” *Vancouver Express*, 12 May 1970; “Canadians Invade U.S. in Mockery of Cambodia Attack; Gate of ‘Peace Arch’ is Bolted Shut,” *AMEX* June 1970, 17; Robert Sarti, “Yippies Behind Rash of Street Actions Here,” *Vancouver Sun*, June 27, 1970.

recurring theme that summer.”¹¹⁰ Indeed, when a street battle broke out between police and crowds of youth at English Bay on the evening of July 11, 1970, Mayor Campbell used the incident to justify his opposition to the establishment of a federally-run hostel for unemployed youth in Vancouver, because it would become a “draft dodger, deserter, and hippie haven.”¹¹¹ Proclaimed Campbell, “I’ve warned this city that if we are going to let hippies, Communists, and radical groups come in here, things like this are going to happen. ... I’m not going to stand by and let them set up a pad for the hippies, draft dodgers and deserters who cause this sort of thing.”¹¹² He concluded by stating that if he had his way, he would close the Canadian border to American hippies and draft evaders and “let the United States have back the ones already here.”¹¹³

This animosity came to a head in October 1970 when the federal government invoked the War Measures Act in response to the abductions of British trade commissioner James Cross and Quebec Minister of Labour and Immigration Pierre Laporte by members of the separatist Front de Libération du Québec. Allowing for the imposition of martial law and the suspension of civil liberties across Canada, Mayor Campbell saw the emergency law as an opportunity to crack down on undesirable groups in Vancouver and expressed his willingness to use the War Measures Act to “pursue American draft dodgers, drug traffickers and other criminals.”¹¹⁴ As he explained in an interview with the *Toronto Star*, “I believe the law should be used against any revolutionary whether he’s a US draft dodger or a hippie.”¹¹⁵ This aspiration played itself out in a very real way for Ngoma Wajembae and a group of other American war resisters living in the Vancouver Committee’s 7th Avenue hostel, who purchased a rifle and planned to commit suicide if Campbell tried to use the

¹¹⁰ Williams, *The New Exiles*, 362.

¹¹¹ Paul Musgrove, “Mayor Fears Draft Dodger ‘Haven,’” *Vancouver Sun*, 10 July 1970.

¹¹² “Mayor Blamed for Beach Melee,” *Vancouver Sun*, 13 July 1970.

¹¹³ Kasinsky, *Refugees from Militarism*, 137.

¹¹⁴ *Vancouver Sun*, 16 October 1970.

¹¹⁵ *Toronto Star*, 26 October 1970.

law to send them back across the border. Recalls Ngoma, "I was sitting out on 7th Avenue with a rifle with I think 2 or 3 bullets in it; the mayor had said that if it was up to him, he would get us all shipped across the border,...and that he would do it in a few hours. So we were expecting the RCMP to come, and I was one of a group of about three or four who decided to commit suicide, to blow our brains out."¹¹⁶

In the end Campbell's bellicose statements proved little more than empty threats, and the suicide pact was not fulfilled. Nevertheless, for Ngoma, Campbell's hostility served to confirm his growing sense that Canada was not the haven he had hoped for. While most Americans had a notion of Canada as a welcoming, benevolent nation, for Ngoma, an African American, the idea of Canada as a refuge for people fleeing injustice held particular significance. The terminus of the 19th century Underground Railroad, "Canada, in the black community," explained Ngoma, "has always been known as the North Star and the promise of hope."¹¹⁷ During the Vietnam War, this imagery assumed renewed meaning as the antiwar movement revived the term "underground railroad" to describe the loose network of pacifist and religious organizations, campus radicals, draft counsellors and middle class professionals who together helped spirit thousands of fugitive American servicemen across the Canadian border.¹¹⁸ Not long after arriving in Canada, however, Ngoma was confronted with difficult truths regarding Canada's complicity in the American war effort, as he learned of the arms relationship between Canada and the United States, as well as the fact that thousands of Canadians were actively backtracking the path he had sacrificed so much to follow, going south to join the US army in order to fight in Vietnam.¹¹⁹ Yet as the "North

¹¹⁶ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹¹⁷ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹¹⁸ See, for example, John Kifner, "'Underground Railroad' Aids Deserters to Canada," *New York Times*, 5 October 1969.

¹¹⁹ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005. The CBC archives note that though "estimates vary wildly," most agree that between 30,000 and 40,000 Canadians served in Vietnam. "Canadian Hawks Fly South," *The CBC*

Star,” Ngoma still believed there was a special “openness for activity” in Canada that had not existed in the United States, a feeling bolstered by his involvement in the Canadian antiwar movement in Ottawa and its members’ unyielding commitment towards building a better world. Ngoma took part in the “Enough” protest on Parliament Hill, led by veteran Canadian social activist Claire Culhane. For twenty days between December 24, 1969 and January 12, 1970, the group braved the cold Ottawa winter in the hopes of gaining an audience with Prime Minister Trudeau to convince him to issue a declaration condemning the American war in Vietnam.¹²⁰

After arriving in Vancouver, however, this vision faltered, tarnished not only by the antagonism of the city’s establishment towards hippies and war resisters, but also by his first exposure to Canadian racism against First Nations people. During one of his first conversations with a white Canadian in Vancouver, Ngoma was assured that he “didn’t have to worry about being black here,” because “all the prejudice we have is for the Indians.”¹²¹ He was then treated to the details of this man’s habitual weekend activity, which included the intoxication and sexual assault of Aboriginal women. He recalls, “all of a sudden it dawned on me: now wait a minute – what happened to the North Star, what happened to the compassion and love and all those things, and the happiness I saw out East?” Explains Ngoma, “what presented itself to me from that statement regarding the First Nations People was a whole development of how I perceived the Canadian landscape....I think I seduced myself into thinking that Canada had a very optimistic, young, vibrancy about it that had potential.”¹²²

Digital Archives Website. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Last updated: 27 Sept. 2004. http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-71-1413-9120/conflict_war/vietnam/clip1.

¹²⁰ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005. "Camped Out for Peace". *The CBC Digital Archives Website*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Last updated: 5 Oct. 2004. http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-71-1413-9122/conflict_war/vietnam/clip1.

¹²¹ Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

¹²² Ngoma Wajembae, interview by author, 15 June 2005.

Ngoma was not alone in his disillusionment. Many Americans learned with dismay of the social, economic, and political oppression suffered by Canada's First Nations' peoples, and drew unfavourable comparisons between their new and old countries as a result. Some questioned whether any difference existed between Canada and the United States at all. *Yankee Refugee*, a newsletter published by American exiles in Vancouver with strong links to the local political left, decried Canadian racism by expressing solidarity with the Red Power movement. In its 7th issue, dedicated to William Lloyd Garrison, an American abolitionist and pacifist, the magazine reprinted the 8-point program of the Native Alliance for Red Power.¹²³ As one *Yankee Refugee* columnist asserted, "we see that we never had an alternative in North America to the pathetic racist culture we left behind. Because if you don't like what's happening to the Black man down there, dig what's happening to the Red man here."¹²⁴

The harassment of youth by the forces of authority yielded a similar assessment. Melody Killian came to Canada in 1965 and was an active participant in the struggle to enforce an open admissions policy at Simon Fraser University in the fall of 1968. After a four-day occupation of the Administration building was ended by the arrest of 114 students, Killian reflected in *Yankee Refugee*, "when I saw 100 cops, 8 paddy wagons, and a bus there, as I watched for two hours cops bringing kids out and putting them into the wagons, everything was all too familiar – it was like a re-rerun of an old horror movie – made in the U.S.A."¹²⁵ Summing up the situation in Vancouver

¹²³ *Yankee Refugee: West Coast Newsletter of American Exiles*, no. 7, April 1969, 2.

¹²⁴ Lancelot Greers, *Yankee Refugee: West Coast Newsletter of American Exiles*, no. 3, 18 December 1968, 1.

¹²⁵ Melody Killian, "American Students at the Sit-In," *Yankee Refugee: West Coast Newsletter of American Exiles*, no. 2, 25 November 1968, 2.

one war resister concluded: “we’ve merely made a jump from Yorty to Daley to Campbell, and the difference is minimal.”¹²⁶

Regrettably, as the voices in this chapter suggest, for most lower class American war resisters living in Vancouver during this period, this estimation proved tragically accurate. Crossing the border in order to escape forced military service in a war widely disputed as immoral and unjust, Americans who had already been excluded from accessing the educational deferments available to their middle- and upper-class counterparts in the United States found themselves shut out of Canadian society by the same lack of skills and education, not to mention the targets of a civic crusade that specifically identified them as the worst elements of the controversial youth counterculture taking root in the city. For the middle- and upper-class American war resisters who arrived in Vancouver during this period, however, while some may have recognized similarities between Canada and the United States with respect to issues like racism against Aboriginal Canadians, the differences they encountered in Canada’s social, political, and military landscapes for the most part defied comparison. Armed with college educations and free of the emotional scars which plagued deserters from the military or Vietnam, most middle-class American men and women possessed the skills necessary to become legally established in Canada and successfully assimilate into Canadian society. Liberated from the clutches of the draft and the bitter social and political polarization which marked the United States at this time, for them Vancouver truly was the haven they had hoped for. Working class Americans, on the other hand, were the objects of harassment and scorn, and relegated by poverty to the margins of Canadian society. Unable to gain a foothold, many if not most of the working-class Americans who came to Vancouver looking for a refuge from the horrors of Vietnam were forced to return to the United States in disgrace to

¹²⁶ Lancelot Greers, *Yankee Refugee: West Coast Newsletter of American Exiles*, no. 3, 18 December 1968, 1. Sam Yorty was Mayor of Los Angeles from 1961 to 1973; Richard Daley was Mayor of Chicago from 1955 to 1976. Both were notorious defenders of “law and order” and adverse to “hippies.”

rejoin the military or face penal sanction. During the Vietnam War, then, Canada did provide a “refuge from militarism” for Americans opposed to the war, but only for those fortunate enough to qualify; for the most vulnerable war resisters, in the absence of official political asylum or refugee status from the Canadian government, the promise of refuge in Canada was little more than a cruel fiction.

Conclusion

The migration of Americans to Canada during the Vietnam War has been called the “largest politically motivated migration from the United States since the United Empire Loyalists moved north to oppose the American Revolution.”¹ While this is an appropriate and important characterization, beyond opposition to American involvement in Vietnam, the full extent of the political motivation behind this migration has not been explored. To be sure, the conflict in Vietnam created a rift that shook American society to its foundation, but attitudes against the war, and the antiwar movement itself, grew out of the same frustrations and awareness of injustice that fueled all of the democratic struggles for change that marked this period in American history. The experiences of the men and women profiled in chapter one suggest that the American Vietnam Era migration to Canada requires a similarly comprehensive understanding. A study of such a small number of people must necessarily be considered impressionistic, but nonetheless their stories serve as an important starting point for further research. Not only does the wider composition of this migration beyond military-age American men in danger of service in Vietnam need to be recognized, but the more complicated nature of motivations for leaving the United States, as well as opposing the Vietnam War, deserve attention. Active participants in the civil rights movement, the New Left, the counterculture and the antiwar movement, while each of their circumstances were different, these Americans shared an awareness of injustice, intolerance, and corruption in the United States that not only underscored their participation in the democratic critique of American society in the 1960s but ultimately influenced each to leave for Canada.

¹ John Hagan, *Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 3.

How Americans were treated when they arrived in Canada also needs to be reconsidered. Canada did not open its arms to Americans refusing military service, but rather more passively benefited from the tens of thousands of college-educated American youth who looked to Canada as a haven and conveniently also fulfilled existing Canadian immigration requirements. Americans who did not meet immigration standards, mostly uneducated, working-class deserters, were shut out of Canadian society, forced to return to the United States because they could not establish themselves in Canada, or eke out an existence underground until the 1973 immigration “amnesty” finally allowed some to legally become a part of Canadian society. The impact of local circumstances within this legal framework is demonstrated by considering the situation in Vancouver, where the difficulties faced by Americans who could not legally immigrate were made significantly worse by the city authorities’ entrenched hostility towards Vancouver’s radical political and countercultural communities, the very elements that seemed to make Vancouver the ideal destination for Americans whose shared progressive views and participation in similar communities in the United States directly influenced their decisions to emigrate. For those Americans who could become legally established, Vancouver appears to have lived up to its promise. What impact they had on their new home, particularly on the city’s political and social movements, remains to be explored. The experiences of Americans who settled in rural areas and how they may have differed from those in urban centres, meanwhile, is perhaps the most important new direction for research on this topic, and could include a fascinating examination of the back-to-the-land movement in Canada and how it was influenced by the American influx.

Unfortunately, the false but enduring vision of Canada as a “refuge from militarism” during the Vietnam War has very real consequences today, as a new generation of American men and women look to Canada as a sanctuary for refusing to participate in the American occupation of Iraq. Even more so than during the Vietnam War, however, Canada’s doors are closed to

deserters from the U.S. military. Like their counterparts from the Vietnam War, today's deserters hail predominately from working class backgrounds, a group of men and women whose limited economic and educational opportunities induced them to enlist through what is now commonly referred to as the "poverty draft."² Canadian immigration requirements in terms of education, skills, and financial resources, meanwhile, have increased, and applications must now be made from outside Canada in a process that can take years to complete.³ These fugitive soldiers have instead made individual appeals for recognition as political refugees that have so far been denied, and to date two Iraq deserters have been deported to the United States to face punishment.⁴

Yet many Canadians continue to believe in the image of Canada as a progressive nation that respects choices of conscience, and a sustained campaign is underway to make this a reality. In June 2008 and March 2009 motions were passed in Canada's House of Commons that called on the government to halt all deportation proceedings against war resisters and take steps to let them stay in Canada.⁵ These motions, however, were non-binding and have so far been ignored by the ruling Conservative government. Instead, the spirit of these motions has been put to Parliament a third time in a bill to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Currently waiting for a second reading before the House of Commons, this bill would allow soldiers who, for moral, political, or religious reasons, refuse to participate in conflicts not sanctioned by the United Nations, to remain in Canada as permanent residents through "humanitarian and compassionate

² Megan Feldman, "Gimme Shelter: U.S. Military Deserters Once Again Flock to Canada to Avoid Iraq War," *Dallas Observer*, 12 March 2009, <http://www.dallasobserver.com/2009-03-12/news/gimme-shelter/>, Accessed 10 August 2010.

³ Gerry Condon, "U.S. War Resisters in Canada," *Z Magazine* 18, no. 7/8 (July/August 2005), 30.

⁴ Nick Kyonka, "Other War Resisters Undaunted by Expulsion," *Toronto Star* 16 July 2008, www.thestar.com/Article/461025, Accessed 15 March 2010; "Gabriola War-Resister Arrested at Border in Washington," *Nanaimo Daily News* 5 February 2009, <http://www2.canada.com/nanaimodailynews/news/story.html?id=c74e9d3c-3582-43e8-b34e-352f4e25d473>, Accessed 15 March 2010.

⁵ Alex Cooper, "Federal court to hear American war resister's appeal," *Toronto Star* 21 April 2009, www.thestar.com/article/622278, Accessed 11 March 2010.

consideration.”⁶ Speaking directly to the issue of what values define Canada, this bill puts to the test Canada’s celebrated reputation as a haven of peace and justice and, if passed, will finally demonstrate the compassion towards all men and women who have had the courage to say “No” that was denied during the Vietnam War.

⁶ Bill C-440, *An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (war resisters)*, 2nd Session, 40th Parliament, 57-58 Elizabeth II, 2009, First Reading 17 September 2009.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Archival Sources

J. McRee Elrod Fonds, University of British Columbia Archives

The CBC Digital Archives Website, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, <http://archives.cbc.ca>

Interviews

Debby. Interview by author, 13 June 2005, Vancouver, British Columbia. Tape recording.

Goldberg, Michael. Interview by author, 27 January 2005, Vancouver, British Columbia. Tape recording.

Kuehn, Larry. Interview by author, 24 February 2005, Vancouver, British Columbia. Tape recording.

Leslie, James. Interview by author, 22 February 2005, Vancouver, British Columbia. Tape recording.

Randall, John. Interview by author, 11 March 2005, Vancouver, British Columbia. Tape recording.

____. Interview by author, 15 February 2006, Burnaby, British Columbia. Tape recording.

Rosen, Bob. Interview by author, 9 March 2005, Vancouver, British Columbia. Tape recording.

Strickling, Bonnelle. Interview by author, 23 February 2005, Vancouver, British Columbia, Tape recording.

____. Interview by author, 15 February 2006, Vancouver, British Columbia. Tape recording.

Wajembae, Ngoma. Interview by author, 15 June 2005, Richmond, British Columbia. Tape recording.

Newspapers and Magazines

AMEX: The American Expatriate in Canada (Toronto), 1970, 1973

Dallas Observer, 2009

Georgia Straight (Vancouver), 1969

Life (New York, NY), 1970

Nanaimo Daily News, 2009

New York Times, 1969-70

Our Generation (Montreal), 1969

Saturday Night (Toronto), 1970

Toronto Star, 1970, 2008-9

Ubysey (Vancouver), 1969

UTNE Reader (Minneapolis, MN), 2001

Vancouver Express, 1970

Vancouver Sun, 1970

Yankee Refugee: West Coast Newsletter of American Exiles (Vancouver), 1968-69.

Z Magazine (Boston, MA), 2005

Sound Materials Discography

Dylan, Bob. "Girl from the North Country." *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*. 1963, Columbia KCS 8786-LP.

____. "Girl from the North Country." *Nashville Skyline*. 1969, Columbia KCS 9825-LP.

Mayfield, Curtis. "People Get Ready." *People Get Ready by the Impressions*. 1965, ABC-Paramount ABC505-LP.

Parsons, Gram and Chris Hillman. "My Uncle." *Gilded Palace of Sin by the Flying Burrito Brothers*. 1969, A&M SP 4175-LP.

Federal Government Published Sources (Canada and United States)

Leacy, F.C., ed. "Series 385-416. Immigration to Canada by Country of Permanent Residence, 1956-1976," *Historical Statistics of Canada*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983.

Statistics Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada. "Profiles U.S.A.: American Immigrants in Canada," *Immigration Research Series*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Current Population Reports*, Series P-60, No. 75, "Income in 1969 of Families and Persons in the United States." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970, 107. <http://www2.census.gov/prod2/popscan/p60-075.pdf>.

Bill C-440. *An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (war resisters)*. 2nd Session, 40th Parliament, 57-58 Elizabeth II, 2009, First Reading 17 September 2009.

Other Published Primary Sources

King, Martin Luther, Jr. "Beyond Vietnam." Riverside Church, New York, NY, 4 April 1967.

"'People Get Ready': Song Inspired by March on Washington Carries Enduring Message," 26 August 2003, NPR, <http://www.npr.org/news/specials/march40th/people.html>

Unpublished Sources

Debby. "American Daughter, Canadian Mom," Essay Assignment, Geography 265, Simon Fraser University, 8 July 1997.

Secondary Sources

Books and Articles

Alkebulan, Paul. *Survival Pending Revolution: The History of the Black Panther Party*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007.

Anderson, Terry H. *The Sixties*. New York: Longman, 1999.

Appy, Christian, and Alexander Bloom. "Vietnam War Mythology and the Rise of Public Cynicism." In Bloom, *Long Time Gone*, 47-73.

Appy, Christian. *Working Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

Barber, David, and Beth Bailey. *The Columbia Guide to America in the 1960s*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.

Baskir, Lawrence M. and William A. Strauss. *Chance and Circumstance: The Draft, the War, and the Vietnam Generation*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978.

Berton, Pierre. *1967: The Last Good Year*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1997.

Bloom, Alexander, ed. *Long Time Gone: Sixties America Then and Now*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Bloom, Alexander, and Wini Breines, eds. *Takin' it to the Streets: A Sixties Reader*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Blum, John Morton. *Years of Discord: American Politics and Society, 1961-1974*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1991.

- Bothwell, Robert. *Alliance and Illusion: Canada and the World, 1945-1984*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007.
- Bothwell, Robert. *Canada and the United States: The Politics of Partnership*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992.
- Bothwell, Robert, Ian Drummond, and John English. *Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics, and Provincialism*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.
- Breines, Wini. "Of this Generation: The New Left and the Student Movement." In Bloom, *Long Time Gone*, 23-45.
- Campbell, Lara. "'Women United Against the War': Gender Politics, Feminism, and Vietnam Draft Resistance in Canada." In *New World Coming: The Sixties and the Shaping of Global Consciousness*, edited by Karen Dubinsky, Catherine Drull, Susan Lord, Sean Mills and Scott Rutherford. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2009, 339-346.
- Castles, Stephen, and Mark J. Miller. *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. 2nd ed. New York: The Guilford Press, 1998.
- Cernetig, Miro. "The Far Side of the Rockies: Politics and Identity in British Columbia." In *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st Century*, edited by David Taras and Beverley Rasporich. Scarborough: Nelson Thompson, 2001, 413-426.
- Chafe, William H. *The Unfinished Journey: America Since WWII*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Chalmers, David. *And the Crooked Places Made Straight: The Struggle for Social Change in the 1960s*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Christy, Jim, ed. *The New Refugees: American Voices in Canada*. Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1972.
- Dickerson, James. *North to Canada: Men and Women Against the Vietnam War*. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1999.
- Emerick, Kenneth Fred. *War Resisters Canada: The World of the American Military-Political Refugees*. Foreword by Monsignor Charles Owen Rice. Knox, PA: Pennsylvania Free Press, 1972.
- Epp, Frank H., ed. *I Would Like to Dodge the Draft Dodgers, But...* Waterloo: Conrad Press, 1970.
- Eynon, Bret. "Cast upon the Shore: Oral History and New Scholarship on the Movements of the 1960s." *Journal of American History* 83 no. 2 (September 1996), 560-570.
- Finkel, Alvin, and Margaret Conrad. *History of the Canadian Peoples 1867 to the Present*. Vol. 2, 3rd ed. Toronto: Addison Wesley Longman, 2002.

- Flynn, George Q. *The Draft: 1940-1973*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993.
- Foley, Michael S. *Confronting the War Machine: Draft Resistance during the Vietnam War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Granatstein, J.L. *Yankee Go Home? Canadians and Anti-Americanism*. Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 1996.
- Griffith, Robert. "American Society in the 1950s." In *Major Problems in American History Since 1945*, edited by Robert Griffith. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1992, 199-234.
- Hagan, John. *Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Haig Brown, Alan. *Hell No, We Won't Go: Vietnam Draft Resisters in Canada*. Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 1996.
- Hansen, Art and Anthony Oliver Smith. *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of Dislocated People*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1982.
- Harrington, Michael. *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*. New York: MacMillan, 1962.
- Isserman, Maurice, and Michael Kazin. *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Jeffreys-Jones, Rhodri. *Peace Now! American Society and the Ending of the Vietnam War*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
- Jones, Joseph. *Contending Statistics: The Numbers for U.S. Vietnam War Resisters in Canada*. Vancouver: Quarter Sheaf, 2005.
- Jones, Joseph. "Misquotation: Pierre Trudeau's Views on U.S. Vietnam War Resisters." In *Happenstance and Misquotation: Canadian Immigration Policy 1966-1974, the Arrival of U.S. Vietnam War Resisters, and the Views of Pierre Trudeau*. Vancouver: Quarter Sheaf, 2008.
- Kasinky, Renée Goldsmith. *Refugees from Militarism: Draft-Age Americans in Canada*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1976.
- Killmer, Richard L., Robert S. Lecky and Debrah S. Wiley. *They Can't Go Home Again: The Story of America's Political Refugees*. Introduction by the Honorable Edward I. Koch. Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1971.
- King, David. *The Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin's Russia*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997.

- Knowles, Valerie. *Forging Our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900-1977*. Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2000.
- Kostash, Myrna. *Long Way From Home: The Story of the Sixties Generation in Canada*. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1980.
- Kusch, Frank. *All American Boys: Draft Dodgers in Canada from the Vietnam War*. Wesport: Praeger Publishers, 2001.
- Kunz, Egon F. "The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement," *International Migration Review* 7 (Summer 1973), 125-146.
- Kymlicka, Will. *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Levitt, Kari. *Silent Surrender: The Multinational Corporation in Canada*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1970.
- Loo, Tina. "Flower Power in Lotus Land," *The Beaver* 78, no. 1 (February/March 1998).
- MacPherson, Myra. *Long Time Passing: Vietnam and the Haunted Generation*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1994.
- Miller, Douglas T. *On Our Own: Americans in the Sixties*. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1996.
- Miller, James. *Democracy is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987.
- Morgan, Edward P. *The 60s Experience: Hard Lessons About Modern America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.
- Murphy, Aisling. "Class and Canada as a 'Refuge from Militarism': Exploring the Divergent Experiences of American Vietnam War Draft Resisters and Deserters in Vancouver." In *War Resisters in Retrospect: Papers from the 2007 Our Way Home Peace Event and Reunion*, edited by Joseph Jones and Lori Olafson. Vancouver, Las Vegas: Joseph Jones; Lori Olafson, 2009, 85-92.
- Ogbar, Jeffrey O.G. *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.
- Owram, Doug. *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.
- Palmer, Bryan D. *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Time*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

- Petersen, William. "A General Typology of Migration," *American Sociological Review* 23, no.3 (June 1958), 256-266.
- Rorabaugh, W.J. *Berkeley at War: The 1960s*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Satin, Mark, ed. *Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada*. Toronto: House of Anansi, 1968.
- Shain, Yossi. *The Frontier of Loyalty: Political Exiles in the Age of the Nation State*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989.
- Surrey, David. *Choice of Conscience: Vietnam Era Military and Draft Resisters in Canada*. New York: Praeger, 1982.
- Thompson, John Herd and Stephen J. Randall. *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*. 3rd ed. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.
- Thompson, Paul. *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Todd, Jack. *The Taste of Metal: A Deserter's Story*. Toronto: HarperFlamingo Canada, 2001.
- Van Deburg, William L. *New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Verzuh, Ron. *Underground Times: Canada's Flower-Child Revolutionaries*. Toronto: Deneau Publishers, 1989.
- Ward, Brian. "People Get Ready': Music and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s," *History Now* 8 (June 2006), http://www.historynow.org/06_2006/historian2.html.
- Wells, Tom. *The War Within: America's Battle over Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Werner, Craig. *A Change is Gonna Come: Music, Race, and the Soul of America*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006.
- Williams, Roger Neville. *The New Exiles: American War Resisters in Canada*. Foreword by William Sloane Coffin, Jr. New York: Liveright Publishers, 1971.
- Zweig, Michael. *The Working Class Majority: America's Best Kept Secret*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000.

Dissertations and Theses

- Churchill, David. "When Home Became Away: American Expatriates and New Social Movements in Toronto." PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago, 2001.
- Roth, Mark. "Crossing Borders: The Toronto Anti-Draft Programme and the Canadian Anti-Vietnam War Movement." Master's Thesis, University of Waterloo, 2008.

Websites

Live Peace in Toronto – 1969, http://beatles.ncf.ca/live_peace_in_toronto_p1.html

The Ground Observer Corps, <http://www.radomes.org/museum/documents/GOC/GOC.html>