# Inuit Cultural Maintenance in Contemporary Nunavik

© By
Christopher Balfour James Mount

A Thesis submitted to
The Office of Graduate and Post Graduate Studies
In partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Culture and Values in Education,
Department of Integrated Studies in Education
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McGill University, Montreal
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*Abstract*

The objective of this study was to determine how education can best be used to assist with Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik. This research examined that which defines Nunavik Inuit culture and can provide a framework from which an education program could be structured with the intent of the preservation of Inuit culture, values and traditions. In the wake of contemporary society, any cultural maintenance efforts must be actuated through a concerted effort on the part of all parties involved, including Inuit youth, parents, Elders and the school.

Modern Inuit also need a modern education. If contemporary Inuit cultural maintenance in Nunavik is to succeed, it must not interfere with the need to acquire this modern education. Inuit cultural maintenance must therefore be achieved in conjunction with, but separate from, contemporary education. How then do we teach contemporary Inuit youth the skills needed to survive and flourish in both worlds without compromising the efficacy of either?

In this ethnographic qualitative case study research methods included: Surveys and open-ended questionnaires, field notes, participant observations, and photography. I found that Inuit culture needs to be passed down from generation to generation, as was the traditional Inuit educational model. Contemporary education systems are at odds with the way Inuit were traditionally educated. Inuit culture must be taught on the land, over the course of childhood and adolescence, under the tutelage of Inuit Elders.

*Résumé*

L'objectif de cette étude était de déterminer comment l'éducation peut être mieux utilisée pour aider à la préservation des valeurs culturelles contemporaines Inuits dans le Nunavik. Cette recherche a examiné ce qui définit la culture Inuit de Nunavik, et pourrait fournir un cadre dans lequel un programme d'éducation pourrait être structuré dans le but de la préservation de la culture Inuit, des valeurs et des traditions. Dans le sillage de la société contemporaine, l'effort d'entretien culturel doit être actionné par un effort concerté de la part de toutes les parties concernées, y compris les jeunes Inuits, les parents, les aînés, et l'école.

Inuits modernes ont également besoin d'une éducation moderne. Si l'entretien culturelle contemporaine Inuit dans le Nunavik veux être réussir, il ne faut pas interférer avec la nécessité d'acquérir cette éducation moderne. L'entretien culturelle Inuit doit donc être réalisé en collaboration avec, mais distinct de l'éducation contemporaine. Comment devons-nous enseigner les jeunes Inuits modernes les compétences nécessaires pour survivre et prospérer dans les deux cultures et mondes sans compromettre l'efficacité de l'un ou l'autre?

Les méthodes de recherche utilisées dans cette étude ethnographique qualitative comprennent la réalisation d'entrevues de sondages et de questionnaires à réponse libres, la prise de notes sur le terrain, l'observation des participants, et la photographie. Il a été constaté que la culture Inuit doit être transmise de génération à génération, comme c'était le modèle éducatif traditionnel Inuit. Le système d'éducation contemporaine est en contradiction avec la façon dont les Inuits étaient traditionnellement éduqués. La culture Inuit doit être enseignée sur la terre, au cours de l'enfance et de l'adolescence, sous la tutelle des Aînés Inuits.

*Acknowledgements*

The author would like to acknowledge with sincere gratitude all assistance received. I wish to thank all of the people who gave of their generous time, energy and sincerity in allowing me to interview them for this study. I hope that in doing justice to your voices, this research will enable change for the benefit of future generations of Inuit children.

I wish to thank my supervisors Dr. Boyd White and Dr. Kevin McDonough of the Department of Culture and Values in Education, for their support, guidance and advice throughout this study. Having spent the best part of a decade and a half under the supervision of Dr. White through both my M.A. and Ph.D. degrees, I am forever grateful for the invaluable and continuous kind support, guidance and direction that he has provided in my learning and life. Special thanks are due to my committee members, Dr. Boyd White, Dr. Kevin McDonough, and Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, for their generous assistance throughout this degree.

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Finally and most sincerely, I wish to thank my partner and our children for your endless patience, understanding, and constant support through years of study and work, at all times of our lives. This study is dedicated to you.

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## *Part 1*

*Changing Camps: An Introduction to Inuit Culture*

I recall preparing for, and traveling to my first Northern community in 1996. There was no fear, but the mix of adrenaline, anticipation and excitement somehow duplicated a similar fearful feeling. Whatever I had been, or was now, was soon to change. All I had was myself.

I had grown up knowing about the 'Eskimos': I had done a "research paper" of my own accord in grade three as I had wanted to learn more about a people I had only vaguely heard about in whitewashed (pardon the pun) stories containing Huskies, igloos and seals. Over the course of my childhood, we had had three Samoyed dogs — cousins to the Huskies — whom I had repeatedly tried to tie my red, plastic Eaton's 'komatik' to, in attempts to get them to "mush".

As I played-out the final playoff soccer game of the year for Team Norway (I am about as Norwegian as I am Eskimo, but that's another story), our "keeper" inquired as to where I was going the following morning. I distinctly recall asking him, "I know who the Eskimos are, and I know who the Indians are, but who are the Inuit?" Needless to say, our keeper didn't know either.

Literally crawling into the cigar-tube excuse for an airplane lined with six collapsible seats, I began to realize that I was in for the adventure of a lifetime.

When we landed, some eight hours later, I couldn't help but stop on the gravel runway to deeply inhale the crisp, clean air. As far as the eye could see, there was vast, open, nothing. Yet the emptiness had a profound beauty that I had never experienced before. This was the tundra.

Less than twelve hours later, upon rising the following morning, I looked out the front window, then rushed to the front door of my house to marvel at and photograph an Inuit family walking down the dust-filled dirt road in front of my home. Two adults, four small children the smallest of whom were wrapped in a cloth blanket slung across its' mother's back, Husky puppies yelping and nipping at their feet.

Wiping a small tear of joy, awe and disbelief, I realized that I had left my culture and stepped, not into the pages of National Geographic as my initial thought had been, but into a special, magical world of a people and culture that I would spend the rest of my life coming to understand and know. Who are the Inuit?

> “I have been here for three months now, so I have really adapted to the Inuit way of life and people: I laugh at things that they find funny as I understand why now; I incorporate as many Inuktitut words and expressions into my speech as possible... as I express myself in their terms now. (Mount, Field Notes, November 16, 1996).

As wonderful as those first Northern four months of a maternity replacement were, I longed for home. The last two weeks were excruciatingly difficult: Home from work at 4:00, supper at 5:00, journal/field notes ‘till 8:00, then off to bed. I had decided that if I went to bed really early, the days would go by faster.

“I’ll be back”, I offered Jobie N. with a nod of certainty as I stepped onto the plane. “That’s what they all say” came the painfully honest reply.

The morning following my return I found myself on a subway from downtown. I was immediately overcome with such a frightening sense of dizziness at the speed of the people, train and general hustle-and-bustle, that I got off the car at the next stop in favour of the five-mile walk back home. As I peacefully strolled along the sidewalk, I ran into someone from the same village I had just left whom I had spoken to a few days prior.

Upon the typical handshake greeting, I recounted my unsettling event, only to be met with a smile. We went our separate ways.

Oddly enough, “Home” was not the same once I had returned. As cliché as it sounds, once the North is in you, you can’t get it out. I had acquired a perceptible hole inside that I just couldn’t fill.

After spending the entire 1997 year in Montreal as a full time graduate student at both Concordia and McGill Universities (Graduate Diploma in Adult Education: Teacher Certification, and Master of Arts, respectively) and Adult Education Teacher for the (then) Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, I was quite easily persuaded in an out-of-the-blue phone call to return to the North to Puvirnituq, affectionately called “P.O.V.” after the original Inuktitut spelling of Povungnituk. My official title was to be the Education Consultant and Adult Education Teacher for the Socioprofessional Integration Services (S.I.S.) program, where my job was to design, implement and evaluate an extensive four-month course with the intent of re-motivating adults receiving social assistance into either returning to school to up-grade their skills and education or to the workforce.

Delayed an additional ten days due to the Montreal ice storm, I finally made it out and flew North the day after, February 14, 1998.

What made the difference for me, this time, was commitment. I had previously found an extremely strong attraction to the North, but due to southern engagements, had remained a visitor, or tourist, as it were, in a

world I deeply admired, but did not consider “home”. Upon my return to the North, I had had time to seriously question many of the ‘southern’ values of the culture that I was raised in and realize many of their shortcomings. I felt at home with the Inuit. This was a wonderful feeling, but also quite difficult, as I accepted that I was adopting an alternative cultural perspective.

As Christmas neared, I was coaxed into staying in the North for the holiday, with the promise that it would be different. I did.

The Inuit celebrate Christmas as it should be. It is not the mass commercial, frenzied event leading up to a one-day consumer climax that one becomes accustomed to in the south. Rather, is celebrated over twelve days, with feasts, Inuit games, musical performances and dancing until 5:00 a.m., every day. The days are filled with ice fishing and igloo-making contests, dog team races, tea making contests from the ice of Hudson Bay, three-legged running contests across the ice, and so on.

Every night, the entire village crams into the community gymnasium. At midnight on Christmas Eve and New Year's, the people form two large chains around the circumference of the gym, slowly rotating in opposite directions, so that each and every person may shake hands and wish "Merry Christmas" [and the following week "Happy New Year"] personally and with sincerity, to every person in the community. There is no rush... no exchange of trite colloquialisms; simply sincere festive heart and soul. Spending Christmas in the North changed my views about Christmas and greatly contributed to my "love of the North".

Five months later, I again decided to spend half of my summer holiday in the North as well, as I had by then become quite enamored with Inuit culture and felt very much at home.

A strange occurrence happens when all the Qallunaat (non-Inuit) leave the community for the holidays. It is as if the town comes alive, becoming more Inuit, as it were. I suppose it is somewhat like the minute the proverbial in-laws finally leave and the family is once again a unit unto themselves.

There is such a remarkable change in the people that it almost feels like a completely different village.

Finally back in Montreal again, I accepted the fact that it was no longer “my home” and that I now felt more at home in the North. A transition had occurred; not just the physical, but an existential changing of camps. I now counted the days until my return to the North. I remained in the community of Puvirnituq for four years and considered it home.

The strongest memory of my beginnings of ‘cultural change’ consists of when I first taught the course, "The History of Nunavik" to the Inuit. Astonished that no such course existed (for credit) under the (then) M.E.Q. curriculum, I pressured my school board into allowing me to teach it under the heading of ‘Local Social Studies Program’, for credit. There is something wrong with an education system that mandates that the Inuit of Nunavik are required to learn and pass, "The History of Québec and

Canada" in order to graduate from secondary school, whereas they are under no such obligation to study their own history.

The history of Nunavik is essentially a short history, for the Inuit culture. It remained unchanged for thousands of years until contact with European whalers. Then, more dramatically, the Qallunaat began living in Arctic Quebec when the first Hudson's Bay Company (and Révéllion Frères from France for a while) trading posts were set up in Kuujjuaraapik (a.k.a. Great Whale, on the Hudson coast) and Kuujjuaq (formerly known as Fort Chimo, on the Ungava coast).

> During this period, the trading companies encouraged the Inuit to trade Arctic fox skins for products such as tea, tobacco, flour, salt, sugar, and hunting equipment. The Inuit who chose to trap had to change their hunting and fishing habits. In addition, by trapping in a single region, the Inuit travelled less. They needed

to stay close to the trading posts (Kativik School Board, 1995, p. 7).


The history of Nunavik from contact forward is an account of how the European Canadians (or Qallunaat) changed Inuit culture. The fur trade would have eventually altered their way of life in any case due to the increasing dependency on European products, but the saddest aspects of this change were the coercive acts taken by both the Canadian and Québec governments to move the Inuit into permanent villages, houses and schools accomplished through pressure tactics such as:
1) Threatening to withdraw social assistance unless Inuit children were enrolled in school; Indeed, Inuit children could not be enrolled in schools unless they lived in close proximity to the schools; 2) the registering of Inuit as Canadian citizens, but forcing them to wear "Eskimo dog tags" around their necks in order to receive social assistance, to name but two of many examples (Kativik School Board, 1995).

The more I learned about "Inuit History", the more I developed a sense of disdain for ‘southern’ culture for having altered the traditional Inuit ways

of life. Although this change was inevitable, one cannot help but think that to some degree, our Canadian [southern] society is responsible for this.

> "The subject matter is a bit weird for me to be teaching, as it is all about how the [sic] Qallunaks have messed up their lives. We went off on hundreds of tangents this afternoon, but all relevant: We ended up talking about differences between their ancestors' lifestyles and now, which of course raised the issue of how much influence the white culture has had on theirs. (Mount, Field Notes, November 29, 1996).

The other side of this coin, however, is that when I have asked the Inuit if they would go back to their former existence given the chance, all from teens to Elders in the communities of Inukjuak, Puvirnituq and Kuujjuaq have said no, as that life was too hard.

From my M.A. research, the most striking revelation was from a participant addressing an interview question dealing with the loss of culture and the following response: "More or less, we are losing our traditional ways by the schools. Instead of going hunting with my kid, he is going to school and sometimes I don't have time for him, as I'm in school. This is how we are losing our traditional way of life" (Mount, 2001, p. 63).

As a teacher with the school board mandated to provide education to the Inuit of Nunavik, it is extremely frustrating that this institution provides not only a questionable 'southern' education to its students, but also a questionable Inuit cultural education. In my sixteen years in Nunavik there

has always been a severe shortage of willing and/or qualified teachers of Inuktitut and Inuit Culture to teach these courses, in all sectors; absenteeism is rampant. I have had potential adult high school graduates held back an additional year due to not having an Inuktitut teacher to teach this required course. These students were asked (along with my five other 2011 graduates) to write one-page essays for each of their Secondary IV and V Inuktitut examinations in Inuktitut syllabics, having received no instruction in the language at our Center. This enabled my students to graduate, but directly impacts the demise of the language.

As per these life, teaching and research experiences in Northern Inuit communities, I have learned to be very comfortable being posited in the “they” camp, due to a strong sense of guilt at what has happened and is happening to Inuit culture. In the first two communities I resided, I thoroughly enjoyed being part of an extreme minority for, as the saying goes, "turn-about is fair play".

Being in a mixed Qallunaat/Inuk relationship in my second community was sometimes trying though and was on occasion met with resistance from the Inuit.

We have found living in Kuujjuaq to be completely different from the former two. This is a village where Qallunaat have been living in mixed marriages with the Inuit for more than three generations.

Although *we* are therefore more ‘at home’ in this respect, this has had considerable effects on the Inuit in this community. As they have been living closely with other values and cultures for half a century, the erosion/evolution of Inuit values has occurred at a much greater pace and is much more evident. There is a strong and obvious correlation between the degree of exposure to other cultures and Inuit ‘cultural erosion’.

I believe that many of the values that the Inuit share are humanitarian and therefore precious. I think that other Qallunaat and indigenous cultures can learn a great deal from the Inuit and must do so if there is any hope at all for our survival. Culture is a continually evolving phenomena, yet the more contact the Inuit have with other cultures through physical contact, radio, satellite TV or the Internet, the more diluted this distinctness  becomes.

As Inuit students in Nunavik schools learn predominantly non-Inuit courses and thereby non-Inuit culture, it appears that Inuit culture is slowly being replaced by non-Inuit culture through education.

There is a need to reverse this trend, and assist in the articulation of Inuit cultural values and ways of teaching them more effectively, to ensure sustainable Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik.

*Introduction to Nunavik*

Nunavik is composed of fourteen villages in Northern Québec, Canada, dispersed along the eastern shore of Hudson Bay and the Ungava Bay coasts. The smallest of these Inuit villages, Aupaluk, has a population of roughly 300 people, while the largest village, Kuujjuaq, has a population approaching 3 000 (roughly 75% Inuit) (Taylor & Wright, 1991, p. 3).


Communities usually consist of a local, Inuit-owned “Co-op” store (Fédération Coopérative de Nouveau Québec)

and a “Northern Store” (The Northwest Company; a division of the Hudson’s Bay Company),

Canada Post Office,

a municipal offices building and garage,

‘regular’ school (K-11)

and in larger villages Adult Education Centers,

separate primary schools,

day care center(s),

Hospital (or nursing station in all but the two largest communities),

community center/ hockey arena,


small gravel strip airport,

(larger in Kuujjuaq),

an Anglican church, with a Catholic Church in larger communities,

police station, gas station,

a few local small business enterprises

and between roughly forty and one thousand trailer, duplex and detached houses depending on the size of the village.

Communities are serviced daily except Sunday, by water and sewage trucks.

“It’s another long weekend this weekend. I really hate them up here, for two reasons: First, I am here to work, and time off just means less income and more expenditures and killing time; and second, long weekends mean one water filling on Saturday afternoon to last until Tuesday night. I have gotten into a routine with the water. I do my laundry on Friday nights — entertainment in Inukjuak, fill the humidifier and wash the dishes, and have my shower on Saturday before 10:30 a.m., the earliest they arrive at my house. When washing dishes, I scoop the dirty dish water into a large bucket until it is full, then put it by the toilet so as it can provide two flushings. Washing my hair takes up six inches in the tank, so I usually do it Saturday morning and then not again until Tuesday or Wednesday (depending on how much I have left, and if I can stand it any longer); short rinse-off every day takes about an inch. The dishes usually take about two inches and cleaning, tooth brushing and miscellaneous use more, so, with a thirty-eight inch capacity water tank (looks like two bathtubs sealed together), one notices how quickly the water goes. This is all apart from the fact that most people here use the water to drink and cook with. I don’t, as it is really dirty, smells, and I got sick from it after the first week. Bottled water costs $5.90 for four litres, so I usually go through three or four, four litre jugs per week —— costs between $18.00 and $30.00 per week.” (Mount, Field Notes, November 10, 1996).

The larger communities also house various Kativik School Board, Kativik Regional Government, Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau, Kativik Regional Development Corporation, Makivik, and Landholding Corporation administrative branches, Elder's House, conference center/movie theatre, small restaurants and hotels, which brings an increasing influx of Qallunaat professionals to fill many of the positions in these organizations.

Despite the many reminders of the south, Nunavik communities exist as if in a different world, completely isolated in the tundra, vulnerable to the Arctic elements. “Traditional activities still form some part of daily life for many individuals in the hamlet. It is not unusual to see a hunter heading out on the land to get caribou, people outside their house preparing to stretch a skin, or hides hanging to dry on a line” (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996b, p. 225). Foreign visitors very quickly forget that they are in Quebec.

Although the Inuit people still fish and hunt regularly, reliance on dog teams as a means of transportation has ceased.

Modern modes of transportation include: Snowmobiles; four-wheel all-terrain vehicles affectionately called “Honda’s” in the North; large “canoes”; and a few older vehicles such as pick-up trucks. In the larger communities, the availability of sealift shipping of automobiles has created similar southern consumer trends toward purchasing the biggest and latest sports utility vehicles (S.U.V.’s), mini-van and luxury vehicles, annually. The amount of vehicles shipped to Kuujjuaq each

summer had risen from an estimated fifty-four in the year 2006, to one hundred six by 2008 and more than one hundred fifty vehicles by the summer of 2011.

{Sea-lift arrival at Puvirnituq, 1998}

Unemployment and reliance on social assistance are particularly high in Nunavik, as the employment infrastructure is insufficient to sustain the growing population. The Inuit population has literally gone from hunter-gatherer existence to the present, ‘from the stone age to the post-modern computer age’ in less than one century. Where Inuit people were once nomadic,

they are now sedentary, residing in villages of relative permanence.

The Inuit way of life has been and is still being transformed into a pervasive Western capitalistic ideology that now governs most of the world, yet the means to achieve success in this new world are not equally available in Nunavik. “The pressure to prepare students for the global economy, post-secondary education, and the local [Nunavik] market presents a creative learning challenge for parents, teachers, and students” (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996b, p. 220).

Over the course of my teaching career, I have had the pleasure of living and working in three Nunavik communities; Inukjuak, Puvirnituq and Kuujjuaq, for more than fifteen years, between September 1996 and December 2012 (with the exception of 1997 spent in Montreal), as an English Academic Adult Education Teacher with the Kativik School Board.

Facilitating adult learning in a second-language “Up-grading” class (high school for adults who have interrupted their studies at some point and returned) in the North involves the multi-level teaching of all Ministry courses from literacy through secondary education programs.

In an English class, for example, the classroom can be composed of students learning primary literacy practices as well as students editing final drafts of secondary five research papers, and all levels in between.

A classroom with more than twenty-five students can become an intense teaching challenge.

> "At some points in the day, the student demands are just so numerous that I feel that I am going to explode. I never let it show of course, but when six students need your help at once (have to keep mental track of the order they asked to see me in), [secretary] wants to ask me a question regarding administration, I'm on my way to my book room to get a student a new book and to the office to get [student] another exam, someone else is having a temper tantrum, and there is a long distance call for me on hold, one needs to just stand back and laugh at the ten ring circus!! Lots of fun and great learning though, so that's all that counts."
> (Mount, Field Notes, November 6, 1996).

The pressures and demands are extreme; the support minimal. Add to this the culture shock of submersing oneself in a completely isolated and foreign world where one is now in the extreme minority and one has a recipe for great stress, burnout and breakdown.

> "[Inuit colleague] had gone across the street to the regular school to have a coffee and was talking with one of the women who worked in the office when she got the call that her son had taken his life. They closed the school this afternoon. The entire village is in mourning, and although it came as an incredible shock, it apparently happens quite often in the North. Funny eh, I feel like

I'm in Disneyland, and a teacher and a student have committed suicide this first week." (Mount, Field Notes, September 3, 1996).

I have often heard teachers say that if you can teach in the North, you can teach anywhere. It is no wonder that teacher turnover rates are so high in this narrow field of education.

I was fortunate in my first Northern teaching experience, to teach in and "close" the last of the proverbial one-room-schoolhouses, in a cramped old run-down building that had been the village's Adult Education Center [white, below].


This old building was replaced with a twenty-eight million dollar Adult and Vocational Education Center and student residence [far right].

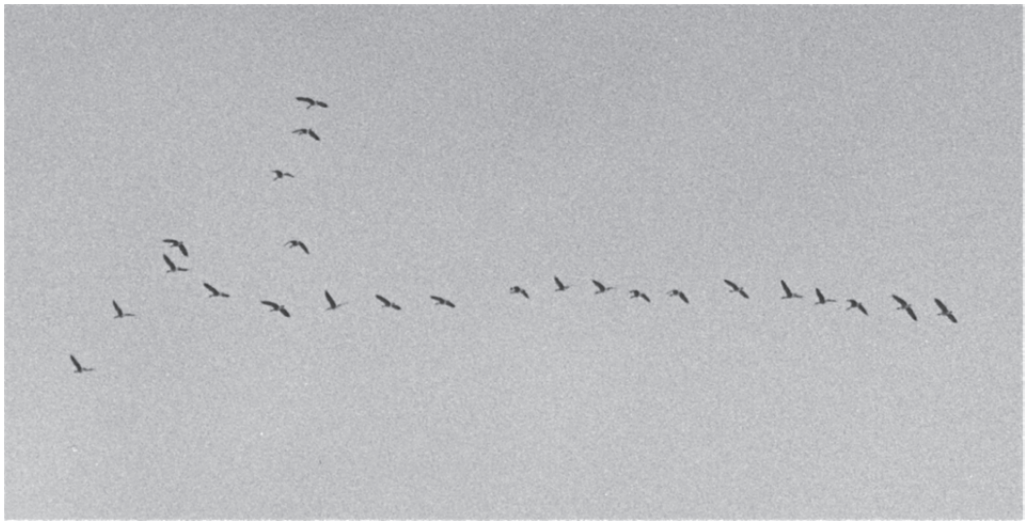
The two other Northern Adult Education Centers I have worked in are large, well-equipped modern learning institutions, sporting the latest in office machines, telecommunications and projection devices, and in excess of thirty state-of-the-art computers all fully loaded and wired.


Both Centers contain three large classrooms, meeting spaces, two offices, fully functional kitchens (one Center has two large kitchens), and handicapped-accessible men's and women's washrooms.

I have heard both former and current teachers of the Kativik School Board proclaim that the board does not provide curricular material, leaving teachers completely on their own to generate curricula. In my experiences with the KSB, I feel it is important to mention that I have only experienced the opposite. Independence and initiative are valued in the Northern teaching context. The board may not directly tell teachers what books to use in all cases, but materials are available. I have annually ordered large volumes of books, curricular material, tools and resources for my classrooms that were never refused (apart from a plush teacher's chair that might, perhaps, have been excessive).

Many new teachers in the North have difficulty accepting that teaching in this context is different than in the south and judge their experiences, the Inuit people and Inuit cultural values through 'southern lenses'.

Walter Feinberg (1998) reminds us that this is not always easily avoided: “The issue arises because once it is accepted that culture conditions the way the world is viewed, then we always look at another culture through the lens of our own” (p. 82). It is important to keep in mind the fact that the North is a completely different world, with its own people, values, social systems and processes. One cannot impose judgment on people out of context,



When in Rome... we must change the perspective of our lens. “May our desire to learn and understand be greater than our desire to judge and prescribe” (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996b, p. 221).

The idea of children playing outdoors until three a.m. in the summer is shunned by most visitors to the North, interpreted as inadequate parenting practices, neglect, etc., when the opposite is, in fact, true: “Fixed schedules are unnecessary and nonproductive” (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996b, p. 225). In a land where people eat when they are hungry as opposed to following the ticking of a mechanical invention, playing outside in the summer ‘midnight sun’ until three a.m., which can be as bright as three p.m., is as natural as belching after a meal in order to release the gas. Children play outside because it is light out and they are not tired.

If one lives by one's southern beliefs and value systems while in the North, one misses the point and continually rubs against the grain of Inuit culture and values. When one adapts to the cultural rhythms of the North, one exposes oneself to the beauty and preciousness that distinguishes this remarkable world.

The following is a fictional essay, based on real events. It is included here, as an important reminder of how communal values, and in this case real Inuit values, are negotiated and evolve:

Human Transcendence and the Quest for Meaning in Life

The news had spread quickly throughout the Inuit village of Tusarvik, as any news does in small isolated communities: Maina Inukpuk and her six year old daughter had perished in an horrible plane crash just off the Hudson coast of the village of Umijaqmut. The runway for the Umijaqmut airport commences at the top of a cliff overlooking Hudson Bay, so that takeoffs and landings must be made either heading into or dropping off a cliff: Treacherous-looking for passengers, but nothing more than routine for the gutsy Air Inuit pilots, who are known in flying circles for being the only pilots daring enough and able to fly through Northern storms, landing on gravel and ice-covered strips of dirt that they often can't see.

It had been the final leg of a standard flight from the South, where Maina had accompanied her daughter to a metropolitan hospital to be examined for a particular medical condition. Visibility had been clear, with a slight Easterly wind blowing at thirty-five knots. Permission to land acknowledged, the pilot had made his final approach, committing them beyond the point of no return. Suddenly there was a strong jolt from the right as a Southern warm front slammed into the side of the small craft, hurling it helplessly into the icy cliff just below the caribou fence that surrounds the runway and airport. The great metal bird exploded on impact... There were no survivors.

Pauloosie Inukpuk's (or Paul as he was known in his rapidly-becoming white society) world came undone. At thirty-two he had been married ten years, fathered two children, was a renowned hunter, and held one of the few (and therefore prestigious) jobs in the community driving the water truck. He owned two skidoos, two canoes, an old Chevy pickup, one of the few remaining dog teams, and rented one of the most luxurious government houses in the community — a wealthy man by Inuit standards. He took great pride in being one of the few Inuit who lived both off of the land, and on the fruits of his labour. He had not been historically coerced into social assistance and thus had maintained his humanness and cultural identity.

Having been consumed with a crippling scourge of grief, he had sunken so deeply into his own suffering, so the story went, that when he was told his fourteen-year-old son Eli had been found hanged in the shack the eve of the funeral for his mother and sister, his acknowledgment was but an accepting nod. He did not speak again.

As he stood outside listening to the wind the bells began to ring, startling him back to reality. The entire village had come (as was customary) and was waiting inside the small church.

Children covered the altar floor with their youth on both sides of the coffin. Death is part of Life. A funeral for a child must involve children. Death is celebrated openly, but suicide is never spoken of — to purposefully end the Creator's gift is heretical.

“Jesus Loves Me”... “Shall We Gather At The River”... in Inuktitut. Sweet (despite having no real musical ‘key’), but somehow reeking of historical Christian domination. The priest spoke for a long time, saying that Eli had not wanted to take his life, but that it was the work of Satan. He spoke of the forces of good and evil playing inside all humans, but somehow it was hard to see any good in all this. The church was pressed full right to the doors. On the left wall Pauloosie noticed Eli’s peers, looking very solemn. This had been one of them. Who would be next? He had heard two of them whisper as he made his way through the crowd to his place on the altar, that he was lucky to have gotten out
— escaped the misery of life... Psalm 23.

In a state of semi-consciousness he dug the ceremonial first shovel, falling back to leave the task to his people. Eli had always liked this mountain, it had seemed only fitting that Pauloosie bury his son at its foot, so that his spirit might ascend. Stones meticulously placed atop; shovels, never to be used again (having fulfilled their purpose), carefully propped against the stone-pile grave...

Pauloosie stopped only long enough at the house to gather his rifle, ammunition, tent, warm skins and a few nights' provisions of food and oil. Strapping them onto his komatik, he prepared the team to go out on the land. The cold November wind blew in from Ungava Bay, guiding his direction from Tusarvik. His grandfather had taught him to listen to the wind as a young boy. Now the wind called him.

That night he travelled until the dogs were tired, made camp, and sleep came quickly. In his dreams he saw a raven perched atop an igloo. The raven spoke words he could not quite make out, yet every time he moved to get closer to hear, the distance and uncertainty between them remained the same. Every night the dream returned. It haunted him by night and tormented him by day.

He tried to make sense of the dream, and the events of the past three days. Were they connected? Surely it could not be so that the Creator would allow one of his children to be subjected to such affliction**.** How does one go on living when all will is gone, when everything one lived for and loved has been taken away? This pain was necessary, purposeful even, but for what? What deeper meaning lay in the occasion of this tragic event? These questions and others he carried with him across the tundra.

Arctic winds lashed out at the land biting into his progress, but he pressed on. Delirious and snow-blind he stumbled to keep up to the komatik, which slipped in and out of sight almost in time to the bark from

one of the dogs breaking through the crash of the wind. Something tripped him up and he landed on the back of the sled, grazing his head. Black. The raven beckoned him.

With humble steps he moved toward the great bird. As he approached, it did not move. Smoke trickled out of the air hole at the top of the small igloo, and warm light broke through the ice window launching crystal rays into the dark vast night. Kneeling to pull back the skins of the opening, he entered the warm sanctuary. Huddled at the back of the igloo by the light of an oil lamp, he could barely make the wrinkled outline of a face that was as old and as wise as time.

The igloo was warm and inviting, smelling just as they did on hunting trips with his father as a boy. The inside was bare, barring one large block of soap stone in the middle of the floor, which supported an oil lamp. In the most affable of gestures, the figure beckoned for Pauloosie to sit on a bundle of skins in front of the stone.

“You have travelled far. Your load is light yet your burden heavy. Why do you bear so much weight?” the figure asked softly.

“I have suffered much! I cannot help but wonder, is the one who created this world not a God of mercy?”

“What do you make of your suffering my dear friend?” the figure replied.

“I understand that it is for a greater purpose, yet just what eludes me. It seems in my thinking, that life is a delicate balance of sorts — as in the

North with light and darkness. For six moons we live in the light of the midnight sun, then six moons of darkness with but the light of the moon. It is only because of the dark that we enjoy the light so much. It is because of our harsh and cold winters that we appreciate the changing of the seasons and the summer as we do. If there were meaning to be found in my suffering it would be in the fact that, as with the cycles and seasons of the universe, people and situations are neither good nor evil, but depend upon a balance between the two. Perhaps when one endures great suffering such as I have it only heightens future joys by enriching it with an understanding I would not otherwise have come to know — complementary opposites."

"It is evident that your struggles have not been in vain" the figure replied, a few decibels above a whisper. "How then will this circumstance aid you on your life's journey?"

"If it is true that this balance exists within the order of the universe, that it is only because of the dark that we come to love light, then, this recent turn of events being likened to the dark, I can expect only the light!", Pauloosie exclaimed hopefully.

"Do you believe this to be true?" came the soft reply.

"Well, not entirely. Just yesterday I came to the place where I had no more food, the dogs and I were cold and tired, and in the midst of the storm I had become lost.

“Finding the path that led back was not desirable as I had resolved to espy that which I was looking for. To continue on in uncertainty involved the possibility of death. It was then that I understood that life is not predetermined. I did not choose this adversity, but my choice lies in how I deal with it.”

“What did your heart tell you?” the figure probed.

“It told me to listen to the wind. The inner wind that is the spirit of my being. In that moment I realized that each decision I make for myself affects the outcome of my future. What I came to know was the wonder of choice. It is in exercising choice that we define our humanness. The wind of my choice blew me here.”

“How then do you perceive this gift of choice in relation to defining who you are?”

Barely able to trace a visual outline of the figure, the light dancing between them, Pauloosie paused, and pondered. He had contemplated this very dilemma the other day when he had “come to a crossroads” in the tundra. He could have returned, but hadn’t. His past filled with darkness and pain, he had made the choice to seek that which he did not yet know. He had sought out knowledge, as there had to be a deeper meaning to the pain, anguish and meaninglessness that life had apportioned him.

“I have the choice to do or become whatever I so desire. My son’s actions sadly illustrate his choice. Ultimately, we have the choice to be

the best we can be, to fulfill our human potential. The choice to actualize our potential is ours. Take this block of soap stone for example. From its solid, standard form I can create a large polar bear, a walrus lying on the beach, an Inuit family; or I can leave it as the block of soap stone that it is… never realizing potential at all. I have the choice to give it LIFE — meaningful and beneficial life — or to let it simply exist, as an unfinished block of stone."

"Wonderfully put", the figure replied. "Please continue."

"Thank you. If you asked me to carve exactly what it is that would define my concept of the essence of human fulfillment, it would most certainly be different than if I were to ask you to carve yours."

"Precisely my friend. And this then is the point: Given the multiplicity of choice, how then might one come to a personal notion of human fulfillment?"

"It seems that one must first be aware of what it means to them to be fulfilled as a human. The meaning of human fulfillment varies in as many ways as there are humans. There exists no measuring rod with which to record and compare the degree to which one fulfills one's personal notion of humanness. Therefore, human fulfillment is relative to each human being and one's unique definition of it. I believe it is your life being congruent with the ways in which you perceive it should be."

“I couldn’t have said it better myself”, the figure replied. “How then is this notion of human fulfillment (for you) reconciled with the greater needs of one’s community and society at large?”

“As the Elders have taught, Inuit have always known that life is a precious gift from the Creator, who placed humankind in the midst of this glorious and delicate balance of Creation, to walk softly upon the Earth leaving no footprints. We are one with the animals, the earth and the sky. In relation to the vast complexities and wonders of the universe, “I” simply do not matter. Individually, we are only significant to the extent that we benefit our community of brothers and sisters.”

“Please continue” the figure requested, hunching slightly forward, intrigued.

“It occurs to me that it is when we live for humanity, for the Earth and Universe, that we come (with much humility) to recognize our insignificance as individuals. In transcending the self, we come to a deeper understanding of what it means to be human, and how one’s view of human fulfillment is thereby engaged with societal wellbeing. It is to live for our people, as we have always done.”

In the dim oil light a wrinkled smile spread across the figure’s face. After a few minutes of meditation he replied; “As I have it, you have concluded that it is only when one’s sense of human fulfillment is in tune with societal wellbeing that we can in turn attempt to be fulfilled?”

A long silence followed, enhanced by the flickering of the flame. Slowly Pauloosie replied;

“For thousands of years Native Peoples have lived off the land that the Creator provided us, sustaining our people by living according to the balance and harmony of nature and the universe.

“Within the past three hundred years we have witnessed the coming of the ‘white man’ and the progressive, continual destruction that is their lifestyle that they inflict upon the land. With the Europeans came a new vision of humankind’s place in the natural order of the universe, a new perspective. The Earth and Universe were created for humankind, to dominate, exploit and abuse.”

“And what has been the result of this perspective as you call it?” the figure asked.

Pauloosie paused thoughtfully, and then replied, “We have learned that this perspective serves only the self, and that is its inherent flaw. As our rich historic tradition demonstrates, when one lives in accordance with the laws of the universe, in tune to its balance, one lives in harmony and peace with one’s environment. When civilizations manipulate and destroy their surroundings for short-term, self-serving ends, they break the harmony of the universe, bringing about their eventual decay. In keeping with this line of thinking, it is only when we accept our position in nature and transcend the self for the better good of the community that we truly come to be fulfilled as human beings.”

“I see we are progressing quite rapidly in our discussion”, the figure stated. “What then do the consequences of such an understanding suggest with respect to personal values?” the figure goaded.

Like the wise man his adversity was transforming him into, Pauloosie thought carefully, then quietly responded:

“As social beings, we need community. We may choose to withdraw or retreat from society for reflective or meditative purposes (such as I have this week), yet we find that we need association, as it is only in relation to ‘the other’ that we can compare our thought, actions and progress.

“Once we have come to awareness that to be fulfilled is to act for society, we arrive at the place where our personal values become extensions (or re-presentations) of those values that make up society. As the universe and humanity are in a constant state of evolutionary flux, so too are our values, for they are only relative to the collective knowledge of a particular time.”

“And If personal values are but extensions of societal values, what implications does this have for personal thinking?” the figure coaxed.

“Societies come to value what is commonly accepted, and change, if not hard to come by, is usually met with resistance. Where personal thinking comes into play, is in challenging the boundaries of knowledge, and therefore societal values.

“Indeed, had no one ever questioned what was accepted as ‘the norm’, we would still be living as our ancestors did for thousands of years, never

having been ‘discovered’. The model is one of reciprocal interplay: Society shapes personal values, which in turn are pushed and redefined by the individual, who re-shapes society’s values. A never-ending process of values evolution, in both the individual and society.”

“Might you provide me with an example to further shed light on my understanding?”

“I would be most pleased”, Pauloosie replied. “For thousands of years Inuit have lived solely off of the land, taking only what they needed in order to sustain the community. Caribou has been our predominant source of food and clothing, but as the caribou only migrate (or “run”) twice a year, procuring nourishment and warmth outside of the mating season is sometimes difficult at best. This has been our situation (which dictates our values) ever since the beginning of time. A year ago in the village of Inulit, some Inuit decided that to have our food supply restricted to twice annually was not in our society’s best interests. One man’s personal thinking again pushed the boundaries of our societal values, and it was decided that we (like the white man) should harness nature so that it would better serve our collective needs. Over the ensuing year a caribou corral with a large opening was built in great haste, working against the animals’ biological clocks. We waited.

“The day the caribou ran last October was a day I shall never forget. Ten miles out of town the herd was spotted; it was estimated at being eight miles long and three miles wide, some half a million caribou.

Skidoos made their way around the back of the herd as a helicopter flew to meet them. For what seemed like hours the caribou were herded toward the ranch on the outskirts of the village. Being afraid of the machines, the caribou ran where they were directed — right into the corral.

"Oh the jubilation and excitement Inuit shared on that brave day. Some two thousand caribou had been captured, ready for slaughter on demand. With the opening sealed, the animals presented a strange and new occurrence. Hanging over the top of the ten foot wooden fence and staring down in amazement, I began to realize that something was not right with this picture. We had become the white man. We had confined and controlled our environment and nature, to suit our needs. We, after thousands of years of finding peace amongst adverse situations, had taken the proverbial path of least resistance. This was not the Inuit way.

"Other problems presented themselves as we gazed at the steam rising off the frightened herd. The females were pregnant and would need to be fed and nurtured, which we, of very little means, did not have the resources to do. Of greater concern, however, was the fact that this act ran counter to our Native values in that, if a hunter comes across a herd s/he only kills what is needed, so that the population may multiply, providing food and clothing for future generations."

"What then did your inner wind say?" the question came in the dark.

“It told me this was wrong” Pauloosie continued. “One man’s personal thinking had temporarily altered societal values, but upon realization of a greater truth, personal thinking and values changed it back, and society’s values were restored. The caribou were released. It is individuals, whose thinking challenge and redefine our accepted values, that change societal values; and when society has allowed ‘too much’, it will be individuals who will again redefine them.

“And so we see again, that the ‘self’ truly does not matter inasmuch as society does; there really is an ordered, evolutionary flow to the universe, and as long as we can recognize and realize our place in the process, we will continue to evolve in relation to its allotted evolutionary expansion.”

∞

Pauloosie awoke to find the igloo cold and bare. Kneeling to pull back the skins of the opening, he entered the warm sanctuary of a new day. Reflecting on what seemed like an eternity of understanding, he readied the team. As the wind of his choice guided him back to his people, the knowledge of certainty travelled with him. With an awareness of being, Pauloosie ventured into a new world of possibilities. Strapped to the back of the komatik he found the carving of a caribou running free, as a raven overhead tipped its wings.

The preceding fictional essay was based on real events. Names were changed and revealing details omitted or disguised. As mentioned earlier, it is included as a poignant and real example of how personal and communal values are negotiated and as a result, evolve; Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik. The very serious issue of teenage suicide has had devastating effects on the Inuit people and Northern communities. In places where some see no hope for their future, bleak examples of the minimal possibilities that do exist, and no way out of cycles of poverty, despair, abuse, alcoholism and domestic violence, an unfortunate response has been an alarmingly high rate of teenage suicide in Northern communities.

Regrettably, when one teen chooses to end his life through suicide, this can lead to “copy-cat” acts of suicide as many youth can view the suicide as ‘having gotten out’, or ‘escaped the misery of life’. The suicide in the preceding story was real. The events surrounding it were not. This had been the fourth suicide, three Inuit teenagers and one Qallunaaq teacher, in three months in the same small village.

> “<u>September 2, 1996</u>
>
> The entire village closed down this afternoon (both schools and stores, and all city services) and went to the funeral at three p.m. The small church was packed to the hilt. People lined all of the walls two or three thick, and sat on the floor in all the aisles (after the 30 pews x 9 seats had filled). Not wanting to intrude, I made sure I was

one of the last in (stood at the back near the door) and the very last to leave. They may not discuss their feelings preferring to keep them inside, but there certainly was a moving display of emotion this afternoon. Hard to witness in such good humoured people.

"At the start of the funeral most of the people lined up to view the child one last time. It was quite moving watching their faces as they turned to head back to their seats. It was quite disturbing seeing the number of children and teenagers (his friends) who did this.

"The funeral was led by two Inuit priests (Anglican) and one Inuit Elder who must have been at least ninety years old. It was 95% in Inuktitut but every once in a while the priest would end his sentence with, "It's as simple as that. Jesus taught us to think of God as your Father". They really are a musical people. Eight hymns were sung in Inuktitut and their voices were angelic (although a little choked). One Elder woman sat at the front on one side of the altar with the family and had a microphone three feet in front. All of the people's voices were soft and smooth (as I said, angelic) but hers' was almost nasal and shrill which carried above the rest. The effect was profound.

"The boy's mother was helped up to the podium to speak, and after hugging the priest for a few minutes for strength, she started. Sobbing most of the way through, at one point she broke down and cried quite loudly. The entire church started crying with her. I'm reluctant to say this, but it happened, and this is what I'm writing this

for: The cries turned into a sort of howl (not sure whether it is due to Inukjuak being famous for its throat singers or their oneness with nature). I listened extremely carefully (wiping tears from my eyes) as I wasn't really sure that that was what I was hearing. Triple-checked my senses to make sure, and that was what I heard! It lasted for about three and a half minutes and increased in volume to the point where the children started putting their hands over their ears. Really. It was emotionally moving, astonishing and mystical all at the same time. Never heard anything like that before and I know I never will again. It reminded me of seeing documentaries of Haitians in mourning who do a similar thing, yet much shriller, and much less wolf-like. I closed my eyes and it sounded exactly like the wolves on my first night here." (Mount, Field Notes, September 2, 1996).

“November 30

Life is a precious gift from God.

[Inuit friend and ‘cultural interpreter’] called at noon to ask if I would like to go with her to visit the [deceased’s] family — so nice of her, she always thinks of me in these circumstances as she knows I am a sensitive humanist and interested in Inuit culture. We went to [boy who hanged himself] mother’s house. The house was full of Inuit friends and family. I was the only Qallunaaq there, but my presence was extremely appreciated; it showed that I care. His mother immediately came up to me and threw her arms around me pouring tears. I held her for a few minutes, she sat down and I squatted next to the couch and held her hand for five minutes. My words of consolation helped, although she doesn’t speak English — the meaning and sincerity was very clear. We looked in each other’s eyes for a minute and she said, “Nakurmiik”, I responded, “Ellalie”. She is surprisingly quite old, maybe sixty; with a weather-worn and wrinkled face typical of Inuit photographs... she is an Elder.

“Sitting at the kitchen table was [his sister — my student]. When I put my arms around her and gave her a hug, she burst into tears. I was very moved, and it was hard to hold back the tears myself, as I felt their pain. [She] thanked me for coming and showed me a picture of him; I had seen him around town almost daily. She had a

> crumpled piece of paper in her hands that she passed to me to read. It was [his] suicide note. The anthropologist in me wanted to copy it down, but my conscience and respect for the Inuit told me not to. As closely as I can remember it read: “My burning soul is in hell now. The priest stands above my body and tells me to forgive my sins; he makes me sick. He does not understand. The pain of life is too great to bear, and it is too late now”. Dear Lord…why? His writing was perfect — the teacher in me noticed no spelling or grammatical mistakes; he was so much farther ahead than his peers.” (Mount, Field Notes, November 30, 1996).

Totally devastated, the community sought both answers and solutions. Local religious leaders blamed the devil as the cause of this recent rash of unexplained suicides. It was decided that rock/heavy-metal music and motorcycle paraphernalia were to blame, as it was deemed that these were the tools of the devil. The only way to rid the community of the negative effects of these influences was to collectively gather all relevant compact disks, cassette tapes, video tapes, records, ‘Harley-Davidson’ flags, T-shirts, posters, and all other related paraphernalia, from every house in the community.

Once collected, these items were heaped in a pile on the frozen river and put on display for the entire community to see.

As community members of all ages encircled the pile of excommunicated articles, the pile was soaked with gasoline.

A prayer is said to rid the community of the devil...

And it is set ablaze.

This was an awkward event for me to observe. As a person living in the community, I did not agree with this act and was reminded of anti-The Beatles album-burning events from the 1960's. This appeared to me as an example of the 'strangle-hold' that Qallunaat religions have come to have over the conduct of the 'colonized'. I certainly sympathized with the Inuit around me. These were my friends, my colleagues, my students, my peers, my hosts... yet sacrificing a symbolic representation of what a few may define as "products of the devil", in a pseudo-staged attempt to rid the community of the devil and put an end to teenage suicide, to me, seemed to deny the root source or cause of the issue by laying blame on a convenient and coincidental common denominator.

As a researcher, I admit that of all my varied experiences in the North this was the one time where I felt that I was different, that I did not belong,

and that I was witnessing an archaic whichcraft-esque ritual that I should not be witnessing. This was also the only time I have felt that I was intruding by photographing an event. Indeed, with each of the previous five photographs there was a distinct feeling that someone was going to grab the camera away from me at any second.

From the community perspective, these were the artifacts of a cancerous culture that were seen to be eating-away at the very core of Inuit cultural identity. Action was required. This was a communal decision to draw attention to and eliminate a social problem that, at least historically, was not a traditional Inuit social problem. This is Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik.

The only other time I have ever felt remotely uneasy as an outsider witnessing foreign events was the first time I attended the return of the annual community hunting boats. Every year in most Nunavik communities, qualified local hunters are hired for two-to-three week “country food” hunting expeditions by boat in search of walrus, seal, beluga, and/or caribou and fish, returning to the villages to distribute the cache amongst community members at the wharf, placing the remains in the community freezer for Inuit consumption.

The entire village gathers at the dock in advance of the arrival of the much-anticipated hunters…

After saying a community prayer of thanks for what they have received,

everyone lines up to take pieces out of the generous containers of fresh country food, one by one...

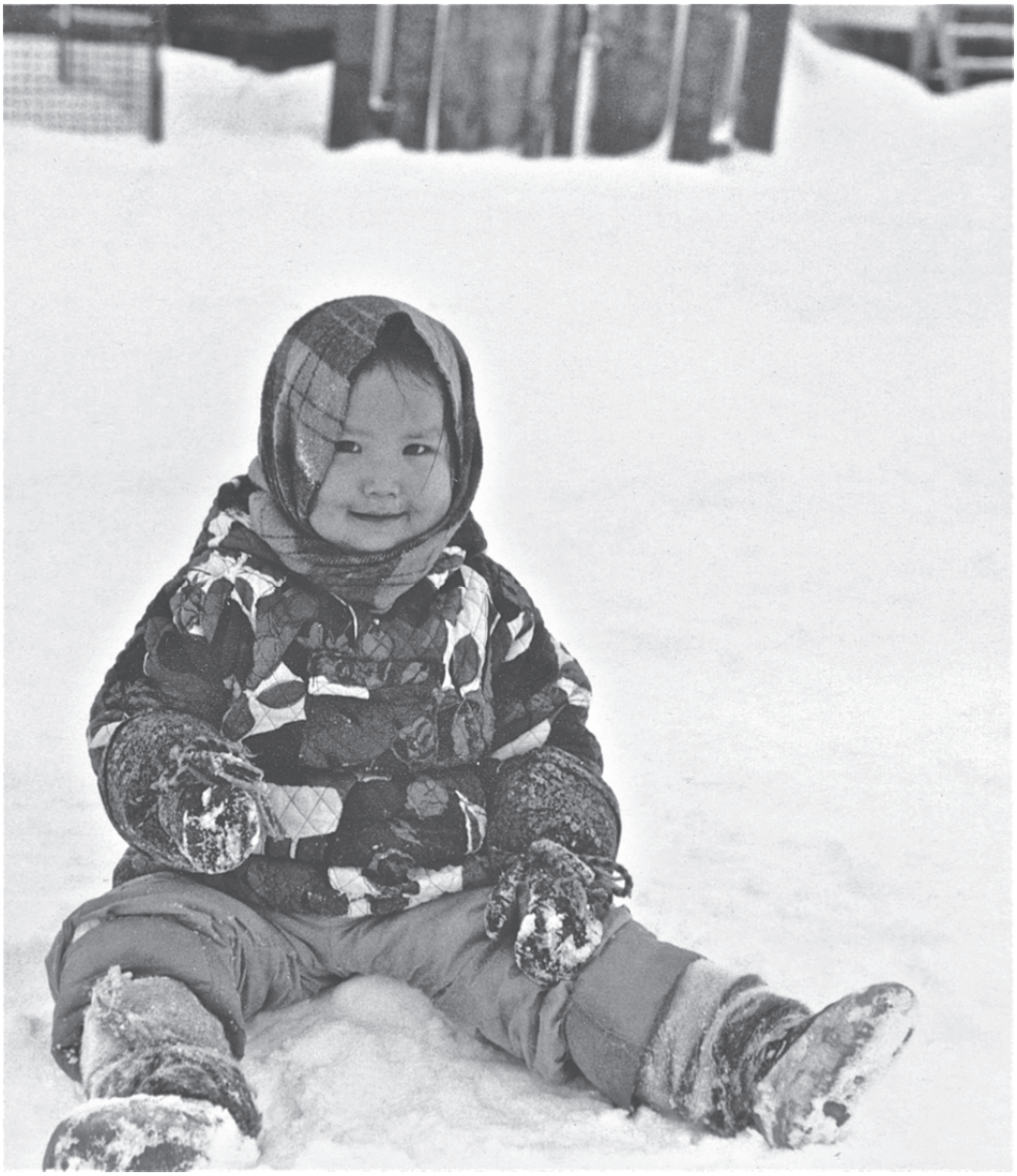
“November 30, 1996

Everyone’s hands were covered in blood, and everyone was happy. Looked over my left shoulder to see an Elder woman and her grand-daughter gnawing on some raw pieces they had pulled off of the dead animals. Definitely not in Kansas anymore!” (Mount, Field Notes, November 30, 1996).

In retrospect I realize that my feelings of unease and discomfort in partaking in and photographing these above events was due to the fact that I was witnessing, and recording, Inuit culture “in action”. Honoured at the privileged place I occupied (savouring raw beluga on an Arctic beach was also a first), I was equally vitally aware of the cultural differences and somehow felt as if I was witnessing something that not all eyes see; Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik.

The objective of this inquiry is to define the values and elements of contemporary Inuit culture that can assist in the preservation of Inuit culture and meet the educational values of the Inuit.

These values will emerge and be explored in depth in the research interviews. In this study I examine that which the Inuit feel defines their culture, and could provide a framework from which an education program could be structured with the intent of assisting in the preservation of Inuit culture, values and traditions.



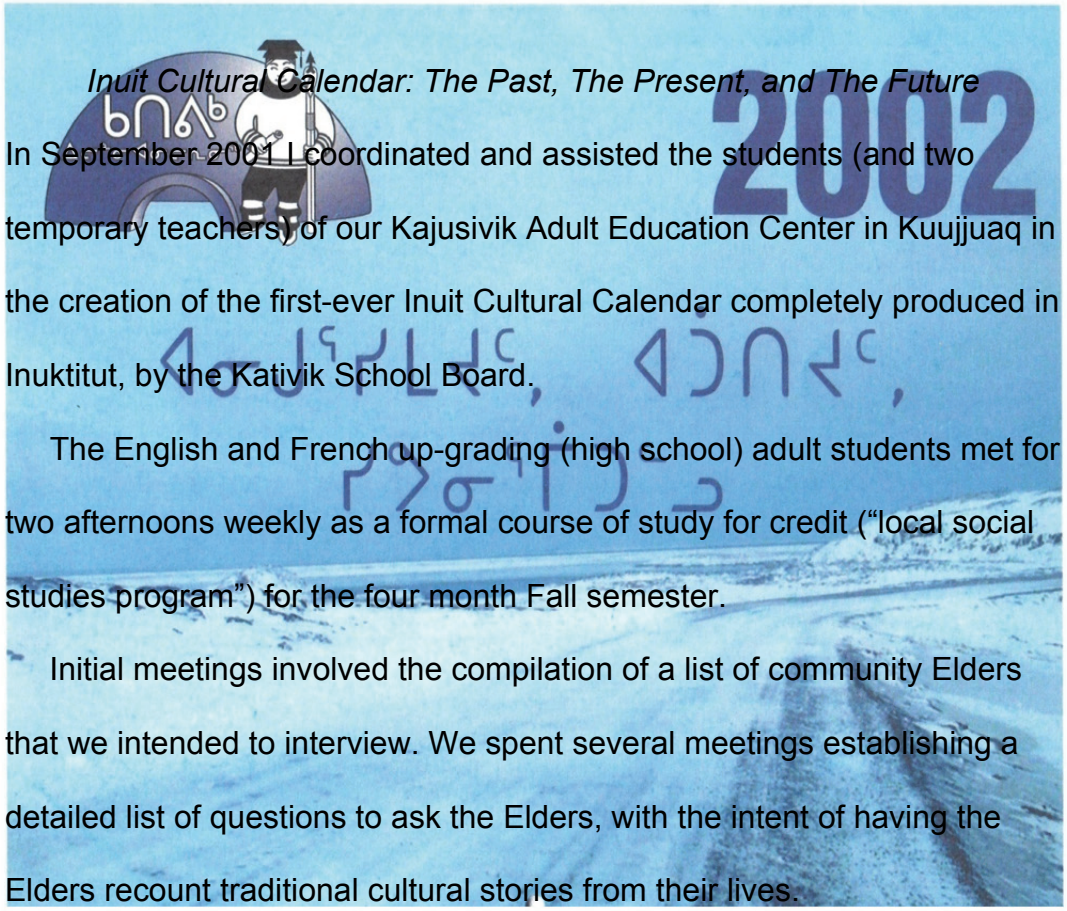
From this research, I hope to establish curricular elements of a pedagogy that might serve as a foundation for an education program that has the intent of teaching Inuit culture, alongside whatever courses from non-Inuit culture the Inuit feel would best benefit their people, and that embraces the desired advantages of both worlds, traditions and cultures.

Inuit culture is rapidly declining, being replaced by the culture and lifestyle of the post-postmodern Western world. As a prominent Inuit Educational Leader Simeonie Nalukturuk once commented to my class of Inuit students: “I know half as much traditional knowledge as my father did, while my son will only learn half as much as I know” (personal communication, 1996). “According to this estimation, fifty percent of Inuit culture disappears with each new generation” (Mount, 2001, p. 8). Instead of hunting, fishing, building Igloos and teaching their children Inuit culture and traditional knowledge, many Inuit parents surf the internet and are caught up in the same hurried technologically-driven capitalist society that drives most of the Western world.

If the scales of balance are not tipped in favour of Inuit culture and traditional knowledge, it will continue to disappear with each successive generation... until it is gone.

Adding further pressure to the necessity of such research is the fact that most of the Elders who have lived by this culture, who were born in an igloo and raised and schooled by the land, have either passed on, or are quite old. This information must be documented, stored and developed before it is too late.

One example of such an effort to keep these stories and cultural traditions alive in print for future generations is the Kativik School Board *2002 Inuit Cultural Calendar: The Past, The Present, and The Future*:

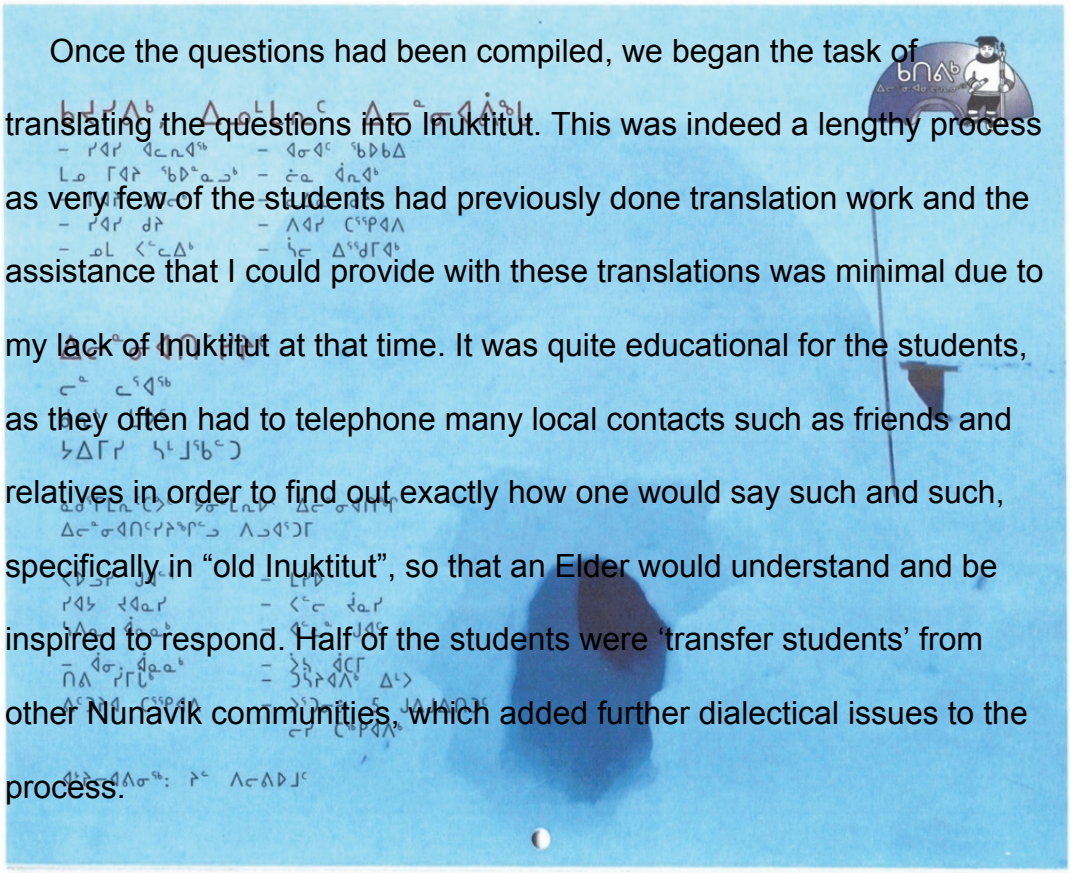



*Inuit Cultural Calendar: The Past, The Present, and The Future*

In September 2001 I coordinated and assisted the students (and two temporary teachers) of our Kajusivik Adult Education Center in Kuujjuaq in the creation of the first-ever Inuit Cultural Calendar completely produced in Inuktitut, by the Kativik School Board.

The English and French up-grading (high school) adult students met for two afternoons weekly as a formal course of study for credit ("local social studies program") for the four month Fall semester.

Initial meetings involved the compilation of a list of community Elders that we intended to interview. We spent several meetings establishing a detailed list of questions to ask the Elders, with the intent of having the Elders recount traditional cultural stories from their lives.



Once the questions had been compiled, we began the task of translating the questions into Inuktitut. This was indeed a lengthy process as very few of the students had previously done translation work and the assistance that I could provide with these translations was minimal due to my lack of Inuktitut at that time. It was quite educational for the students, as they often had to telephone many local contacts such as friends and relatives in order to find out exactly how one would say such and such, specifically in "old Inuktitut", so that an Elder would understand and be inspired to respond. Half of the students were 'transfer students' from other Nunavik communities, which added further dialectical issues to the process.

The next step involved the drafting of consent forms for the interviews, first in English, and then translated into Inuktitut by the students. We then set about contacting the Elders selected. We had elected to use one Elder's story per month, and therefore needed twelve for the annual calendar.

As the scheduled interview dates approached, a few of our students began to get nervous, in one case to the point of tears, as they were anxious regarding their interviewing abilities and also found the prospect of asking their Inuit Elders personal questions, which is culturally "out-of-line", something they therefore were reluctant to do. Time was devoted to learning interviewing techniques and skills.

We decided that each of the students would be involved in the actual interviews, and that those who were less comfortable contribute by doing the audio tape recording of the interview. All twelve interviews were conducted in the respective residences of the Elders, including two at the Elder's House.

In one interview, as an example, I accompanied two female students of 45 and 21 years and a male student of 28, interviewing a wonderfully cheerful, warm and welcoming Elder woman in her early eighties in her home around her kitchen table. Before she would have us begin, she made certain that we had all had our fill of bannock (Inuit bread). As the interview progressed it diverged, and soon enough they were all

engrossed in Inuktitut conversation, laughing, sharing, and crying at times. It was a wonderful, mutually-beneficial process for all.

One almost felt guilty for being the one who had to turn off the tape recorder when the interview was over, as it somehow took away some of the raw essence of the shared experience in that it reminded everyone in that room that our intentions had been to ‘study and examine’.

At the end of the interviews each Elder was photographed, in his/her chair (two Elders returned to my class to be photographed later), and reproduced in sequence on the back inside cover of the calendar.

After interviewing the twelve Elders, we had in excess of thirty hours of tape to transcribe, translate, and utilize. We decided to separate the stories according to themes associated with each of the twelve months of the year: For example, a Christmas story would be ideal for December, as would a story about the coming of the geese for May, or tent camping in the summer month of July.

As all of the taped interviews with the Elders were at least sixty minutes in length each, we were fortunate to have many stories to work with during the selection process. One Elder woman told three stories throughout the course of her interview. We had initially planned to use one of the stories she shared in the interview but much later in the process had to re-visit the taped interview and use one of her other stories, as a different Elder's response to that question was a better fit with the children's drawing we had selected for that month on the calendar, and cohesive whole.

Once selected, the twelve narratives were then typed by our students in Inuktitut syllabics (*Ai Nunavik* font) and printed on paper. The quality of the segments of audio recordings from the interviews was considerably lacking. The conversations, questions and answers were sometimes difficult to decipher and required much repeated listening to in order to recreate exact transcripts. We therefore decided to re-record two of our student interviewers narrating the selected Elders' stories clearly and succinctly on separate audio tapes, roughly three to four minutes in length each, in Inuktitut, in our classroom.

We were given time at the end of a weekly staff meeting at the (regular sector) Jaanimmarik School in Kuujjuaq, where the project was pitched to the teachers, but specifically the Inuktitut and Culture teachers. With these teachers on board, an audio copy of one story and accompanying Inuktitut printout was provided to twelve teachers. The teachers then played their story to their respective classes of grade two or grade three students, twice. If needed, the teacher was then able to read either parts of the short story or the narrative in its entirety again to the class from the printout. The students were then immediately asked to draw a picture of the Elder's story that they had just heard and were given ample time and material resources to do so.

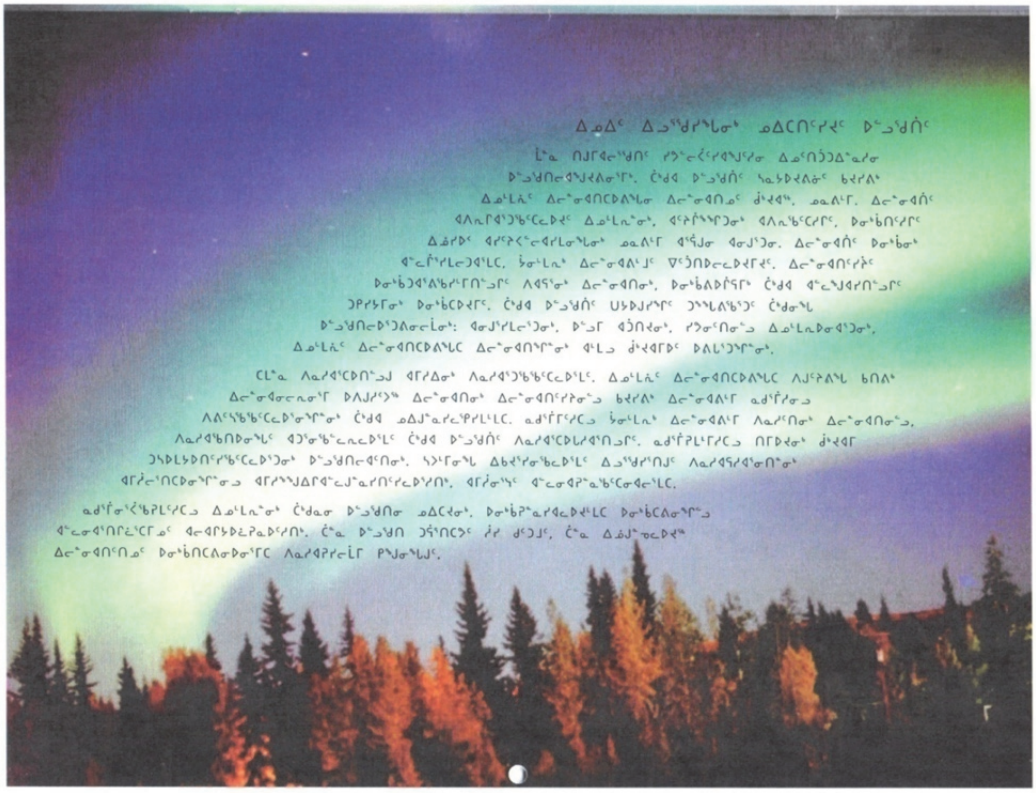
Once completed, the young Jaanimmarik School student drawings were collected in large manila envelopes per class, and collectively returned to our Kajusivik Adult Education Center, where we began the arduous process of viewing, then selecting the drawings that we felt best went with each story selected. This was not an easy task as the drawings were extremely imaginative, artistic, and very different from each other.

Each drawing was then displayed on the top of one page of the calendar representing that month, along with the Inuktitut text of the Elder's story superimposed on it and the Elder's photograph, all positioned above the standard layout of a southern calendar, completely in Inuktitut — the months, the days of the week, holidays and observed days, etc.

With the assistance of a five thousand dollar grant from the Quebec Ministry of Culture and advertisements from local organizations, that were used almost exclusively for printing and distribution costs (small amounts were allocated toward the purchase of the audio tapes and film), five thousand copies of the calendar were printed.

The Elders interviewed were not given an honorarium for their participation. For each interview we brought tea and cookies to share and set a relaxed social mood for the interview. Upon completion of the calendar the Kativik School Board provided a generous gift to each of the Elders interviewed in the form of twelve large ‘southern’ fruit, cheese and biscuit baskets flown in from Montreal.

Five thousand copies of the 2002 Inuit Cultural Calendar were distributed via Canada Post to every household in Nunavik. The calendar was extremely well received in the community of Kuujjuaq. Most unfortunately, one of the Elders interviewed and featured in the calendar passed away one week after we had interviewed her (and two more Calendar Elders also passed on during the three years preceding the printing of the calendar), further highlighting the importance of recording stories such as these and passing them on to future generations, before it is too late.



*[Kativik School Board Translation of above] Inside Cover of the Calendar*

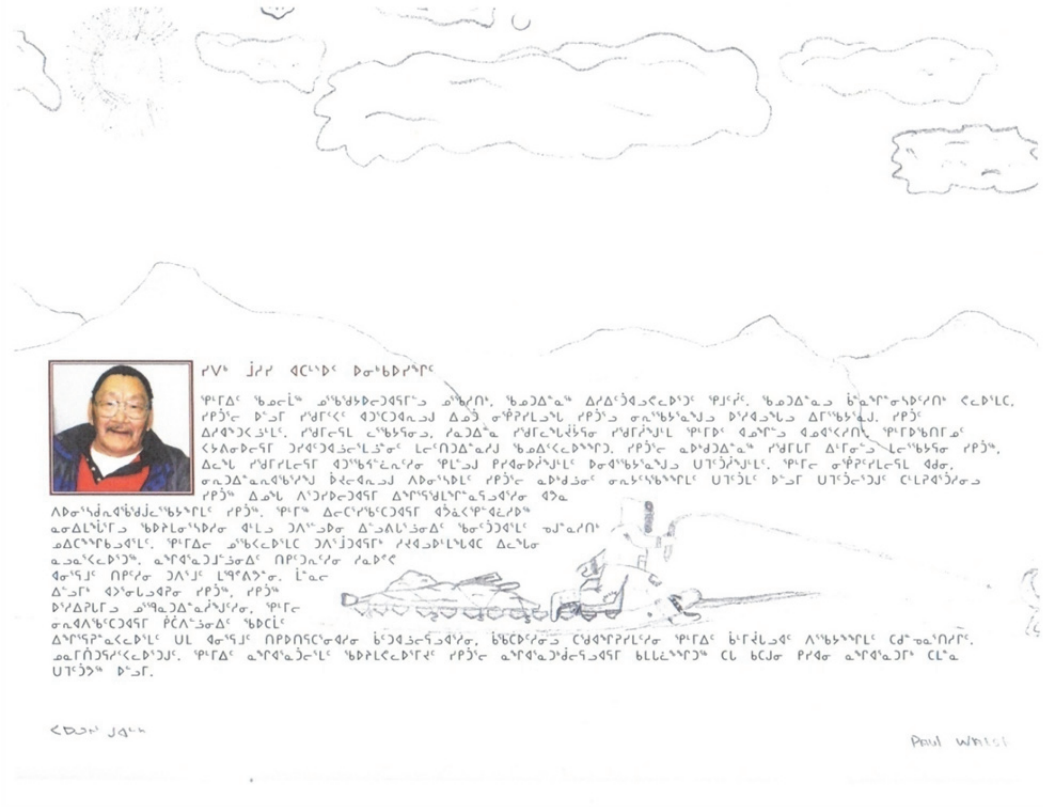
“You now hold in your hands the first Calendar ever to be produced entirely in Inuktitut. The Calendar was produced by the students of the Kajusivik Adult Education Center in Kuujjuaq, Nunavik. The students interviewed Elders in the community, asking them to discuss a variety of themes, explaining how life in Nunavik has changed over the years. Once the students completed writing the stories, they were given to the teachers at Jaanimmarik School. The teachers then read them to their young students, who in turn drew pictures to depict the stories that they heard. The title of the Calendar reflects all of those who participated in the making of it: The Past, The Present, and The Future represent the Elders, Adult Education Students, and the Youth of Kuujjuaq.

“A great deal of hard work and cooperation was involved in this project. The Adult Education Department of the Kativik School Board is proud of the efforts of the students and the teachers of Kajusivik Center, and thankful to all of those that gave of their time and energy to make it happen. Thank you to the staff and students of Jaanimmarik School, whose cooperation was essential in completing the calendar. We would also like to thank the businesses and organizations in Kuujjuaq who advertised in this Calendar. Their generous support of this cultural project allowed us to increase the number of copies printed, and therefore the number of people that will read these stories.

“We would especially like to thank the Elders who appeared in this Calendar, whose willingness to share their stories will undoubtedly be appreciated by all who read them. The Calendar is dedicated to Susie Kooktook, who passed away only one week after she was interviewed by our students.”
(Kativik School Board, 2001, Inside Cover).

The following is a free translation of the Elders stories as they appear in the Kativik School Board 2002 Inuit Cultural Calendar: The Past, The Present, and The Future:

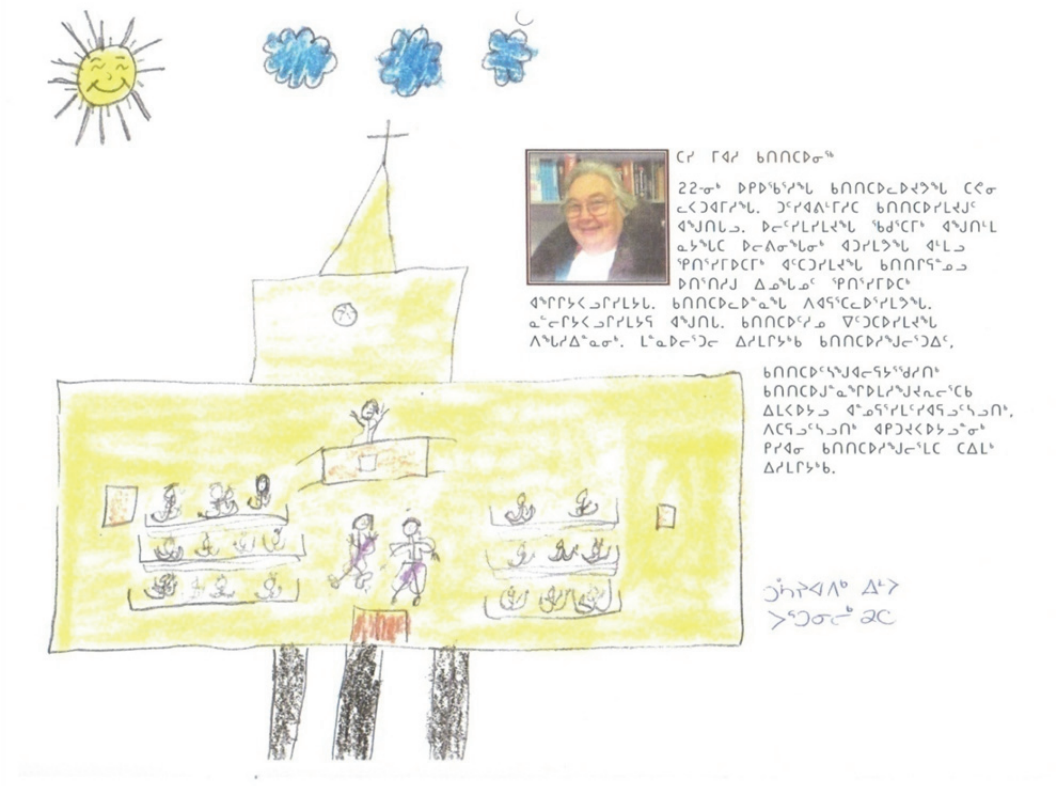
JANUARY



Moses “Spike” Adams: Dog sledding

When I am going out with the dogs, if I say “stop”, they stop where they want when they are pulling the sled (komatik). I used to have a skidoo, but it was always breaking down. So I decided to only use the dogs, because I could tell them where I wanted them to go. When I was younger I used to go dog racing and when I was hungry I shared my food with the dogs. When the dogs came to the tent, they took just a little bit of food because they didn’t want to be too full when they were running.  If the dogs hurt a leg, they would continue to run on three legs. Sometimes when the dogs are going very fast, if they slow down, the komatik crashes into the dogs. The dogs can smell if someone else passed by that way before and left some food under the snow, so they would dig for the food and eat it. When I was hungry, I used to make a hole in the ice to catch some fish to eat.

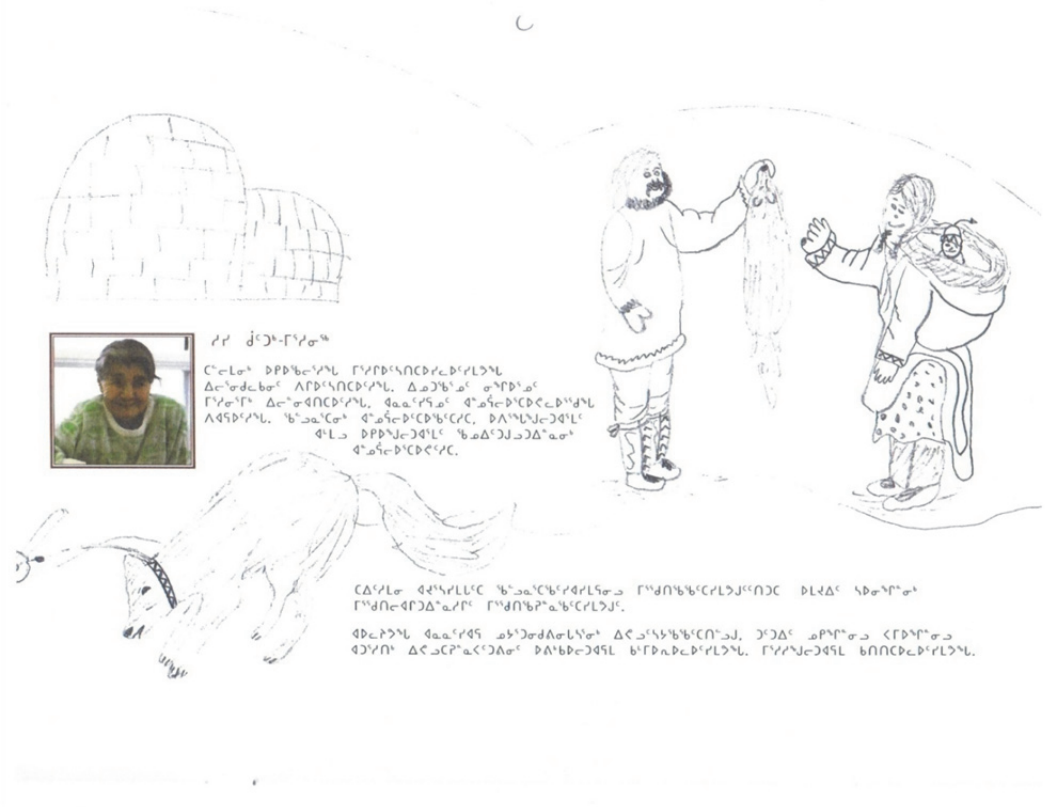
FEBRUARY



Dorothy Mesher: Getting Married

When I was 22 I got married in the church in a nice white wedding dress. My husband's sister let me borrow her wedding dress. My husband gave me a ring that he borrowed, but it was too big for me and I had to give it back after the wedding. After the wedding I had babies that I love very much.

MARCH



Susie Kooktook: Sewing

When I was five, my mother taught me to sew and so now I can sew for myself and for other people who don't have much clothing, both older and young people. I used to make nice clothes for my grandmother. When I was young, Qallunaat (non-Inuit people) came to my village to sew clothes for people from my village too. We made different clothes for summer and winter.

A long, long time ago we got stuck somewhere near a Qallunaat village and they had needles to sew with, not like the bone needles we use. We used to make our bone needles. I remember that my grandmother used to tie my hair with ribbons made of fox pelt.

APRIL

Lissie Saunders:

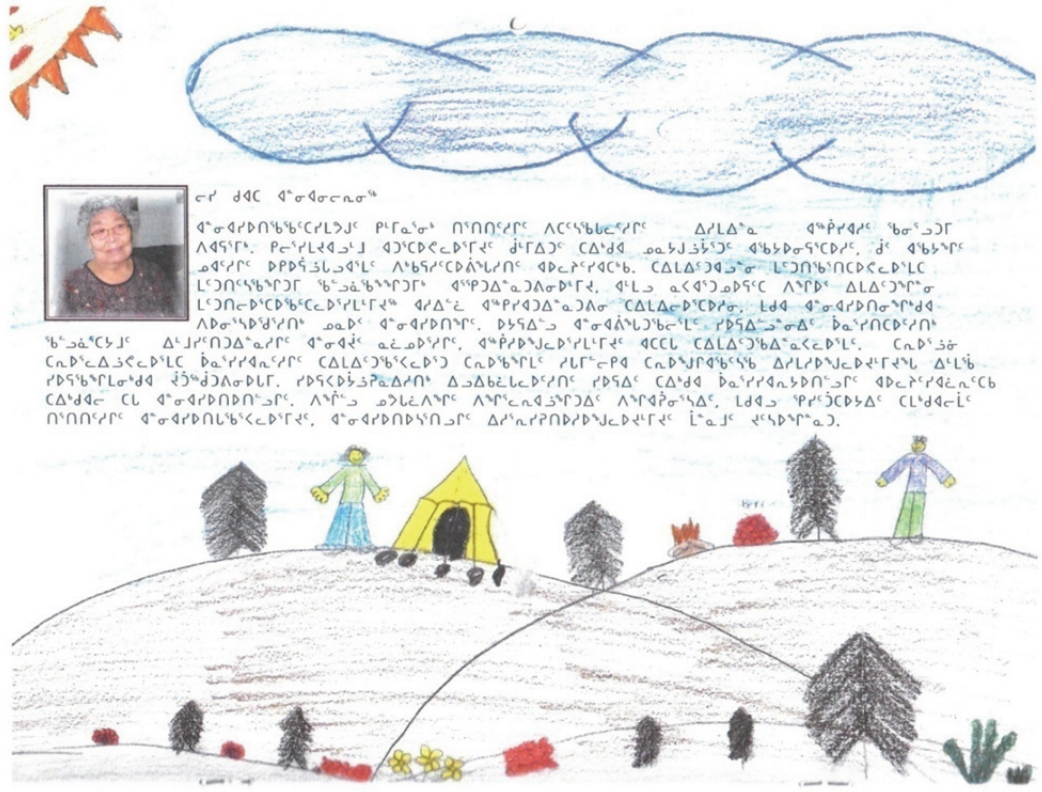
We used to go sliding with caribou skins and our father made our sleds with wood and caribou skins on the runners made them go much better. My mother kept our clothes very clean and I had a very nice dress. My mother used to make hangings with coat materials and old tents. We squeezed fruits to make red, orange and blue colours to dye the materials. We made bowls with glass pieces decorating to drink our soup. We also made dolls with the material and stretched caribou skins with glass pieces sewn in them. We made rope out of caribou gut and played finger games with the cords.

MAY

Petalook Unicet: Hunting

My mom and dad took me to hunt for food with them. We were sleeping on the mountain in the night and heard a noise. We saw a caribou and I was so happy because this would be food for our family. When the caribou saw my father ready to shoot him, he cried out to his family to come quickly. About twenty other caribou came very fast from the river, but my father shot the caribou before they came. When we brought the caribou back home it was frozen and I had to hammer it before we could cut it in pieces to eat.

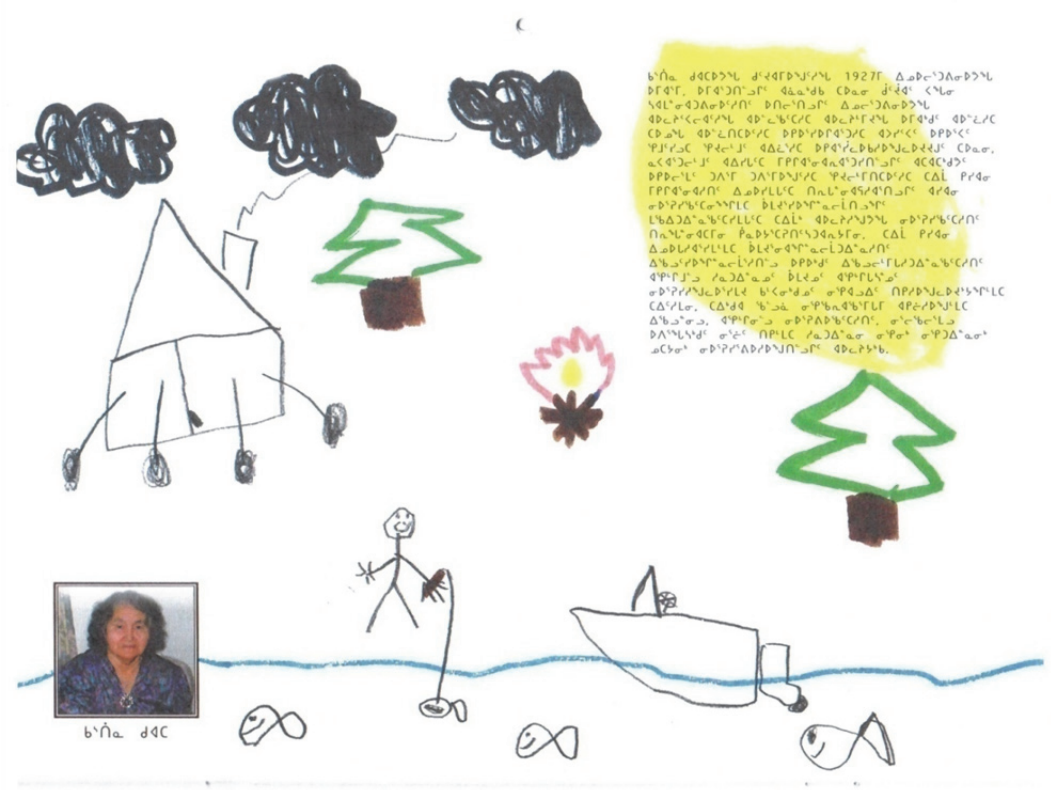
JUNE



Lissie Gordon: Healing

I am a nurse and I used special berries to help people when they were sick to make them feel better. When children cut themselves, I used green leaves to heal their wounds. Even in the winter I looked for these berries and leaves, kept them in my tent and gave them to the people when they were sick. I gathered other herbs and plants between the rocks. We also helped Qallunaaq people if they were injured, put salt on their bodies, wrapped them with blankets and laid them on a bed of rocks and boards. My father was a healer too and showed me how to do this.

JULY — “Caribou growing their antlers”



Christina Gordon:

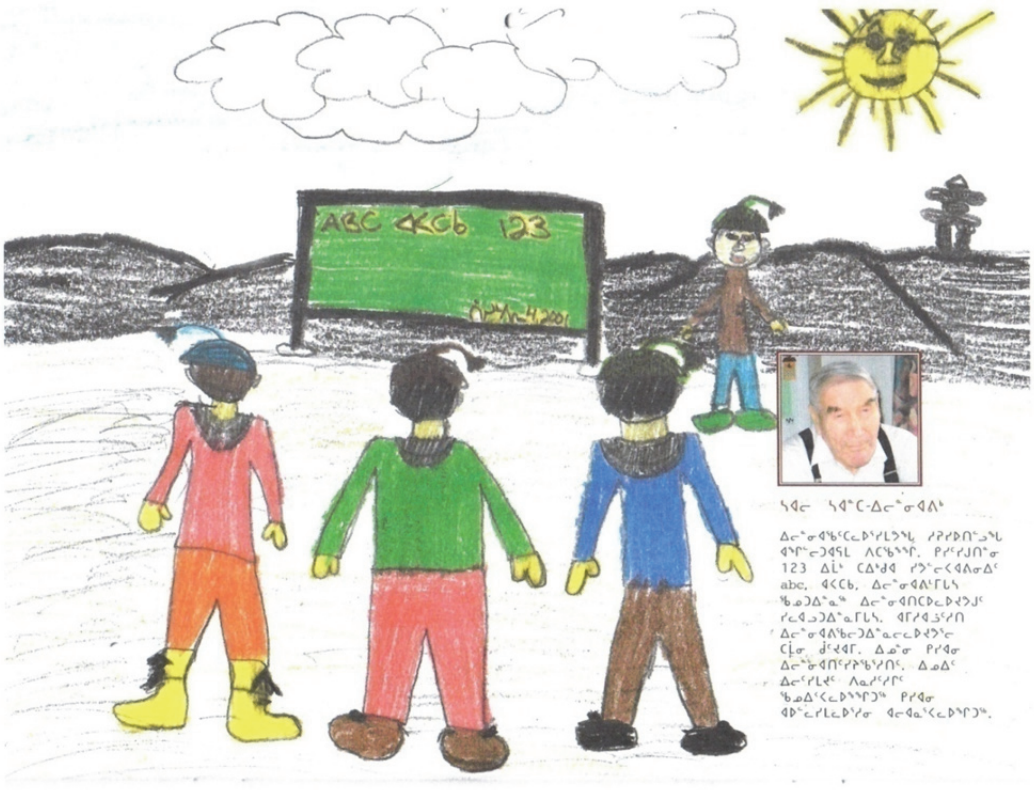
My name is Christina Gordon, I am from Kuujjuaq and was born in 1927 in a boat during the time my parents were headed back home from salmon fishing north of Kuujjuaq. Later on I remember we were travelling [migrating] by boat south for the up-coming winter. When the snow was hard we travelled by dog sled to a wooded area so the men could trap in order to trade. We had to live closer to the woods in tents in order to do this, so the hunters could sell fish, ptarmigan and fox to the Company store. The Qallunaat have to have food for sale. During spring time when the geese come North and all the animals migrated, I remember we would trade the fresh meat.

AUGUST — “End of Summer”

Elijah Johannes: Trapping

I have seen a home-made trap that was a deep hole in the ground. They would cover it by piling rocks in the shape of a pyramid over it and leaving a duck wing on top as bait. When they had enough food they stored it under the rocks. When hunger came, they would share the food.

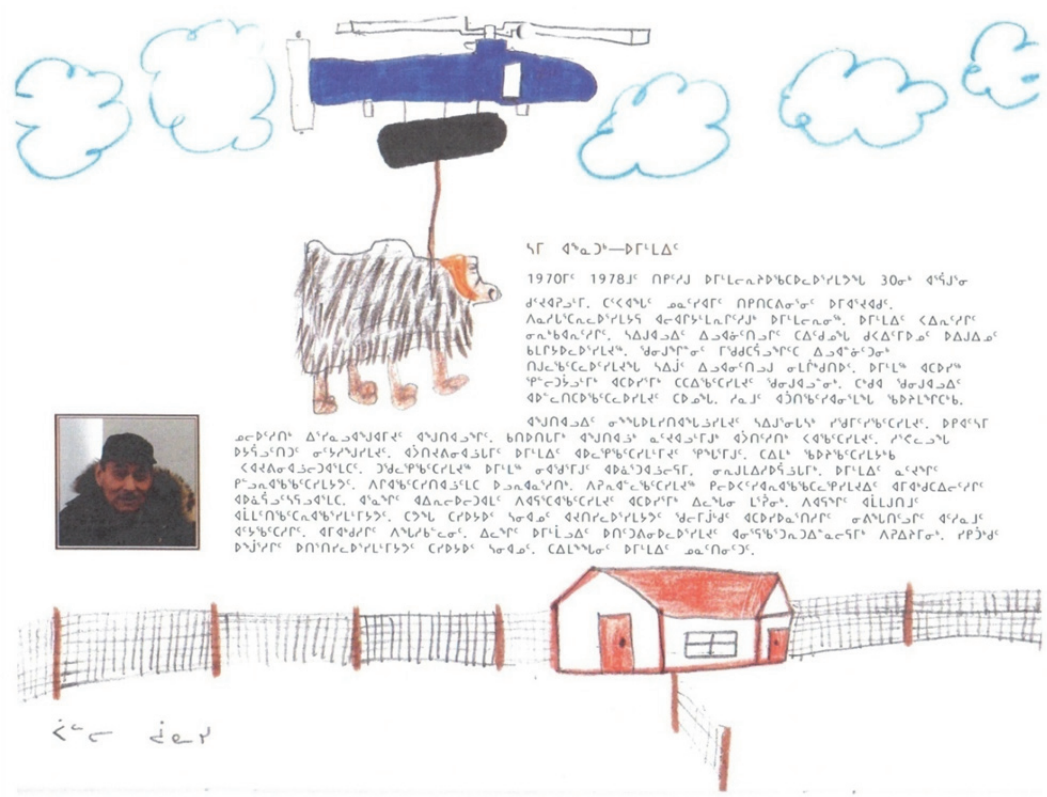
SEPTEMBER — “Fur Shedding”




Charlie Saunders: School

I used to go to school when I was a boy, when I was old enough to understand and learn. Our first lessons were 123’s, ABC’s and Inuktitut syllabics and other courses. Our classes were held outside. There were many students attending school at that time here in Kujjjuaq. They had only Inuit teachers; they were good, but it wasn’t fun being away from home.

OCTOBER — “Many Muskox”

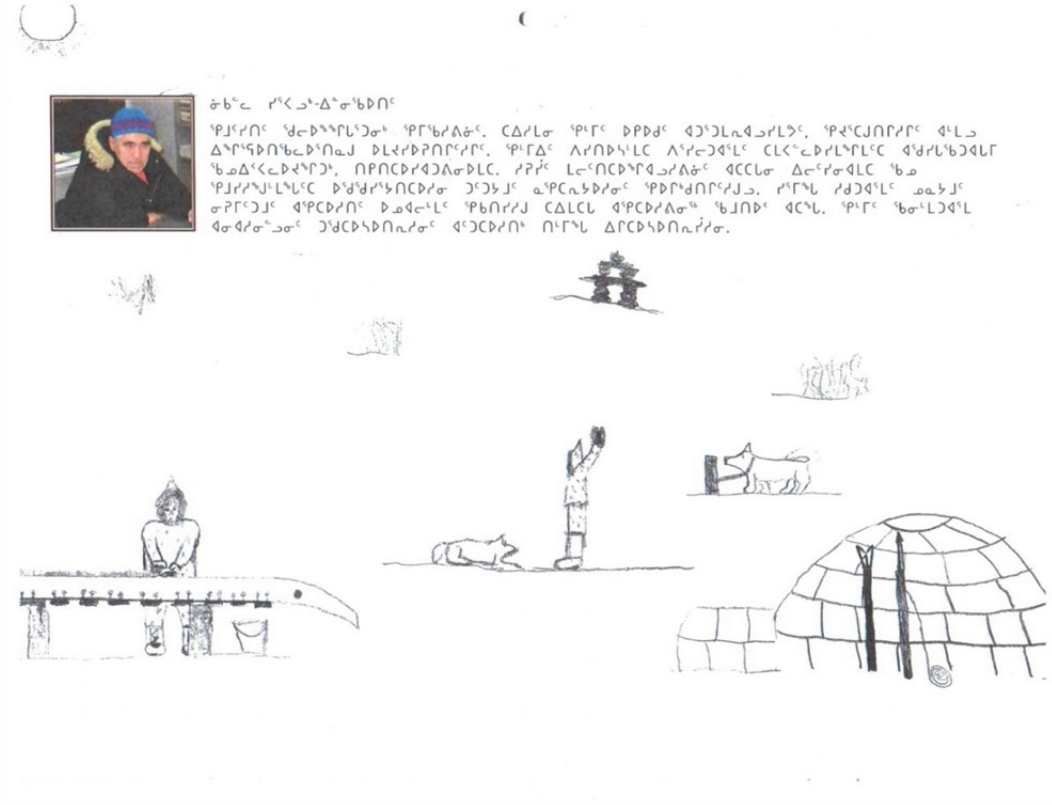


Sammy Angnatuk: Muskox

In the 1970’s to 1978 I worked for about thirty years as a muskox shepherd in Kuujjuaraaluk. The muskox were brought from Nunatsiaq up there, by boat. We took care of the muskox and fed them. They were fenced-in by people who worked for the Quebec government. We kept the muskox in place so it wouldn’t move and sheared the undercoating of hair (down) beneath the long hair. One animal filled one big garbage bag. The down used to be sent down south. I don’t know what it was used for.

Male muskox used to be very aggressive and broke the fences. In fall during mating season it used to be very scary. When the herd came together two males would fight and use their horns to ram each other — that’s how they used to fight. The sound used to be very loud as the sound of large boulders falling. They used to get bloody noses from hitting each other. Some of them used to die from blood loss, and they would refuse to eat. We had to cut the horns, and the horns would grow back, so we had to re-cut the rest to the nub. The females used to have one or two babies every April. We used to lead the babies away by bottle, leaving three babies with the herd. Some of the muskox used to go back to the coral where they used to stay, thinking it was their home where they had been raised. We would lead them back by snowmobile near Tasiuaq. Ever since then the muskox have stayed in our village.

NOVEMBER — “Caribou losing their antlers”



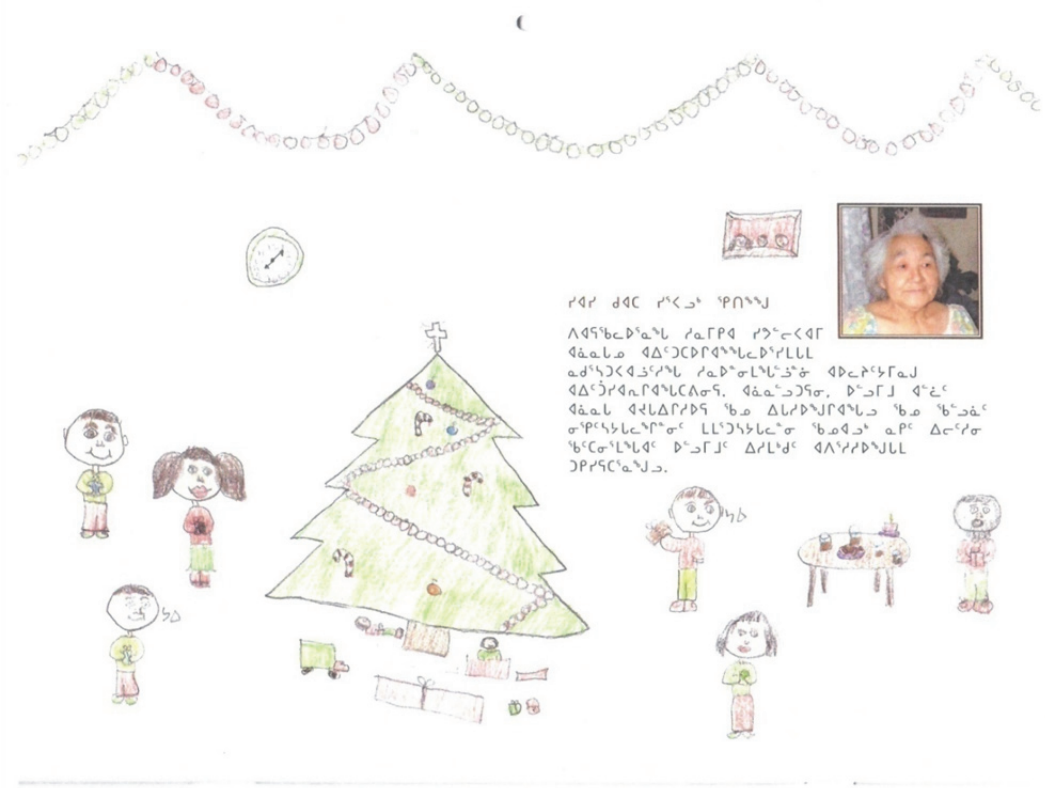
Ned Shipaluk: Dog Sledding

The dog sled driver had to have nine dogs. Back then dogs were very useful in the winter to get wood, and before we had motors, we used them to go hunting. The dogs never got lost, even in a blizzard they could find the way. They were good, and always arrived safely.

The boy would always follow his father every time he went hunting by komatik, so he could learn how to drive sled dogs. He would have to keep warm by covering himself with a caribou skin. He was tied to the komatik with the caribou skin to keep him warm.

When the komatik runners broke, they would spread moss and soil on the runners and leave it overnight. If the dogs were sick or injured they would kill them right away, which was sad, but they had to get rid of the body.

DECEMBER



Jessie Gordon Shipaluk: Christmas

Before I had babies, the first time my mother gave me something I was very grateful, but I don’t remember what it was — that was my first gift. To this day I am still surprised that my mother could cook the way Qallunaat could.

## *PART 2*

*Inuit Cultural Maintenance: A Literature Review*

> The Nunavik educational story is a dynamic one which includes traditionalists (Inuit and Qallunaat), revolutionaries (Inuit and Qallunaat), advocates (Inuit and Qallunaat) for a combination of traditional Inuit perspectives with Western curricula, Qallunaat who think the Southern model of education is destructive of Inuit traditions and Inuit who believe they and the students are best served by adopting Western educational approaches — against a background of James Bay hydroelectric development, Quebec separatism and negotiations on regional self-government. (Vick-Westgate, 2002, p. 2).

### *Introduction*

The focus of this research is to determine that which defines Nunavik Inuit culture, and how this culture should best be taught and imparted to successive generations of Inuit children to provide the necessary means to assist in its preservation in the wake of the pervasive Western culture. “The right of ethnic minority groups to use education to preserve and maintain their distinctive beliefs and values and transmit these to the next generation” (Dhillon & Halstead, 2003, p. 149) has become as central an issue in educational debates, as have questions of individual and group identity within larger multicultural contexts.

Children in Nunavik begin their education in their mother tongue, Inuktitut. The James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement of 1975 clearly outlines linguistic policy in Nunavik: “17.0.59. The teaching languages shall be Inuttitut and with respect to the other languages, in accordance with the present practices in the territory” (Québec, 1991, p. 285).

Children are schooled in Inuktitut from kindergarten through grade three [extended from grade two in 2003], when they are provided the choice of pursuing their education to completion in either French or English. “If students benefit from instruction in Inuttitut, why stop at the end of Grade 2? The implications of this research are that it might be advantageous to expand the Inuttitut program into Grades 3 and beyond” (Taylor & Wright, 1998, p. 63). The Kativik School Board’s decision to lengthen the mother tongue language of instruction to include grade three, was based on these recommendations. This system of Inuktitut first-language primary instruction serves to reinforce the mother tongue language learned at home and reflects cultural and communal values.

The transition at (now) grade four is one that arguably puts students at a disadvantage for participation in both cultures. The thrust of Inuktitut and Inuit culture that has been dominant since birth now takes a back seat, as it were, to other languages and cultures. Inuit students find themselves in grade four learning rudimentary English or French grammar and vocabulary. One might argue that students are then at a disadvantage in

many subjects that are tied to these languages. However, Taylor & Wright (1996) refute this stating:

> Increasing heritage language skills does not reduce the capacity to learn a second or third language. Knowledge transfers readily from one language to another. Children do not have to relearn in a second language what they have already learned in a first. ...Therefore, if going to school in Inuttitut for the first few years results in a stronger more fluent knowledge of Inuttitut, this can lead to better English and French skills in the long run (p. 5).

This issue has been one that I have had to address personally. We made the decision to put our daughter in English in Grade three (she was in Grade two the last year before Inuktitut was extended to include grade three, in Kuujjuaq). We had known that this was coming, so I had spent a great deal of time, night after night for years, teaching her “adult” English in order to counter the effects of lost years and the transition. Fortunately this worked, placing her years beyond her peers. Our daughter is an exception, which does not bode well for the average Inuit student.

I have used this example of our daughter to address the issue of cultural maintenance schools as they pertain to the schooling of the Inuit children of Nunavik. In this chapter, I examine the responsibilities of parents and the state in promoting autonomy. I then discuss the role of education in the development of personal and cultural identity in a child’s personal notion of “the good life”. I conclude with a discussion on the

provision of a right of exit from cultures, dangers associated with the right of exit, and a brief discussion on state funding as it pertains to the provision of separate schools in a democracy.

### *The Responsibilities of Parents and State in Promoting Autonomy*

Walter Feinberg (2003) defines autonomy as referring, "to the developing capacity of a child to choose a life in accordance with her own critically developed conception of the good. Autonomy requires the ability to reflect upon one's own socialization process and to eventually take greater control over that process" (p. 400). Autonomy, then, is a developmental process, culminating in the ability to critically define and actively pursue one's personal definition of the good life, accordingly. As young children do not possess this ability, it must be encouraged and taught, both in the home and in school. "These essential prerequisites of autonomy — the elements of a basic education — require time and expertise to teach properly; and in a world where most adults must work for a living, parents cannot be expected to provide them on their own" (Appiah, 2003, p. 63).

In a liberal democratic society, mandatory education fulfills this obligation. The democratic state has a role to reproduce responsible citizens so as to create a citizenry that will reproduce society, while parents have the role to raise and educate their children as they see fit, according to their own definition of the good. "On the one hand, parents

have a right to form and enter communities, to live without interference from state officials, and to pass on their values and beliefs to their children. On the other, schools have an obligation to promote children's rights to freedom of association, personal growth and equal opportunity" (Feinberg, 1998, p. 159).

It is when a child's rights are impeded by the rights of parents to pass on their own distinct ideas toward what constitutes the good that an overlap exists and tensions surrounding differences in values may arise. "Deference to parental choice in education must end when parents wish to thwart the development of autonomy in their children that enables them to exercise the basic freedom of living a life other than into which they were born" (Reich, 2003a, p. 438).

One fundamental responsibility and privilege of parenthood is to raise and educate one's children according to the beliefs, customs and traditions of the culture and society into which one is born. Parents have inherent rights associated with parenthood. "Here we should start with the assumption that the role parents play in the raising of children gives them rights, in respect to the shaping of their children's identities, that are a necessary corollary of parental obligations" (Appiah, 2005, p. 201).

Naturally, most parents desire that their children continue the inherited cultural identity. It is clear that the parental right, "to bring their children up within their worldview and the right of groups to maintain their distinctive cultural identity are central to any concept of multiculturalism, but liberal

individualism also protects the rights of children as they grow older to free themselves if they choose from the cultural practices and worldview of their parents" (Dhillon & Halstead, 2003, pp. 152, 153). However, despite these parental rights, living in a liberal democratic society implies that the state also has a right and an obligation to protect a child's right to her own concept of the good, instead of having that of her parents imposed upon her. "Parental authority may not be considered exclusive and ultimate authority, which would deprive children of the education they need in preparation for the freedom to live their own lives as adults as they see fit" (Gutmann, 2003a, pp. 404, 405).

If schools are to serve the purpose of reproducing citizens that are capable of not only fulfilling the needs of the society to which they belong, but further, ascertaining and eventually living their own identities according to their own personal definition of the good life, then the role of schools is to foster the autonomy needed for students to make these choices independently. "The fundamental idea of a philosophy of education must be that we need to guide each child from hopeless dependency into an autonomous maturity" (Appiah, 2003, p. 62). Anthony Appiah (2005) also reminds us that despite the role both the school and the state must play in the development of autonomous individuals, "the state's principal concern isn't with the ethical success of our lives; it's with the stability and survival of the political order" (p. 161). Survival of the political order in a liberal-

democratic society is therefore contingent on the development of autonomous individuals.

"Choosing freely the principles by which we live requires us critically to compare our parents' favored way of life with other alternatives on offer in the world today" (Burtt, 2003, p. 201). Rather than reproducing the culture that children are born into, schools must prepare students to examine that culture in light of other cultures and value systems and comparatively evaluate the culture they were born into with other cultural choices. These choices, therefore, must be made available to them in the first place.

Schools must prepare students for the ability to critically discern their own conceptions of the good by also preparing students with the options needed to make such a choice.

> Children given educations designed to elicit comprehensive commitments to certain ways of life will not experience the world as presenting a 'menu of spiritual possibilities' nor will they be apt to understand themselves as free to select any identity from among hundreds of thousands on offer in the modern world (Burtt, 2003, p. 189).

If the only culture and choice one is raised and schooled in is that of one's parents, freedom to choose for oneself is no longer possible, for one's options remain restricted to one choice. In a liberal democratic society children must be free to select their own lives, cultures, and identities, even if these are found outside of their culture of origin. "The

value and importance of autonomy lies in enabling not only choice within culture, but also choice beyond one's culture" (Reich, 2003b, p. 314). Children must also be free to selectively opt out of their culture, if they so desire.

In their article, "Liberalism and Communitarianism", Eamonn Callan and John White (2003) state: "Autonomy depends on the existence of options. Education cannot supply these, but it can make students aware of them. Its job is to open up horizons on different conceptions of how one should live — ways of life, forms of relationship, vocational and non-vocational activities" (p. 97). As exclusive parental authority over education cannot guarantee this variety of options for children, it is then the responsibility of the state to ensure that nothing hinders a child's right to autonomy and choice of the good.

From this understanding follows the reasoning that, "neither parents nor states have a right to ultimate and exclusive authority over the education of children" (Gutmann, 2003a, p. 401). At worst, shared as opposed to exclusive rights to educational authority may be seen as a form of safeguard or guarantee that children are not exposed to a harmful or exclusivist education that is detrimental to their individual democratic development from either parents or state. "Dividing authority between parents and state is far less threatening to the future freedom of children than resting educational authority in parents or state alone" (Gutmann, 2003a, p. 401).

Shared rights afford children the opportunity to benefit as much as is possible from their democratic right to an education, from both influences. The sharing of educational authority is necessary not only to attend to the democratic interests of both parties, but also as a safeguard against the excessive control of the other party, in the best interest of the future development of critical and responsible, individual, citizens.

### *The Good Life*

"Simply put, liberalism values political liberty — freedom from government intervention in our lives — because it holds that each person has the right to construct a life of their own" (Appiah, 2003, pp. 56, 57). The right to choose to define and pursue ones' own definition of the good is a right inherent in the ideology of a liberal-democratic society.

> The liberal multicultural nation is seen as an empty shell containing many different conceptions of the good but favoring none of them. Given this vision, it would appear that there is nothing for the schools to promote beyond the idea of individual choice itself and the values of critical thinking (Feinberg, 1998, p. 204).

The responsibility of schools should not, then, be restricted to the reproduction of cultures or societies, rather, its task is the cultivation of a disposition toward critical thinking that will enable students to make their own choices concerning their own definitions of the good.

**"**If liberalism depends on people choosing different conceptions of the good, then there must be different conceptions from which to choose" (Feinberg, 1998, p. 209). Schools also have an obligation to promote these conceptions of the good, as opposed to advocating one culturally-accepted model, or one based on the premise of cultural maintenance. "If my choosing it is part of what makes my life plan good, then imposing on me a plan of life — even one that is, in other respects, an enviable one — is depriving me of a certain kind of good" (Appiah, 2005, p. 14).

The promotion of conceptions of the good involves a, "commitment to developing the capacity for critical deliberation among good lives and societies [which] requires principled limits on all educational authorities, parents, public officials, and professionals" (Gutmann, 2003a, p. 407). Principled limits include non-repression of reason and non-discrimination, and democratic virtues such as open-mindedness and tolerance (Gutmann, 2003a, pp. 406-410). In fostering the conditions necessary for the development of critical thinking, I agree that principled limits such as non-repression of reason and non-discrimination are fundamental prerequisites of a liberal-democratic education. However, I depart from Gutmann on the notion of tolerance, for tolerance implies inferiority, one that others must learn to 'tolerate'. Tolerance perpetuates existing cleavages, allowing both the right to co-exist, but in ignorance, and without addressing the root issue of difference. I would suggest that children need not learn to 'tolerate' gays, lesbians, whites, or men, but rather, need to

learn to embrace, support, and celebrate others *for* their differences. In every difference there is an *other*; neither can claim democratic superiority.

Shelley Burtt (2003) reminds us that the ability to discriminate the good is also intrinsic to the development of identity. “Part of doing a good job of raising children to embrace a comprehensive vision of the good life thus involves equipping them with the ‘powers of practical reason’ with which to confront crisis of faith and identity” (p. 185). It is through the development of critical thinking and the pursuit of conceptions of the good, that identity is cultivated.

### *Culture, Cultural Identity, and Cultural Maintenance*

According to Walter Feinberg (1998), culture consists of a network of meaning from which people share: “A shared written and oral language, shared norms about marriage, childrearing, family membership and obligations, and land use, and shared understanding about the way we should interact with members of other groups and with nature” (p. 4). Amy Gutmann (2003b) furthers this understanding reminding us that cultures can, in turn, be part of larger cultures: “Tribes like the Pueblo, Navajo, Hopi, Inuit, Sami, and Maori, for example, are each distinctive cultures, yet they share the status of indigenous peoples, separated by their cultures from the larger societies of which they are a separate part” (p. 39). It

appears then, that the cultural labels with which we identify and belong are not singular, static identities.

"The idea that a single cultural membership encompasses the identities of its members implies that individuals cannot think, act, or imagine beyond 'their culture', which is singular, not multicultural" (Gutmann, 2003b, p. 48).

One's culture, if even only at birth, consists among many things, of the national, ethnic, racial, linguistic, societal, and religious beliefs of one's parents. "Individuals may never transcend the societal culture of their birth, but they may engage in critical appraisal and revision of it" (Reich, 2003b, p. 316). Essentially every day thereafter, one's culture changes, with every minute, person, event and influence encountered, forever altering the momentary culture into which one was born into an evolved culture of the now. "Cultures are continually changing by virtue of the creative interpretations and actions of people who identify with them and their interactions with other people and cultures" (Gutmann, 2003b, p. 74). Culture, therefore, evolves constantly.

> Inuit culture is not monolithic, but rather varies from region to region, community to community and can even vary in practice from Inuk to Inuk. Nor is it a culture frozen in time. Inuit adaptation is perhaps our most notable trait, and this characteristic continues to serve us well in the modern context (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 2).

As culture is a continually evolving phenomenon, the more contact Indigenous cultures have with other cultures, whether through physical contact, cable TV or the Internet, for example, the more the Indigenous cultures evolve. Sandy Grande (2000) paraphrases Devon Mihesuah in saying: “Acknowledging that, while traditions are important to maintain, they have always been fluid” (p. 489). Culture, and by extension, cultural values and traditions, are evolving and fluid.

> The whole concept of cultural identity only makes sense in relation to other cultural identities. Hence, for example, when I am abroad I am American, when I visit my friend’s church I am Jewish, when I take the bus through the black neighborhood I am white, and when I need a bathroom, I am a male (Feinberg, 1998, p. 163).

Identities, then, are also multi-faceted, contextual and interchangeable.

My identity is composed of, although not limited to the following: Canadian, English Quebecer, male, white, Protestant, husband, father, teacher, student, friend, and so on. I also identify with Inuit culture in my family life. “Furthermore, my identity is crucially constituted through concepts (and practices) made available to me by religion, society, school, and state, and mediated to varying degrees by the family” (Appiah, 2003, p. 65). Identities are multidimensional, and defined at different times of identification. “Identities are multiple and overlapping and context sensitive, and some are relatively trivial or transient” (Appiah, 2005, p. 100).

When I am in the North, I have no choice but to identify with being "Qallunaaq", whereas I do not have a need for this identity label in the south. There are many different identity hats that each of us wear upon differing necessities.

"Black, woman, gay, aboriginal — so many of the identity categories that are politically salient are precisely ones that have functioned as limits, the result of the attitudes and acts of contemptuous others" (Appiah, 2005, p. 12). Although identity can serve to foster a sense of cultural belonging, identities also serve racial prejudice and discrimination, further dividing the culture of humanity. A personal example may again be helpful. On one trip to the south many years ago, we found ourselves in a Montreal shopping center in the middle of winter. My wife had our son in her ammautiq (Inuit parka for carrying babies). Two teenage boys passed us and one exclaimed, "Hey, are you from the Ice Age?" as they walked away laughing. Although my wife wasn't fazed in the slightest, their ignorance bothered me, for it was an example of how cultural identities can also serve to further the discriminatory divides between a (now) global people.

> Inuit live and work in fully modernized communities. Their identity is not to be found in a mere list of cultural attributes (e.g., igloos, shamans, hunting and fishing). Inuit identity involves the specific ways that Arctic natives establish their relationship with people, animals, the land, and the whole universe (Dorais, 1997, p. 106).

In his wonderful analysis of Inuit identity in Quaqtaq (a small village on the Ungava coast in Nunavik), Louis-Jacques Dorais writes of Inuit identity as being caught between the traditional activity of hunting, and the modern necessity of wage earning.

> [The people of Quaqtaq] perceive themselves as inextricably caught between *maqainniq*, the most basic expression of their Inuit identity, and *kiinaujaliurutiit*, the Qallunaaq-inspired means for earning a decent living. Many of them — perhaps the majority — think that maqainniq will disappear and that their grandchildren and great-grandchildren will lose their ancestral language and culture (Dorais, 1997, p. 92).

Although as it would appear, Inuit identity yearns toward the traditional identity of maqainniq [hunting], contemporary necessities pull Inuit identity toward Kiinaujaliurutiit.

Inuit identity in Nunavik, then, appears to be one that is fraught not with competing identities, but with composite identities. As one must adapt to a bilingual, increasingly trilingual situation in Nunavik, so too must one adapt to a bicultural situation. Inuit identity now includes an identity that is needed to survive, succeed, and flourish in both cultures and worlds.

“Whatever its qualifications, however, identity is not simply the label (e.g., ‘Inuit’ or ‘Qallunaat’) affixed to a particular people, nor does it consist in a list of cultural traits defining the artifacts, behaviors and world-view of a specific group of human beings” (Dorais, 1997, p. 5).

Inuit cultural identity speaks to the spirit and essence of an Inuit existence. Dorais (1997) provides a helpful definition of identity:

> Identity is a dynamic and creative process that is best expressed through the strategies developed to relate to one's physical, social and spiritual environments. These environments may change over time and space, thus identity is never fixed once and for all. It fluctuates constantly (p. 5).

As Inuit cultural identity still involves hunting and fishing — maqainniq — and is tied to the land, Inuit contemporary maqainniq also involves skidoos, Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and satellite phones. As culture and identity evolve, so too do traditions. "As they came into each new area, the people adapted their lives to the weather and food resources they found there. They adapted existing tools or invented the new technology they needed to survive in each environment" (Vick-Westgate, 2002, p. 251).

The tools and traditions through which Inuit identity were expressed have evolved with Inuit culture. "Not only have the hunters changed, their families have as well. Inuit families watch sports events on TV. Their children play video games. They use computers, invest in stocks, drive cars, and share in all of the amenities of industrial life" (St. Clair & Busch, 2002, p. 69).

*Inuit Cultural Maintenance*

"Under these circumstances, many aboriginal children in North America will grow up with a striking sense of ambivalence toward both their traditional aboriginal identity and their emerging identification with the federal nation" (McDonough, 2003, p. 363). Life in contemporary democratic Canadian society requires kiinaujaliurutiit — the means for earning a decent living.

I will always recall a conversation I had with my late Inuit mother-in-law upon the birth of our first child. She asked me (slightly tongue-in-cheek, but all-the-while serious) how I was going to provide for my wife and children when I did not hunt? It was the proverbial, "How are you going to provide for my daughter?" speech, from an Inuit perspective.

Taken rather aback by the straightforwardness of her inquiry, and feeling slightly culturally-challenged by the fact that I was not Inuit, I addressed the issue with humility, and no regrets. I explained that in the culture in which I was raised, to 'be a good provider' for one's family requires going to school for years and years in order to get an education which will provide better financial opportunities through better employment prospects so that I can buy food for my family at the store. I added, as if it would somehow appease the fact that I do not hunt, that according to the standards of my culture, I was fortunate to be able to use my mind for labour instead of my hands. Although I do not hunt, I have acquired an education, have refined shopping skills, and am a mean chef!

The question remains, how does the state provide an education for critical thinking and the autonomous development and pursuit of the good life, while also respecting parental and minority group rights to cultural diversity within a liberal-democratic society?

Citing May, Dhillon & Halstead (2003) pose a question that is central to this research in Nunavik: “Should schools be more concerned with the preservation and transmission of traditional cultural values and practices, or with encouraging an approach to culture that allows for criticism, development, and change?” (cf. May, 1999, 33, p. 148). If a Northern school board endorses a curriculum and approach ‘that is more concerned with the preservation and transmission of traditional cultural values and practices’ than they are the development of critical thinking, they do so at a cost.

> Schools that are justified on grounds of cultural survival cannot also guarantee that they will respect the value of personal autonomy, while schools that are justified according to the value of personal autonomy cannot ensure that they will respect the value of cultural survival (McDonough, 1998, p. 472).

Complete exposure to one set of cultural values alone is figuratively ‘cutting off one arm’ of student potential. It might arguably be beneficial to Inuit culture to have Inuit children thoroughly and exclusively educated in their own traditional cultural values and practices, but this is no longer practical in the contemporary Western global society we now occupy.

> Some parents have learned their own school lessons all too well and believe that the best future for their children lies in them learning English well and becoming accomplished in all the skills required by modern Canadian society. They feel that learning the mother tongue and traditional ways is not important and will hinder their children's chance of success (Fogwill, 1994, p. 11).

Educating Inuit youth exclusively in their own culture would only serve to limit the personal, educational, and economic development of Inuit students by not preparing them for the world they now inhabit. Sadly, it is no longer ecologically or environmentally feasible to live exclusively 'off of the land'; the animal population that is not yet polluted or extinct is now insufficient to sustain the growing Inuit population. Pollution and global warming have forever altered the natural environment of the Arctic. The way of life and the balance with nature has been severed.

If it does not make much sense to educate Inuit youth exclusively in the cultural values and traditions of their heritage and ancestry, the question is then one of how much Inuit culture is required in order to sustain and ameliorate Inuit cultural identity, while simultaneously providing Inuit youth with an education that will allow them to succeed in other cultures, should they so desire.

Pradeep Dhillon and J. Mark Halstead (2003) summarize this issue:

> The question therefore arises whether schools have a duty to encourage all children to develop into autonomous individuals, even if this generates a clash of loyalties and may result in children casting off their cultural heritage, or whether they should give priority to emotional security and stability by ensuring that there is some continuity between the cultural values to which children are exposed to at home and those of the school (p. 150).

Exclusive exposure to Inuit culture comes at the expense of a lack of 'Qallunaat' culture (in other words, a southern, Western education) that is now needed for survival in the modern world. Too little Inuit culture is a sure recipe for extinction. This then seems to suggest a mathematically precise and quantifiable compendium of 'culture' required on each side of the educational balance. I suggest that the answer is not that simple.

The other side of this initial query is, if a Northern school board endorses a curriculum and approach to culture that allows for criticism, development, and change, it may imply a dilution of Inuit values in some cases, as many Inuit youth may in the end leave their communities and ways of life as a result of having been exposed to other cultural definitions of the good life. Exposure to other alternatives may indeed cause youth to abandon the ways of the past.

> On the one hand their ancestral culture may be deeply cherished, as the culture of parents, grandparents and other loved ones, but also carry a stigma as a culture doomed to

> failure in the face of the over-whelming dominance of the Western culture that underwrites the larger multinational society (McDonough, 2003, p. 363).

By providing an educational environment that allows for the development of critical thought and change, Inuit students are then given the tools to evaluate the merits of all cultural approaches toward fulfilling the good life, as they choose to define it.

"The crucial issue here is how to determine the limits to parents' educational rights when two aspects of affiliation liberalism conflict — a concern to promote children's autonomy conflicts with maintaining group integrity" (Feinberg & McDonough, 2003, pp. 7, 8). There needs, then, in the interest of providing Inuit students with the optimal amount of exposure to the development of personal autonomy while also addressing concerns of cultural maintenance, to be some sort of balance or compromise available between the two necessities.

In the Nunavik context, Inuktitut is mandatory as a primary language from Kindergarten to Grade 3. Continuing the child's education in French or English afterward is a parental choice, and Inuktitut is from then on offered as a language course, and spoken in culture classes. In Nunavik, the choice to remain in one's culture is not as profound and abrupt a decision as with the Amish culture, for example, where, "the U.S. Supreme Court asserted the right of a cultural/religious group, the Amish, to limit the opportunities of their own children in order that the coherence and

solidarity of the culture could be maintained" (Feinberg & McDonough, 2003, p. 8). The Canadian dominant culture and 'southern' ways of life exist in full capacity in Nunavik Inuit villages, so that the Inuit culture is not as hermitically sealed as is the culture of the Amish, and there is less to 'escape' from, as it were (for a detailed discussion of the Wisconsin v. Yoder case see, for example: Strike, Reich, and Macedo, In McDonough & Feinberg, 2003).

"An education isolating children from the larger society and forcing them to remain within their community of origin restricts their freedom and ability to determine for themselves their own cultural, communal preferences" (Tamir, 2003, p. 507). Although education in Nunavik has not been designed with the intent of 'forcing students to remain in their community of origin', it may have the same indirect affect.

An interpretation of the term 'isolating' used above, may be understood as restricting not only the freedom of choice but also the freedom of knowledge. It may well be that the contemporary education system in Nunavik is isolating to students. Education in Nunavik does not always adequately prepare students for participation in cultural settings other than Nunavik. "Our Inuit teachers do not want to work outside of Nunavik" (Kativik School Board, 2008, p. 86). This is likely due to the fact that teaching in Inuktitut is not needed outside of the North, thereby geographically limiting the need for Inuktitut teachers. Whether the causes be attributed to linguistic shifting and educational bilingualism, poor

teaching from unskilled first-time teachers, insufficient numbers of trained Inuit teachers, inadequate curricular resources, not being culturally and historically used to the Eurocentric model of education, or the many other social and cultural differences that contribute to it, it remains that a Northern education is limited in comparison to a southern one, as it constrains the options available to Inuit students by providing relatively few choices other than the traditional Inuit culture of their parents.

By extension, it could be stated that a Nunavik education is one that *does* isolate children from the larger society by not adequately preparing students to succeed outside of the Northern Québec context. “The Kativik School Board will pursue as an objective the use of French as a language of instruction so that pupils graduating from its schools will, in the future, be capable of continuing their studies in a French school, college or university elsewhere in Québec, if they so desire” (Québec, 1991, p. 285). Although this decree in the J.B.N.Q.A. has good intentions, this ideal is far from a reality**.**

> Parents in Nunavik are well aware of their children’s academic underachievement. They see how few of their young people graduate from Secondary V. They are aware of the number of dropouts. And, they know that even those few who do pursue a mainstream education at the college level rarely succeed (Taylor & Wright, 1998, p. 55).

In short, many ideological claims about the North may have been designed with altruistic intentions and look good on paper, but the fact remains that Inuit culture is continually evolving and is being diluted with every generation, the education system in place serves predominantly non-Inuit values, objectives and methods, and drop-out and failure rates still remain significantly high.

Rob Reich (2003b) raises the issue of the rights of children from mixed cultural identities, which is central to this discussion:

> Think too of a child born to parents who belong to different societal cultures, say of a Native-American mother and a Euro-American father or of a French-Canadian mother and a British-Canadian father. What will be the relevant societal culture for this child? (p. 316).

It may be helpful here to provide an example. If I, as a parent, choose to have my Inuit and Qallunaat preschool-aged children educated in a southern 'multi-cultural classroom' will they adequately learn what it means to be proud and culturally strong Inuit? If I choose to have them educated in a mono-cultural Northern classroom where they are provided an inferior southern education alongside a questionable Inuit cultural education, what future will this prepare them for? Will spending the first four years of their education in the North in Inuktitut be beneficial or detrimental to their future scholastic achievement in English, French, or both? Does this four year Inuktitut immersion adequately teach them all

that they need to know about Inuit culture, in order to appropriately make the critical decisions necessary to exercising their democratic choice?

As it appears, no choice is without fault or detriment. Educating my children in the North will provide an enriching Inuit cultural experience, but may not provide them with the best educational opportunities according to *my* definition of the good life.

Conversely, although they might arguably receive a better quality of education in the south, they may not receive any Inuit cultural education at all, which realistically only contributes to the overall erosion of Inuit culture in the long run. “The range of cultural narratives, roles, and options from which we choose is given to us by the cultural structures within which we were raised and educated” (McDonough, 1998, p. 468). Therefore, the choices we as parents make now will make all the difference in the world in terms of providing our children with the cultural narratives, roles and options needed.

Gutmann (2003b) states that, “since minority groups in a democratic society must compete with the dominant culture to provide a context of choice for their members, they find themselves at a disadvantage” (p. 43). If traditional cultural values are juxtaposed with an education for the Western twenty-first century, minority cultures in a democratic society may indeed find themselves at a disadvantage, as the context of choice is extremely limiting and may contribute to the overall demise of a culture over time.

It is imperative to add that Inuit parents also shoulder the burden of this responsibility, as parents of all cultures should, especially when traditional cultural systems of education involved the parent as teacher.

"Traditionally, Inuit children learned by carefully observing and following the examples set by their elders" (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 19). In traditional Inuit culture, a father taught all of the knowledge and skills necessary for survival to his sons, as a mother did to her daughters. "In the traditional Inuit lifestyle, education was not separated from day-to-day living. It was not something you studied, it was something you did. The essence of education was getting ready to assume adult life roles" (Vick-Westgate, 2002, p. 41). It seems quite apparent, then, that any educational attempts toward Inuit cultural maintenance in Nunavik must see the role of the parent-as-cultural-teacher return to the forefront of the Inuit educational experience.

"What is at issue here is the claim that a minority's right to cultural survival should sometimes take priority over some of the rights a liberal-democratic state usually guarantees to all its citizens" (Halstead, 2003, p. 279). This view confirms the position adopted by Gutmann (2003b), where, "honoring a right of cultural survival calls for perpetuating a group associated with a particular culture, even if its members and their progeny would otherwise freely choose to identify with another culture over time" (p. 75). This position, however, appears to contradict the freedom inherent in a liberal-democratic society, as it implies that the life choices of

individual members of a culture are not as important or valued as the right of the group to maintain the culture. This thereby places group rights above individual rights, which is non-democratic.

Susan Okin (2003) reminds us that, “individuals must not only be formally free, but substantively and more or less equally free, to leave their religions or cultures of origin; they must have *realistic* rights of exit” (p. 325). However, Okin later goes on to add that realistic rights of exit do not exist. “Thus, I conclude, the right of exit, though no doubt important, does not have the clout it is often thought to have” (p. 327). The costs to one’s sense of self-concept and identity are enormous. “Schools can be, and often are, used to insure the perpetuation of the group and to discourage or disable the capacity of children to exit the group” (Reich, 2003b, p. 301). It would seem almost contradictory for schools promoting cultural maintenance and the perpetuation of the group to also advocate critical autonomy and the option to leave, unless the right of exit was fundamentally discouraged. “If the right of exit strategy is even to be coherent, individuals must acquire the capacity to question the value of continued allegiance to cultural norms and practices, and ultimately to the group itself” (Reich, 2003b, p. 306). Reich furthers this argument by suggesting that the right of exit, as a democratic feature of cultural maintenance, is not an appropriate defense.

> Since children are still dependent on their families for care, it is highly unlikely that many children would ever avail themselves

> of the exit option, even were they able to consider it. The costs of exit for children — possibly forgoing the continued love and support of one's parents and family, of suffering shame and ostracism, and so on — are so great that even those with the wherewithal and courage to leave will have powerful reasons to stay (2003b, p. 307).

Anthony Appiah (2005) best appropriates the issue with respect to the right of exit:

> Indeed, you may ask what sense it really makes to say you can exit an identity group... if the unencumbered self is a myth, how can you extricate yourself from the context that confers meaning? After all, it would make little sense to speak of 'exiting' your language, especially when it is the only one you have (p. 78).

We may be able to physically remove ourselves from the presence of a culturally-specific people and influence, but permanently exiting a cultural identity is not a realistic option, nor is it a defense for overriding democratic autonomy.

> For those who seek to reconcile group and individual autonomy — who seek to exalt the freedom of association without utterly scanting conventional autonomist considerations — the right of exit has become a veritable workhorse. As long as a group permits members to leave, a great deal is permitted (Appiah, 2005, p. 76).

As we have seen, the right of exit is a convenient nomenclatural farce.

> If the education of children is exclusively controlled by a single cultural group that aims to make their entire upbringing as encompassed by one group as possible, then it surely cannot be said that their democracy has afforded them an effective right later in life to exit this cultural group (Gutmann, 2003b, p. 61).

One cannot simply give up being Jewish, Chinese, or Inuit, for example. The cultural identities that express these labels are internalized far more than are possible to exit. They are a part of that person's personal and cultural identity. "What kind of a choice is one between total submission and total alienation from the person she understands herself to be? Is this a choice that a group within a liberal state should place some of its members in the position of having to make?" (Okin, 2003, p. 346).

Above all, what is most important is the future development of children. In a democratic society, this means providing children with an education for autonomy. "Democratic citizens must be free to criticize or simply ignore inherited cultural practices and therefore to adopt new practices that may lead to the demise of a culture with which some people identify." (Gutmann, 2003b, p. 77).

As unfortunate as it would be, democracy must protect the autonomy of individuals, whether this in turn directs children toward other versions of the good and by extension, cultural erosion, or whether they choose to remain in their communities and cultures of origin.

> Autonomous choice among cultures may mean simply the freedom to be a cosmopolitan hybrid, appropriating the values of other cultures for oneself, renegotiating the values of the culture(s) one is born into, asserting shifting allegiances and affiliations, and, in the end, constructing for oneself a context of choice that extends beyond the culture of one's birth (Reich, 2003b, p. 317).

The right of exit seems, I argue, not to be a viable option for members of minority cultures, as in most cases this is simply not a realistic choice, either for members to enact, or for cultures to offer their people. Therefore, it could be argued that minority cultural groups in a democratic society should not have exclusive rights over the education of their children, as this contradicts the rights and freedoms associated with the development of a child's autonomy, own cultural identity, and conception of the good.

> The role of public education should be to expand children's horizons, to teach them that they are part of a larger moral community than that in which they were raised and that their life options should not be limited to those endorsed by their parents and communities. Thus the cosmopolitan aims both to liberate children from their roots, and to induce proper moral concern with the rest of humanity (Brighouse, 2003, p. 157).

The role of education is to promote freedom of thought and choice in preparation for the contemporary society we now occupy, not to restrict it.

> Though we may drape ourselves in the distinctive costumes of our ethnic heritage and immure ourselves in an environment designed to minimize our sense of relation to the outside world — no honest account of our being will be complete without an account of our dependence on larger social and political structures that go far beyond the particular community with which we pretend to identify ourselves (Waldron, 2003, p. 54).

As we have seen, all cultures continuously evolve. Although Jeremy Waldron may here seem a bit harsh in claiming the 'pretense' of identity to a cultural community, he is right in saying that we are always part of the larger democratic picture, as Quebecers, as Canadians, and as citizens of the world. We may make all sorts of attempts to separate and compart-mentalize people through the maintenance of separate cultural identities, but it is evident that humanity is evolving into a global society that transgresses many cultural boundaries.

It is clear, however, that cultural maintenance must take place in (Nunavik) schools, apart from the regular curriculum which is provided in order that students may compete in the majority society. "Some minority national groups are territorially concentrated in remote areas (e.g. the Inuit) and thus the possibilities for genuinely common schools are slim" (McDonough, 2003, p. 379). In situations where the population consists predominantly of a minority nationalist group culture such as in Nunavik, common schools — public schools serving multicultural, liberal-democratic

values — cannot exist, for lack of a cultural variety of citizens from which to form a common education. “In these cases it might be possible to address such concerns through a system of separate schools that focus on establishing a commitment to the minority nation in the early years of schooling” (McDonough, 2003, p. 380).

Reich further adds that such schools can apply to minorities who do not respect some principles of a democratic society:

> One approach is to see separate education — schools which are not open to religious or ethical diversity and do not foster citizenship and autonomy — as permissible during the early ages when children depend most on their parents and need most a coherent moral universe to establish an initial identity (Reich, 2003a, p. 441).

Both authors here agree with the idea that minority cultural values can be taught in separate schools in the primary years of development. Indeed, this is the most crucial time when a child needs such stability. In most cases, children of this age are dependent, not yet seeking autonomy, so education in minority cultures may not be viewed as a threat to their autonomy. As this is the current Inuit/Inuktitut model in place in Nunavik, perhaps this is the most optimal approach one can hope for in providing an autonomous and democratic education for both minority and majority nations.

Funding for schools in a liberal-democratic society such as Canada comes from public funds. “Some object that since public schools are supported with resources to which everyone must contribute, it is illegitimate to use these resources to encourage children to think of themselves in narrow and particularistic terms” (Feinberg, 1998, p. 165). Schools operating under such funding must therefore meet requirements established by the Ministry of Education of each province in Canada, as education is provincially-legislated.

Under these conditions it is clear that schools must foster democratic, multicultural, Canadian values that begin with the right to an autonomous identity through the development of critical thinking. “To maintain their support, religious [or in this case, separate] schools would be expected to demonstrate that they serve to advance democracy and autonomy” (Feinberg, 2003, p. 409). Should such schools fall short of these objectives they would then be ineligible for public funding.

Educational funding is also available through various Canadian initiatives to strengthen aboriginal education. “Federal support for measures that strengthen aboriginal education and health care, for example, contribute to a stronger and more just Canada as well as to a stronger minority national identity” (McDonough, 2003, p. 378). On one hand funding is provided in order to maintain majority national citizenship in aboriginal communities, while on the other hand, funding is provided to ‘strengthen aboriginal education’ within the Canadian community. Only in

Canada, eh! It is through the democratic rights of all cultures, that we come to know the beauty of multicultural Canada.

Finally, if minority groups, “cannot use education to maintain their distinctive beliefs and values, then their culture is vulnerable either to gradual corrosion as a result of sustained exposure to liberal values or to a more direct assault by liberal laws and social policy” (Halstead, 2003, p. 283).

Walter Feinberg & Kevin McDonough (2003) offer a final reminder of the initial motivation for this research: “When fragile cultural groups are allowed to disappear it both detracts from the number of alternatives available within a society and provides additional pressures to individuals born into that culture to exit it” (p. 5). When fragile cultural groups are allowed to disappear it hurts us all. If we democratically and philosophically rationalize-away their need, such cultures, ways of life, and people, will vanish. Who then will we learn from?

## *Part 3*

*Theoretical Methodological Framework*

This qualitative research study examines traditional and contemporary Inuit cultural values in their natural setting. A qualitative study is the most appropriate form of research methodology for this research focuses on human values and interpretations, which are best understood through qualitative methods.

Qualitative research methods allow indigenous researchers to study, "the perception and lay understanding of [values] in aboriginal populations or the social and cultural meanings" (Boston, Jordan, et al. 1997. P. 5) that this Inuit population attaches to them.

John Creswell (1998) defines qualitative research as:

> An inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (p. 15).

Qualitative research methods afford researchers the opportunity of observing human behavioural and sociocultural aspects of societies in their natural environment, as they are, that are not as adequately observable or expressed through other methods of research (such as quantitative research methods, for example).

Qualitative research is:

> multimethod in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials — case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts — that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' lives (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2).

This qualitative study is an ethnography. "As a process, ethnography involves prolonged observation of a group typically through participant observation in which the researcher is immersed in the day-to-day lives of the people or through one-on-one interviews with members of the group" (Creswell, 1998, p. 58). Having its roots in anthropological studies, ethnography involves the study of culture through fieldwork. Creswell comments that ethnographic researchers, "establish what a stranger would have to know in order to understand what is going on here, or, more challenging still, what a stranger would have to know in order to be able to participate in a meaningful way" (1998, p. 60).

Ethnographic studies open a window of understanding on the customs, habits and beliefs of a particular people in a given time. "Good, solid ethnographic accounts... help us to understand how particular social

systems work by providing detailed descriptive information coupled with interpretation" (Wolcott, 1987, p. 52).

As the social system in question in this research is an Inuit perspective bounded in a particular place and time, this then takes us closer toward a case study methodological approach. "A case study is an exploration of a 'bounded system' or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context" (Creswell, 1998, p. 61).

A case study is then, more appropriate to a specific cultural group of a particular time and place (in this case, Nunavik; 2012), as the focus of ethnographic research tends more to attempt to understand a complete cultural or social system, whereas the scope of a case study is smaller (Creswell, 1998).

Creswell suggests that, "an apparent overlap exists between an ethnography and a case study. In the former, we examine a cultural system; in the latter, we examine a bounded system" (1998, p. 66). As aspects of both are present in this study, the methodological tradition that this research assumes is an ethnographic case study.

*Setting the Context*

"Setting is a starting point in any inquiry. That is, it is in a particular place at a particular time that cultural encounters, dialogues and negotiations of meaning occur, and shared understandings are constructed" (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996b, p. 219). In setting the context of this research study, I present the story of the events surrounding my initiation into the second community I was to inhabit and work as a teacher and education consultant in, as it is typical of the North and the initiatives teachers must make in order to achieve success.

The ice storm of 1998 hit my Montreal apartment building quite hard. Rather than hurriedly vacate the premises as all other tenants of my building had done, I chose to stay, and made the best of it. Hanging meat, milk and vegetables out of the third floor kitchen window in a plastic-bag-makeshift-fridge, I actually enjoyed the adversity and was probably the only person in Montreal who did. The day after the ice storm ended (February 13) I attempted to leave, but after six hours of waiting at the gate, the flight was cancelled due to mechanical problems; postponed yet one more day — probably best on a Friday the 13th anyway.

The next day, after yet another six hour delay for mid-flight mechanical problems in a cigar-tube excuse for a plane (landing wheels not retracting and the co-pilot literally smashing them down with a broom handle through a trap door in the floor — always fun in-flight entertainment), repair in a village too small to make maps, and being switched to another plane that

made the cigar-tube seem like an ocean liner, we landed at 10:45 p.m., sixteen hours later, in minus 50 degree (Celsius) weather. Good to be home. Driven by school bus to my modern duplex (two story, two bedroom, semi-detached duplex), I found my twenty-four large boxes full of four months' supplies, neatly stacked in the living room.

The following morning I met with the local employment officer responsible for promoting the course before I arrived, only to find that they had not been made aware of the date of my arrival due to the ice storm, had not done recruitment, and therefore had no students for me. That afternoon, two young hunters were reported missing from the community. The program would have to wait. My employers, both the Kativik School Board and le Centre Travail Québec, however, needed a course delivered to a minimum of eight registered students in order to justify my presence and expenses.

Two days later, one of the young men made it back to the village. They had lost their komatik, carrying all of their supplies and tools, when it had come unhitched from the skidoo in the midst of a violent Arctic storm.

Their skidoo had run out of gas and one of the young men had attempted to walk back. He suffered severe frostbite, but his friend was not so lucky. They found his body the next day. Bewildered and in mourning, the entire village literally shut down for two days. I attended the funeral and was deeply moved.

Understandably, the town mourned for many more days. Calls from both of my employers made it quite clear that although they were sympathetic to the situation, I had one week left in order to generate students, for I had already been there one week, or I was, politely, “on a plane home”.

Over the next few days I recorded a ‘hook’, carefully looped four times just before the original song lyrics entered, from a popular song of a well-known contemporary music group, on an inexpensive portable cassette recorder. Using another cassette recorder from the school, I then recorded my voice speaking new lyrics — sounding exactly like the gruff singer, over the initial taped recording of the hook. My lyrics were play-on-word

alterations of the original, in like rhyme and metre, aimed at getting those who were either unemployed or on social assistance back into school or the work force through participation in my course.

At the end of the English version, I looped the sequence again, without pause, and had my hired local assistant speak the same translated text, in time, in an Inuktitut version in sync with the music. I took the final tape to the local FM radio station and upon being received by an interested announcer, had the commercial played some ten times per day for the next two weeks. Commercials did not then exist on the Northern local FM radio stations, the most common means of community communication in Northern villages, so the potential impact was quite high.

In all modesty, it was quite a good production equipment considered, for the end result sounded like the original music group come to this small Inuit village, to entice people into my program at the Adult Education Center. Whether the commercial impressed people enough to come, or whether it illuminated the possibility of something else to do, I had eleven students who registered on Monday morning. Three stopped attending within the first week (two having acquired jobs), and the remaining eight students not only graduated four months later, but successfully acquired jobs and/or returned to school the following semester. The next year I had the occasion to then teach academic high school courses to three of the students who had been motivated to return to school from my first course. I remained in that community for three more years.

*On Being an Inside-Outsider*

Fortunately, I have been able to pursue full time graduate studies while in the North for the past decade and a half, completing the Graduate Diploma in Adult Education: Teacher Certification Option II at Concordia University, Montreal; the Master of Arts degree in Culture & Values in Education at McGill University, Montreal; and my doctoral studies in the same department at McGill. My M.A. research and thesis at McGill was entitled, “Inuit Values in Adult Education: A Nunavik case study” (Mount, 2001). In this research, I concluded that there is a need to integrate the teaching of traditional Inuit skills and knowledge with contemporary curricula: To unite both into a curriculum embracing the advantages of both worlds, traditions and cultures (Mount. 2001). This doctoral research further develops many of the findings from my preliminary M.A. work.

An understanding of the researcher’s position as an insider or as an outsider in the community or culture of qualitative and ethnographic research is central to most qualitative studies. Ideally in research, the intention is to remain as objective as one is able, so as to eliminate subjective bias that the experience of the researcher in the context of the subject under study can cause.

Is it better to study Inuit culture as an outsider, from a distance, taking a momentary snapshot of a culture; or is it better to become an insider, submersed in Inuit culture for lengthy time periods, thereby exposing oneself to the tacit and often hidden aspects of a culture that in-depth,

subjective involvement can provide? Both positions have research advantages. Both have research disadvantages. “In this negotiation, both the ‘outside’ storyteller and the ‘inside’ one are disadvantaged in different but asymmetrical ways” (Feinberg, 1998, p. 196). It is imperative to note that although both are different, neither posture is better. Perhaps a mixture of both is then most desirable.

> The disadvantages of being an insider, totally familiar with and at home in schools, may be more than compensated for by the understanding a perspective insider can bring; the same argument is proffered by persons who hold memberships in other groups and wish to study their own people, on the grounds that insiders best understand the total complexity of the system (Wolcott, 1987, p. 52).

This reminds us that the position of an insider researcher provides first-hand knowledge of the complex cultural context that comprises the groups’ belief systems. Conversely, being an outsider researcher affords one a distance from which to observe, interact and study that can allow one to be more objective, if any degree of objectivity is indeed possible, as one is not part of the day-to-day lives and activities of the people one wishes to understand. It is often difficult to research one’s own people, as the issues are then, ‘too close to home’. “Detachment is as important to the ethnographic process as is involvement” (Wolcott, 1987, p. 52).

I began my research on Inuit values in adult education as an outsider, in my first Nunavik community in 1996, on a four-month maternity-replacement contract in Inukjuak. I was as ‘white’ in look, culture, habit and grace, as I was ‘green’ to the Inuit culture I became exposed to, and gradually, yet eventually, over the course of a decade, came to call home.

As an outsider, I quickly became very attracted to the beauty, warmth, selflessness, honest sincerity, happiness, and dignified persistence in the face of adversity that is the Inuit character. I admired the sense of harmonious joy with which the Inuit people live, that made me feel as if my culture, whatever that may be — White, male, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, Canadian, has missed the proverbial boat of understanding the human condition and our place in nature.

Although my first Northern experience was for only sixteen weeks, it was long enough that it had an effect on me physically and emotionally. Remaining in relative isolation as a Qallunaaq minority in a predominantly Inuit village is quite difficult for many who are used to being part of the majority in large metropolitan southern cities. There were occasions during the last few weeks of my first Northern experience, when I decided to go to bed very early, in order to ‘speed up’ the time remaining until my departure.

The stress, the anxiety, the alienation and culture shock that comes from living completely submersed in a very different culture and language, in a totally foreign world, can be overwhelming. When this is added to the

daunting task of teaching all high school courses in a multi-level, second-language classroom, with minimal support, one can almost find oneself literally pulling out one's hair at times.

Oddly, once back in Montreal and consequently every time I returned to the south thereafter, I became overwhelmingly consumed by a sense of loss and vacancy, of being absent from a more purposeful life, akin to the feeling in September if one has decided not to return to school. Once the North gets in one's bones it does not leave.

In 1998 I returned to the North, to my second Northern village, Puvirnituq. Celebrating Christmas and New Year's with the Inuit and remaining in the community during the summer months, which are times when most Qallunaat have departed for the south, welcomed me much more profoundly into the community. At these times, the local people literally seem 'liberated' as it were, moving about with less constraint and discretion than is normally exercised when Qallunaat are around.

I met my wife, who is an Inuk, in Puvirnituq, where I lived for almost four years, where we were later married and our first son was born. In 2001 we moved to Kuujjuaq, on the Ungava coast, where our second son and second daughter were born and we currently reside.

Admittedly, when I began this doctoral research, I was finding it difficult to be as objective as desired, by virtue of my change in position from that of an outsider to an insider. In the North I lived with the issues I was researching daily; at home, at work in the school, and in the village.

I was the adult education up-grading teacher in the community. For seven years during holidays and on weekends, I was a licensed ambulance driver for the local hospital. My wife worked in the village. Our children went to the local day care center and schools. We spent many of our holidays there. Although it took a few years, we submersed ourselves in the village and eventually became an accepted part of it.

In July 2005, I took a year off from my teaching responsibilities in the North in order to complete McGill University course requirements for this Ph. D. degree. After having lived in the North for almost a decade, I moved to Montreal with my family. This departure from the North was at a crucial time, as it afforded me the opportunity as a researcher, to be temporarily removed from the 'field' and re-submersed in academe and my native culture to refocus my perspective. Finding myself back in Montreal I became quite aware of the fact that a decade earlier I had left Montreal for the North as an outsider, with no knowledge of the Inuit people and culture, and returned ten years later, as an insider, with an Inuit family.

Despite these commitments to Inuit culture, I will never be comfortable saying that "I am an Inuk", as I am not. However, I feel I am as 'inside' as a non-Inuit researcher could ever be. Yet, I am also very much an outsider, as a white man, attempting to understand particular aspects of an endearing culture that I am still learning about daily, and may never come to truly know tacitly and intuitively. "As a [man] who looks non-[Inuit],

speaks differently, and yet has [Inuit] family and community ties, I am simultaneously Outsider and Insider" (Enos, 2001, p. 90).

I name my research situation and position as being that of an 'Inside-outsider'. This is not just by virtue of my position in relation to this research, but in lieu of my belonging to both (or neither, fully) cultures. Philosophically speaking, it is very difficult for me to be associated with an outsider perspective, as I am no longer part of the 'outside' culture to which I belonged when I began my research a decade ago. I am no longer outside of the Inuit community either. But at the same time, I am also not an insider, at least in as much as I am not, by birth and blood, Inuit. "As researchers, we can be insiders and outsiders to a particular community of research participants at many different levels and at different times" (Villenas, 1996, p. 722). I am an insider researcher from the Qallunaat position, yet will always be an outsider researcher from the Inuit perspective – yet on an inside track.

My position as researcher has evolved from that of an outsider not initially aware that the Inuit and the Eskimos were one in the same people, into an insider researcher permanently residing in two Inuit communities. And finally from an insider researcher to an Inside-outsider researcher, no longer belonging to the community of the 'researcher' or the 'researched'. I no longer feel completely at home in the south, and this estrangement changes the perspective of this research. I cannot escape the inherent bias that I have in this research, nor do I desire to.

A perspective as either an insider or outsider researcher greatly influences the manner in which data gathered in the field is interpreted. “An implication of this Outsider/Insider subjectivity is that I need to be careful, on the one hand, not to over-romanticize the parts of [Inuit] life I believe to be beautiful” (Enos, 2001, p. 91). I recall my over-romanticizing the concept of the community freezer. Many Inuit, of course, still hunt and fish either as a full time occupation, or as a means of providing country food for their families. When the Inuit hunt and fish, a portion of their catch is always shared amongst family members, and further, placed in the community freezer.

Ideally, then, although poverty exists in Nunavik, there is no starvation, as Inuit beneficiaries are welcome at any time during the course of the business day to freely partake of the usually abundant stash of country food that seasonally fill the freezer, usually a small house that has had each room converted into separate giant walk-in restaurant-type freezers.

My belief was that this gratuitous act on the part of community members was in line with the traditional custom of Inuit sharing that is so prevalent in Northern communities. Indeed, most Inuit people would gladly give their last fish if another had need of it, for such is the nature of Inuit sharing. I was elated to have finally come upon a living, contemporary example of traditional Inuit cultural values. What I was not aware of was that this event was not everything that I had romanticized it to be.

Inuit hunters do fill the freezers with food, but I did not know that they are paid for it, per kilogram. In this light, the community freezer serves a similar function as southern food banks for the needy, for Inuit who do not or cannot hunt, and as a place of distribution for country food such as seal, caribou, walrus, ptarmigan, beluga and Arctic Char that are not available on a regular basis. This example continues to remind me of the importance of understanding in research in indigenous contexts.

“Denzin (1989) comments that all research is really about the researcher: however, in order for the research to be of value, it must extend beyond me and my situation” (Enos, 2001, p. 92). If one is researching the Inuit, this implies that one must research the Inuit people themselves, and not one’s interpretation or romanticization of the Inuit people or acts. Although the research is a construction or interpretation of the researcher, it must not be about the researcher. “As the ‘instrument’ by means of which the data are gathered and analyzed, I am some way always present in this research. In the same way, it is imperative that the focus of the research — [Inuit] schooling — be always present” (Enos, 2001, p. 92).

As I am always present in this case as a conduit of traditional and educational Inuit values, I must constantly remain aware of the need to be detached from personal romanticization and interpretation of events. “Part of my job as a researcher is to hear how the people I interview experience formal education from their viewpoints, not how what they say supports my own personal views” (Enos, 2001, p. 91).

This is why the researcher’s position as insider or outsider is crucial. Tacit knowledge of a culture is understood and lived by the Insider researcher intuitively, whereas an outsider such as myself in the preceding example can only postulate, always running the risk of cultural misinterpretation.

> There are many degrees of cultural knowledge, from superficial knowledge acquired by incidental encounters with a culture – watching a movie, spending a summer vacation, or reading a novel – to profound cultural competence and understanding which comes from a long, deep cultural experience (Tamir, 2003, p. 503).

Generally speaking, profound cultural competence is only available to the insider researcher.

Living as an insider, one also becomes privy to many issues, events and practices that affect a researcher's ability to remain objective. As I am sure one does in any culture, I have seen and learned many things that I wish I had not as a Northern resident. There are many 'inside' issues that are simply not discussed publically, not for fear of exposure, but rather, for fear of being culturally misunderstood, or hurtful to the Inuit when evaluated by Qallunaat observers lacking the historical, cultural and Northern perspective necessary in order to fully empathize with the event in question.

## *Part 4*

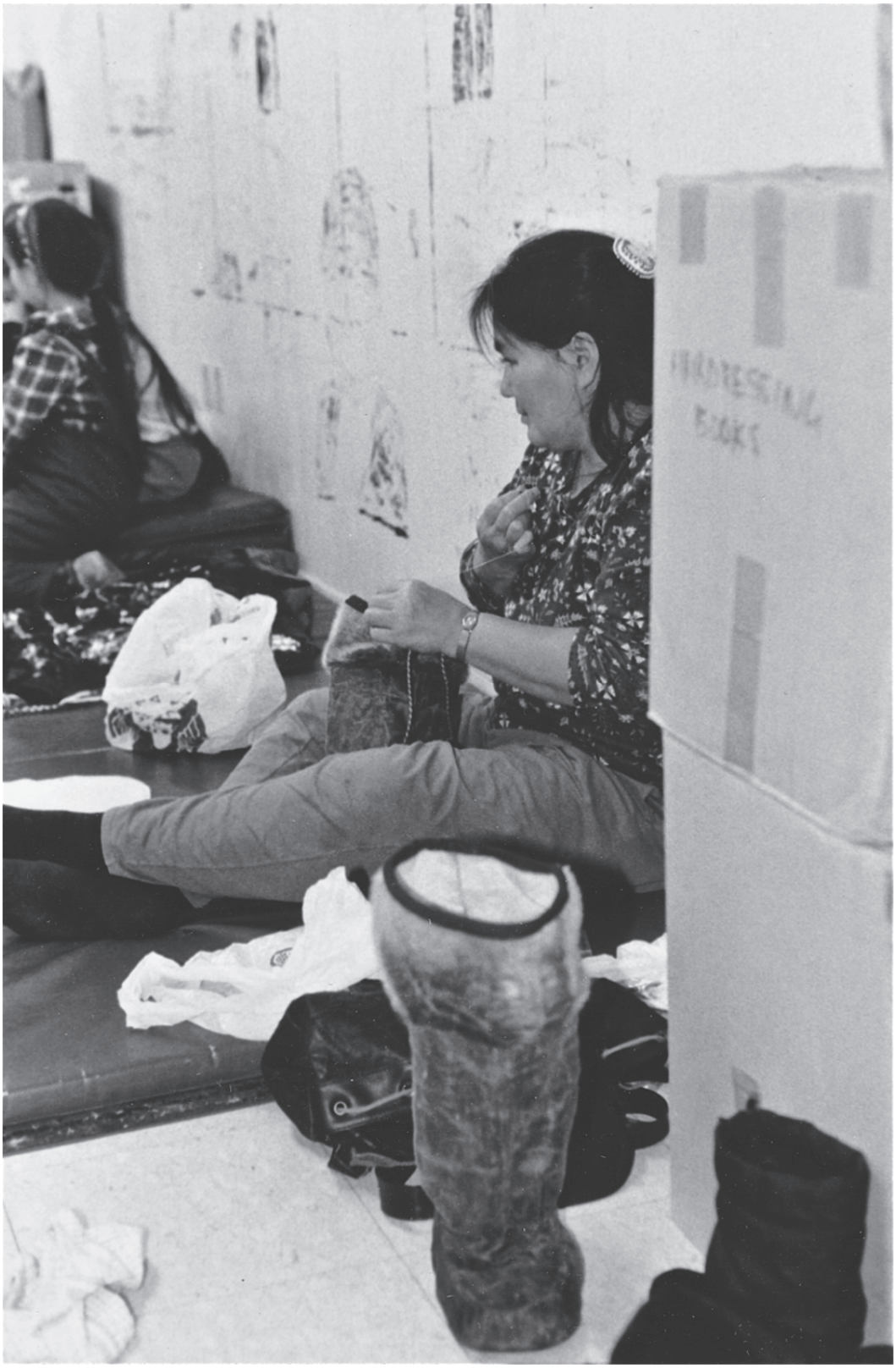
*Research Objective*

The goal of this research is to determine how education might be used to assist in the preservation of Inuit cultural values. The title of this research project is, “Inuit Cultural Maintenance in Contemporary Nunavik”.

My research interests in Inuit cultural values are born out of great respect for the Inuit people, their culture, values, sense of humanism, and resilience. As a non-Indigenous researcher, I must ask myself the question: Why is this research important to me?

I am married to an Inuit woman and we have four young Inuit children, which could add subjectivity to the ways I perceive some of the issues involved in my research. In some respects I am motivated by a desire to teach my children about their culture. In traditional Inuit culture, a father teaches all of the knowledge and skills necessary for survival to his sons,

as a mother does to her daughters.

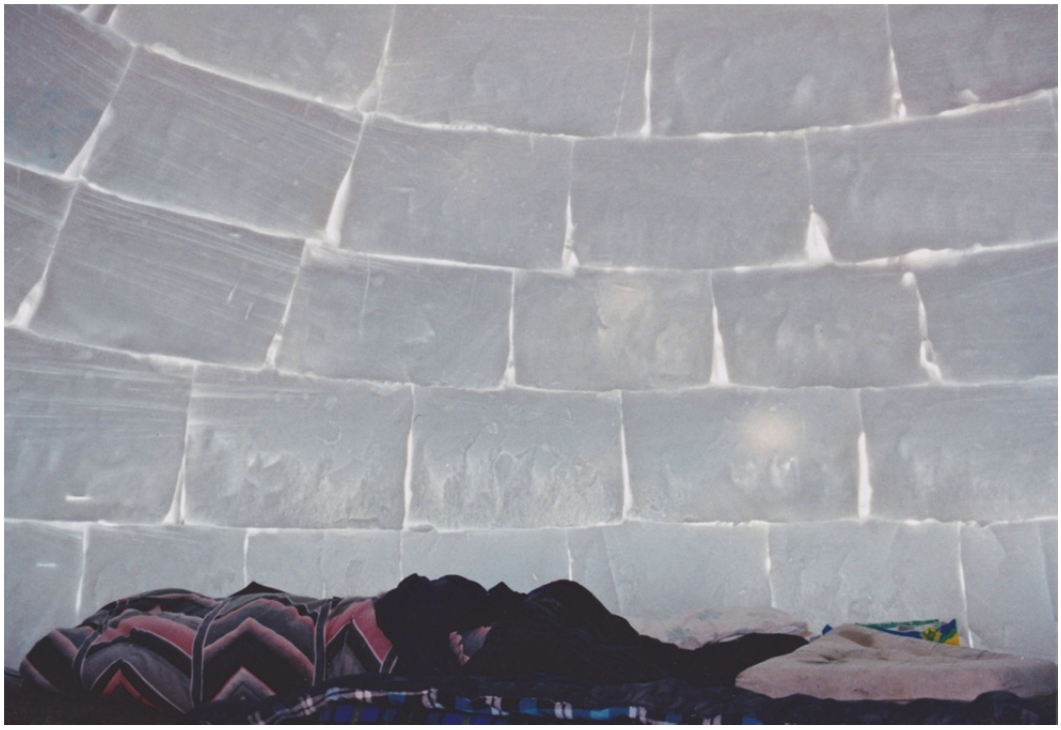


As a father, then, it is my responsibility to teach, or hand down, these values and traditional skills to my young sons.

Having been raised on cellophane-wrapped, store-bought food that no longer resembles an animal in the slightest, and being radically opposed to the concept of hunting from my culture, peculiarly named a “sport”, I do not hunt, nor do I possess the urge to learn how. This represents a barrier in my ability to teach my children the cultural values that I believe are important for them to learn.

As I desire for my children to learn these values, yet am not sufficiently or culturally ‘schooled’ therein to teach them, this implies that I essentially have no choice but to rely on the current Northern education system to not only address these cultural values and traditions, but to teach them to my children in such a way that my children can contribute to the continuation of traditional Inuit cultural values. Children must not only learn these cultural values and traditions, but must learn them well enough so that they can, in turn, teach them to their children.

If, then, the school board mandated to provide this education to my children fails in their task, by extension, I have not only failed my children with respect to teaching them their heritage, but have also failed the Inuit people; for my being non-Inuit, then, has contributed to the erosion of something that I believe should be upheld. It is important to mention that despite people's personal reasons (or excuses) for not being able to do so, however noble, it is misguided for people to expect education systems to replace the role of the parent. To place the onus of responsibility for keeping Inuit knowledge, values and traditions alive on a predominantly non-Inuit school board, represents a venture that is doomed to failure before it begins. To attempt to do so in the midst of the pervasive Western, post-postmodern, technologically-connected world we now occupy is a paradoxical antinomy. Learning how to skin a seal and build an igloo just no longer compete with learning how to surf the internet, send text messages and download one's personal i-tunes.



From the perspective of some Inuit youth, there is little utility in learning the skills of an era-gone-by, which will only serve to place them, again, at a greater cultural disadvantage by not learning contemporary 'survival skills' (Mount, 2001).

How then, does one keep Inuit cultural knowledge and traditions alive in the face of such oppositional value systems, under the auspices of a 'southern' education system imparting predominantly dominant cultural values? Parents of Inuit children no longer have the time needed to perpetuate their culture, for they are at work, in school, or just plain caught up in the social problems that come with adapting to the dominant culture.

Northern school boards, left with the burden of responsibility for maintaining a vanishing culture, are failing to do so. As mentioned previously, the mistake has been in expecting them to fulfill this role in the first place. It is imperative to add that Inuit parents must also shoulder this responsibility. As a parent who cannot provide the Inuit traditional knowledge that my children require in order to learn and maintain their culture as I am not Inuit, I am motivated to do whatever I can, as a researcher, to change the current state of educational events.

I feel trapped as a parent as I know that by enrolling my children in this school system, this decision will contribute to their academic inferiority in terms of 'southern' standards, as well as place them in a situation where they will not learn as much Inuit culture as is required for the continuation of Inuit culture.

What is most disturbing in this regard is that, due to this expectation for the schools to fulfill this mandate of cultural transmission and their inability to do so, Northern school boards are effectively, albeit unintentionally contributing to the decline of Inuit culture. In Nunavik, Inuit children learn non-Inuit courses in school and follow essentially the same curriculum and Euro-Canadian model of education as their non-Inuit counterparts in the south, with the exception of severely limited, and dependent on the availability of teachers, Inuktitut and Culture courses, occupying roughly ten percent of the academic schedule. One of our sons has spent two fifty-minute periods per week this entire academic year in the school library or dismissed early depending on the weekly schedule, as there are no interested/willing/available Inuit Culture teachers, as an example.

If it appears that learning traditional Inuit cultural values and traditions is no longer a required or desired prerequisite in our contemporary world, what then is important with respect to the education of Inuit cultural values and traditions? Should Northern school boards simply focus on educating Inuit children for the post-postmodern world, so that they will no longer lag behind their southern counterparts and can excel at the new culture to

which they are being introduced? Should they focus on educating Inuit children solely for the Inuit world in order to maintain their rich and vanishing culture? Should Northern school boards focus on educating Inuit children for both worlds, as is currently the practice, which appears to result in a compromised education on both fronts?

If, then, it is important to me to research methods for the cultivation of traditional Inuit cultural values and traditions through education, not as a parent but as a researcher, the question still remains, why? “When we consider the motivations that guide research, it is clear that the intention of most researchers is that their research will somehow benefit those *other* people who are connected to the research process” (Weber-Pillwax, 1999, p. 36).

The majority of research is also undertaken in response to the goal of benefit to humanity and furthering knowledge. Research is often highly personal, and can be seen in relation to the researcher. Eber Hampton (1995) states, “We do what we do for reasons. That is the engine that drives us. That is the gift of the Creator of Life” (p. 52).

As I look back over my life for a memory that gives me knowledge (Hampton, 1995, p. 53), I am aware of the enormous impression a short film which I viewed as a small child had on me. It depicted a proud Indian man in full headdress, paddling a birch bark canoe down what I presume was the Hudson River through the beauty of nature, slowly arriving at Manhattan. The camera panned to a solitary tear rolling down the man's face as his canoe sat amidst the pollution on the shores. This image had a profound impact on my life, sensitivity to nature, the environment, human suffering, and to the Aboriginal way of life.

I am aware of a boyish fascination with 'the Eskimos' from a very young age, even farther back than the above, and of a sense of awe that they bestowed on my childhood thinking. I think it was the sense of community or unity in contrast to the isolation, the enviable quality of life and sheer happiness that 'Eskimo' represented to me. Perhaps it was the dogs and igloos.

Whatever it was, the overbearing feeling was not only a belief in, but a yearning for a society that beholds and cherishes humanistic, altruistic, honest, and ecologically-sound values. “We might further suppose, as do a significant number of people today, that the principles of organization and the values of these tribal or primitive societies might offer a new way of looking at the problems of industrial societies” (Deloria, 1997, p. 220).

I believe that many of the values that the Indigenous peoples traditionally lived by are rare and provide insights into how humankind is intended to coexist with nature, the environment, and the universe. Indigenous people created no garbage: Everything that was borrowed from the Earth was returned. In the past century, humanity has wreaked so much havoc on the environment that not only are we in serious danger of extinction, but so too is the Earth. Other cultures stand to learn a great

deal from traditional Aboriginal cultures, and perhaps *must* learn if there is any hope of survival at all for the self-destructive populations of our planet.


“To survive on this globe, it has become clear that we must achieve a transition from egocentrism to ecocentrism. More and more we will be required to read across lines of cultural identity around us and within us" (Owens, 1998, p. 11), in order to create a global society of humanitarian and ecological ideals derived from Indigenous philosophy and ideology. “Our goal should be to convince others of the wisdom of the Indigenous perspective” (Alfred, 1999, p. 21). Alfred develops this recommendation by asserting that, “traditional knowledge has to be brought forward and translated into a form that can be seen as a viable alternative to the

imposed structures — as the culturally appropriate solution to fundamental political problems" (Alfred, 1999, p. 21).

Culture is a continually evolving phenomena, yet the more contact Indigenous cultures have with the 'dominant' culture of industrial societies (whether through physical contact, radio, satellite TV or the Internet), the more diluted their cultural distinctness becomes. The population of Nunavik may be seen as, "moving back and forth between Inuit and Qallunaat traditions at a time when movement toward self-affirmation, defining and preserving an Inuit identity, and educating children for the 21st century are fundamental concerns" (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996b, p. 220).

In my experience the decline of traditional Inuit activities and traditions is linked to, and goes hand-in-hand with, the number of Qallunaat (non-Inuit) residents in each village. Put bluntly, it appears to me that the more non-Inuit residents in each village, the greater the influence to abandon traditional practices and cultural mores. The larger villages have been living with 'other' cultural influences for more than fifty years, which has had a much more profound impact than one observes in smaller communities, where 'other' cultural traditions and values are almost scarce. Sandy Grande (2000) refers to Devon Mihesuah in saying, "Acknowledging that, while traditions are important to maintain, they have always been fluid" (p. 489). Culture, and by extension, cultural values and traditions, are evolving and fluid. While this research focuses on traditional Inuit cultural values and traditions, it is important to remember that culture and values change with time. What may have worked for the Inuit centuries ago may not hold sway with a contemporary group of the same people.

As all cultures are in a constant state of evolution, what may be said to constitute a culture in one era may not be true in another. The 'culture' and society I was born into in Montreal in the 1960's is very different from that of someone from my culture born in Montreal two hundred years earlier (or now). What might have been of paramount cultural importance to learn at that time may no longer be deemed culturally relevant.

Whatever Inuit society was before, the values, essence, and way of life that sustained the Inuit people since their beginnings, it is not now.

In this light, two guiding questions arise: What does it mean to be Inuit today? And; what aspects of traditional Inuit culture and values do the Inuit deem most necessary and essential for cultural maintenance? A further line of inquiry will explore how the Inuit feel cultural maintenance must be achieved. These questions will guide the following research through its focus on Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik.

["Plugged-in Igloo". Puvirnituq, 1998]

## *Part 5*

### *The Research Study*

As culture is an evolving phenomenon, it is time- and place-specific. People's culture pertains, but is not exclusive to, the survival skills of a people at a given point in time. Inuit culture, therefore, involves skidoos and the Internet as much as it does seals and harpoons. "An Indian who speaks her tribal language and participates in tribal religious ceremonies is often considered traditional, but that term is applicable only within the context of this decade, because chances are she wears jeans, drives a car, and watches television — very 'untraditional' things to do" (Mihesuah, 1998, p. 50).

One objective of this research is to understand the time-honoured Inuit traditions, survival skills and communal values that have allowed the Inuit culture to survive and flourish in harmony with nature and happiness for so long. Questions in this study attempt to establish an understanding of definitions of traditional and contemporary Inuit culture and values. Research questions examine that which participants feel defines Inuit culture, and provides a framework for an education program that will assist in the preservation of Inuit cultural values and traditions.

Research involved interviews with people having a vested interest in Inuit culture, traditions and education in Nunavik: Inuit elders, political leaders, educational leaders and professionals, and Inuit cultural activists in Nunavik were interviewed in separate, hour-long personal interviews.

I used a purposive sampling method for this study, in that participants were chosen for their specific involvement with the subject of Inuit cultural maintenance in Nunavik, as opposed to a random sample, for example, where participants are randomly selected so as to represent the total population under study.

While in a previous study I chose to interview only Inuit people in order to provide an exclusively Inuit perspective (Mount, 2001), in this current study, purposive sampling included some non-Inuit members of Nunavik communities or organizations who have an interest in and commitment to Inuit cultural values and the future of education in Nunavik.

Interview questions were open-ended and took place in the context of an informal conversation. Interview questions were established (see Appendix B) but the flow of the interview varied with each participant. Detailed interview notes were taken. Participants read first and then signed one copy of the consent form (Appendix A) at the outset of the interview, keeping one for themselves. Interviews for this study were held predominantly at participant work places, and on a few occasions in participants' homes.

*The Interview Process*

I encountered some unforeseen obstacles during the process of recruiting people whom I had selected to interview for the purpose of this study. Out of a hopeful compilation of thirty-eight names, I interviewed nine people for this study.

The people I chose to ask to be interviewed were selected based on their involvement with Inuit cultural maintenance, Inuit rights and governance, and Inuit Education.

Despite having lived in this community for more than a decade, I had great difficulty in getting people through the three-step process of: Initial contact with a telephone call and/or visit with an introductory letter requesting an interview for this study; confirming a mutually-beneficial time and place to conduct the interview; and finally, conducting the interview itself on the date arranged.

The ratio of people contacted versus interviewed was quite low. Overall, one person in four who I selected and contacted was interviewed for this study. In many cases timing proved most difficult. Many people were 'not available right away' for medical, personal and professional reasons (and were very often, in the south). However, despite following-up on all of these, up to one year later in two cases, none of these interview possibilities occurred. As the majority of people I sought to interview for this study are professionals from very different walks of life, many just did not have the time, or in a few cases simply did not reply.

I began too, to notice a subtle pattern evolve: It was predominantly (Inuit) women who declined to be interviewed. Perhaps this was due to my being a Qallunaaq male and cultural misinterpretation of my intentions. As the interviews progressed and the process became more familiar to me, I started to notice that men too either declined to be interviewed for this study, or did not have the time, and so I began to realize that I may be being perceived incorrectly altogether. Perhaps from some people's perspectives, here I was, a white male, asking Inuit professional and educational leaders in their fields, Inuit CEO's, executives, community activists and politicians, for example, if I could interview them in order to help them maintain their own culture. Perhaps it appeared to some that I was condescendingly offering to right the wrongs that *they* should have already fixed, or be working on. Despite my recognition as an educational 'authority' in this community, and having an Inuit family, there were many varied reasons why people did not agree to participate. This was most frustrating.

Having done research in the North for my M.A. thesis and for the Inuit Cultural Calendar, I was quite surprised at the apparent lack of interest in this research. The gist that I understood from this process and a few of the rejections was that this is vital research that must be done — but that it should be done by the Inuit, and not a 'white', however Northern I may be, researcher. If my assumption is correct, it would be akin to me telling an Inuk how to build an igloo.

Most surprising, was the fact that many of the people who either did not want to participate or avoided further contact with me after the initial contact, are high-level leaders and Inuit people of influence who, ex-offico, should have been overwhelmingly eager to participate. Again, my belief here is that I am attempting to discover things with this research that need to be done by the Inuit people — perhaps the very people who declined — and my doing so may have served as a reminder of the all-too-present feeling of being taken care of that the Inuit live with in the North. Unfortunate. The process knocked the wind out of my sails and took the paddle away from my kayak on more than one occasion.

However, despite these few drawbacks, I was extremely fortunate to be able to interview the participants who did agree, as they were my primary choices during the initial selection process. The participants interviewed are an extremely good blend of Inuit leaders and people involved in Inuit Education, and those who have a stake in the future of Inuit cultural maintenance in Nunavik. The participants interviewed were extremely interested in the subject matter and in contributing to this research for the benefit of the Inuit community. Interviews were expected to take one hour at most. The average length of the interviews was 130 minutes, with one lasting three hours, and another 195 minutes.

The overwhelming lengths of the interviews was due to real interest and involvement on the part of the interviewees, which was humbling. Four of the interviews that commenced at 16:00 hours, with the intent of

ending at 17:00 when their work-day finished, went on until well after 18:30. In many cases the questions and sequence thereof elicited a therapeutic unraveling of memories, opportunities and sadness, of loss, and opportunities seized and lost.

In three of the interviews the interviewees stopped to comment on the effect that the interview process was having on them: One mentioned feeling guilty for not having acted more and taught their children more Inuit culture, yet now realized the importance of immediate action. Another had not previously had the occasion to objectively examine and acknowledge the lessons and culture that had been passed down to him in childhood. The questions reminded people of how their parents, many of whom were no longer living, passed on Inuit culture to them or not, while reinforcing the necessity of doing so now with their own children, which was either a reaffirming or thought-provoking process, but none-the-less proved to be an enriching experience for all involved.

Of the nine participants in this study, three were women and six were men. The mean age of participants was approximately forty-one (40.5) years.

I am extremely grateful to all those who graciously volunteered to participate in the following interviews. They have generously provided of their time, energy and candid insights, memories and emotions, in attempts to assist in documenting Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik.

*Photography: Visual Ethnography*

I have made extensive use of personal photographs throughout this study as each photograph provides a rare glimpse into the Inuit world and onto Inuit culture. Photography is an irreplaceable visual recognition and understanding that could not otherwise be presented with text alone. “In qualitative research, researchers combine visual media and ethnographic research to provide purposeful presentations of meaning relating to social occurrences” (Riviera, 2010, p. 988).

Photographs can enrich the text considerably, as they provide a visual reference point that can be precise and uniform. The Northern, Arctic environment that the Inuit people inhabit is one that few people from ‘southern’ societies have the opportunity to experience first-hand. In this study, photographs are used in order to open a window of understanding which affords the reader a privileged insight on the Inuit people, Inuit culture and values, and the unique Arctic world that the Inuit inhabit.

Combining the photographs with the text was a remarkable experience in that most of the text was written prior to the use, or the idea of photographs in this study and not the other way around. The photographs and text seemed to naturally complement each other in such a way that the text alone, from then on seemed to be only half of a total — the pepper without the salt, in retrospect.

Photographs of specific institutions, for example, of the Inuit-owned "Co-op" store (p. 16) were used in order to illustrate the composition of typical Nunavik villages — to show the reader what the "Co-op" actually looks like; to paint a subjective picture of the North. Many people may not have seen an igloo before, let alone the inside of one. Having a visual snapshot allows the reader to better understand the text, as in the following example: "Smoke trickled out of the air hole at the top of the small igloo, and warm light broke through the ice window launching crystal rays into the dark vast night" (p. 50). The imagination alone may allow readers to conjure their own images of such concepts based on their own experience, but seeing a photograph of both an igloo air hole and an ice window (p. 154) provides the reader with a subjective image that enhances the comprehension of the text.

Photographs were also employed artistically, in order to 'play off of the reader's imagination', in the same way that paintings, music, or other works of art do. People viewing the photographs, "Meeting of Two Worlds" (p.76) or, "From Komatik" (p.156), for example, will interpret these photos in different ways, allowing for separate, individual interpretations of the images, based on personal knowledge, experience, and sensitivity.

Select photographs such as the in the sequence of photographs of Canada Geese (pp. 37, 38) for example, are used as an artistic tool designed to elicit different individual experiences of the photographs.

One can elaborately use descriptive literary terminology to explain the raw privilege of witnessing three generations of Inuit women in an old run-down adult education center in a small Inuit village in Arctic Quebec teach the making of traditional kamiks by carefully tracing and cutting seal skin, generously chewing the seal skin to soften it and render it more malleable, then sewing this softened piece as the sole for the kamiks.

Having the photograph to show such a remarkable cultural event not only supports the text, but further, “takes us there with you”, in order to gain a first-hand visual experience and perspective of the event itself in ways that are just not comparable through words alone:

*Data Collection Process*

The field area of this study is Nunavik, Northern Québec, Canada. In this study, data was compiled through personal, open-ended and informal interviews with participants between March 2010 and June 2011.

After all of the interviews had been completed I transcribed the interviews for this study manually. I then assigned an interview code to each transcribed interview for anonymity and entered them into a computer individually per interview, then collectively per question.

Most important to any qualitative study, is the reciprocal involvement of participant community members in the analysis and interpretation of data, for purposes of authenticity. “It reflects our attempt to ensure that our methodology is respectful of and captures Inuit ways of seeing, doing, and believing” (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996a, p. 8). Verification can involve submitting drafts of writing from the research back to those who have been researched, in order to confirm the authenticity of the data. Without this verification process, the data remain merely subjective interpretations of the researcher. “Knowing we would submit what we were writing to the [participants] in a member check worked as a safeguard for our own process” (Latther & Smithies, 1997, p. 221).

All research, findings, and potential romanticizations must be returned to the researched for accuracy, in order to have any sense of cultural, educational or research validity. Not only is this an ethical component of research, but also respectful and empowering in providing a final say as it

were, to people with a vested interest in the research. “Failure to check one’s finding with those studied can lead to inaccurate and unfair representations as well to the ‘studied subjects’ feeling as though they have been objectified” (Haig-Brown, 1995, p. 32).

Walter Feinberg (1998) raises an important counter-argument in stating that, “One of the reasons that I object to the idea that only the insider should be empowered to tell the story is that it implies the right to some kind of censorship on the part of the group itself.” (p. 192). If research is subject to censorship it is denied the objectivity that research requires by its very nature. If research is censored, it ceases to be research. “Otherwise, the audience has reasons to distrust the research, and all such work should carry a warning that ‘this material may have left out critical information because of the subject’s objections’” (Feinberg, 1998, p. 192).

As “the purpose of ethnographic research is to describe and interpret cultural behavior” (Wolcott, 1987, p. 43), cultural behaviour can only be properly described and interpreted in the social context within which it resides. “Ultimately, there is only one test of ethnography: the satisfactoriness of the completed account” (Wolcott, 1987, p. 42). Whether one is an insider, an outsider, or an inside-outsider, this completed account can only be achieved by returning the research to the researched for verification.

I agree with Walter Feinberg that this verification process is a form of censorship, yet suggest that it is none-the-less necessary, as the proverbial lesser of two [research] evils. To not allow those on whom the research focuses the opportunity to verify the findings, returns us to the very reason that the need for verification arose in the first place. Without this process, researchers can make claims about any cultural group they desire, which in the end, only attain a sense of ethical credibility when they have the agreement of those being researched.

"Researchers, policy makers, educators, and social service providers who work with or whose work impacts on indigenous communities need to have a critical conscience about ensuring that their activities connect in humanizing ways with indigenous communities" (Smith, 1999, p. 149). Above all, research must be conducted under and governed by a sense of ethical and moral respect for the people being researched.

Drafts of the interviews were given to and discussed with one respondent from this study for verification, while final study results were discussed verbally with an additional participant. Two other participants in this study expressed a desire to read the results of this study upon completion, and will be provided with copies of this text.

### *Methods of Data Analysis*

In this research study, I have kept in mind a notion developed by Wendy Luttrell in her 2000 article entitled, "*Good Enough" Methods for Ethnographic Research*, where in every research question and issue, weighing, "what is gained and what is lost" (p. 500) in each research decision, has provided a solid guiding mechanism for this research. What is gained by interviewing one particular person and not another; what is lost? What is gained by interviewing exclusively Inuit participants; what is lost by omitting Qallunaat from the interviews? What is gained and lost in each physical interview setting, or by the length of pauses between interview questions? What is gained and lost with differing methods of data analysis? This implies an awareness of the consequences and effects of all research decisions, however small they may seem.

Data was cross-examined for commonalities and then classified according to the emergent themes. In the final report, data was reported using thick descriptive writing.

### *Limitations and Ethical Issues*

This research is intended as a means of articulation of Inuit traditional and contemporary cultural values. In this research study, no direct or indirect harm to any participants was (or is) anticipated, as participants were provided the opportunity to abstain from answering any questions they are not comfortable with, or to withdraw from the study completely, without prejudice, at will (see Interview Consent Form, Appendix A).

Anonymity and confidentiality have been guaranteed to participants. “Ethnographers can do much to protect settings and participants by removing identifying information at the earliest possible opportunity, routinely using pseudonyms, and altering non-relevant details” (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001, p. 341). Names of people have been concealed, with any identifying details either altered or deleted from the data. All interview sources of data will be kept in a secure, locked space for five years after this study, and then destroyed.

This research study is not in any way intended as a critique of the Kativik School Board. This study is a philosophical analysis of the issue of Inuit cultural maintenance in Nunavik in the midst of the Western, contemporary Canadian society to which the Inuit of Nunavik now belong, and an attempt to discover methods of attaining the respective objectives of both ‘cultures’ through educational means.

The Kativik School Board has done a remarkable job in providing the Inuit of Nunavik with an education that prepares Inuit students for participation in both worlds, and continues to do so.

Nunavik Inuit educational needs have evolved and the Kativik School Board has made extraordinary efforts to also adapt to these changing needs through the many programs from both ‘cultures’ that are offered in their schools. My sincere hope is that this study can be of benefit to the Inuit people of Nunavik and the Kativik School Board that serves them.

*Research Questions*

In brief, the interviews in this study sought to address (and engage) the following two questions: If a curriculum could be designed that would best reflect, respect, encourage and impart Inuit culture, what would it include? How would it be taught?

The process of defining which questions best address these concerns was indeed an arduous and lengthy one that required continuous development and refinement over the course of a few years. In the end the questions or areas of discussion chosen for the interviews reflect my decision to focus on specific defining elements of Inuit cultural identity, and how these elements can best be taught to contemporary Inuit youth.

The first section of the interviews attempts to construct a working definition of Inuit culture. “What is traditional Inuit culture?” looks at personal definitions of traditional Inuit culture. This question, asked at the onset of the interview, makes an implied distinction between traditional and [assumed] contemporary Inuit culture. That Inuit culture has changed is not at issue. The time-honoured and core definitive aspects of Inuit culture that remain, unchanged, are of interest. The second question asks for an example (or story) of traditional Inuit culture, which furthers the traditional/contemporary distinction and examines personal concrete examples thereof. “What traditions (or customs) best define Inuit culture” leads from personal examples of Inuit culture to a more global cultural definition of the respondent’s perspective on traditions and customs of

Inuit culture. In so doing, the question attempts to define key elements that underlie Inuit culture regardless of a timeframe. This therefore raises the question, “How is traditional Inuit culture different from Inuit culture today?" whose aim is to examine both the evolution that has occurred, as well as to further highlight distinct surviving cultural elements. The final question in the subsection of culture, “As Inuit culture is constantly evolving, what parts of Inuit culture remain unchanged?”, acknowledges the evolutionary nature of culture, and seeks to more accurately define the particular parts or elements of Inuit culture that have not changed.

The second section of questions explores Inuit values. I ask two questions in this section: “What are (or were) traditional Inuit values?”; and “Could you provide an example of how traditional Inuit values are different from Inuit values today?” Here, I attempt to flesh-out the differences between Inuit culture and Inuit values, as well as to establish if and how traditional values now differ as a result of time.

The third section of questions addresses Education. Through the first two questions therein, “How would you define education?”, and “What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of education as you know it?” personal definitions of the purpose and utility of education are explored. The latter question seeks to examine both the benefits and problems inherent in education, from an Inuit perspective, and foreshadows the following question, “What changes would you make to the current Inuit culture programs presently taught in Nunavik schools, and why would you

suggest these changes?", which looks to clarify philosophical, structural or curricular problems with the Inuit culture programs currently being taught in Nunavik [or not]. Having previously established perspective on the advantages and disadvantages of education (as they know it), this question then allows the respondent the opportunity to further address changes that they feel should be made to the ways in which Inuit culture is currently taught.

This question, in turn, leads into the next and more specific question, "Which elements of Inuit culture should be taught in an education system designed to preserve Inuit culture?" Although all the questions in this interview are in and of themselves important pieces of an overall whole, this question is most central to the entire study, and as such, may be said to be the core of this study. Having defined Inuit culture, values, education, and made recommendations toward changes needed, this question, then, allows respondents the opportunity to explore key elements of Inuit culture that are required for the maintenance of Inuit culture through education.

Although the final question of the subsection on education may seem to be a paraphrasing of the question before, by asking "What is important for Inuit students today to be learning in schools?", it may in fact be found that it could be more desirable for Inuit to be learning contemporary Western (Canadian) culture, curriculum and values through education in

order to best prepare Inuit for success in the contemporary modern world that they now occupy.

The final section of questions explores the educational medium that respondents feel would best fulfill the necessities of educational cultural maintenance. The first question, “How should Inuit culture, values and traditional knowledge best be taught to Inuit today?” seeks to discern the most appropriate educational medium for the transmission of Inuit culture. The final question of the interview, “How can Education best serve Inuit needs?” serves to elaborate on distinctions between Inuit cultural maintenance and Inuit contemporary education.

## ***Part 6***

*Data Analysis and Interpretation of Results*

*Traditional Inuit Culture:*

Traditional Inuit culture is a way of life that was centered on the need for survival in extreme elements, which through necessity elicited the values of sharing and supporting each other by hunting on the land and the sharing of food afterward. *[Participant responses in italics]*

> *"It is a way of life that is close to nature: eating, hunting, essence of life, respecting others, respect for nature — in life and in work."*

Traditional Inuit culture was sustained through the passing down of this knowledge to the younger generations.

> *"Passing-on of knowledge (teaching knowledge) was a given — you had no choice; it's something that you had to do. A child who is not given that knowledge of values, principles, skills, will have a very difficult time with the environment."*

The transmission of Inuit cultural knowledge was essential as it was directly linked to the survival of the entire family/clan. Children had no choice but to learn, for without this knowledge they would have no future.

> *"Passing on knowledge from father to son for example was a necessity of life. The roles of males and females were specific and their experiences were passed-on to the next generation, whether it be hunting skills or sewing skills. Knowledge of the*

*land for hunting purposes; knowledge of weather were extremely important."*

The roles of Inuit boys and girls, and men and women were very clearly defined. These essential divisions of labour were structured around traditional survival necessities; collectively, these were the skills and knowledge of Life — the 'book' or blueprint for Inuit survival in the North:

*"Survival. Passing of knowledge and skills to future generations; for any culture, but especially for Inuit culture, being out on the land."*

In short, traditional Inuit culture is the essence, or spirit of Inuit life that has grown out of the ability to survive in extreme Arctic conditions:

*"In order to survive in this type of environment Inuit had no choice but to support each other."*

As hunting, gathering and fishing were the only ways of procuring nourishment under these non-agrarian conditions, traditional Inuit culture entails the development of, *"A mind to hunt and fish"* — not just the abilities and skills to do so, but a philosophical approach to life that is centered around and evolved out of an enduring hunting and fishing mentality.

*"We still practice traditions by gathering/sharing of food, but by motorized means. Gathering of food and sharing. Nobody starves today — or we all starve together at the same time. The core is gathering food and survival."*

Over the past century, Inuit culture has been dramatically exposed to the Western, post-postmodern information age, and has changed and evolved as a result. Although Inuit still share (to a much lesser degree, as it is no longer a survival necessity), wear traditional clothing and play traditional games, these traditions are more symbolic or nostalgic. Times have changed and modern Inuit buy their food and clothing from northern and southern stores and play on-line computer games. Inuit still wear atigirks (parkas), kamiks (sealskin boots) and bualuks (mitts), not because they have to, but because they choose to.

Modern Inuit still fish and hunt, but again, not because they have to in order to survive, but to provide 'country food' to supplement their diet of store-bought food. Some Inuit still fish and hunt as an occupation, but they are the exception, not the rule.

When asked to provide examples of how traditional Inuit culture is different from Inuit culture today, one response seemed to summarize and focus the sentiments expressed by all:

> *"We are all disconnected from each other. We are not as close as we used to be. We don't depend on the land anymore because we can just go to the stores."*

It was suggested by participants that this disconnection resulted from the transition from camp life to permanent villages, which in turn, has caused a disconnection between youth and their parents/Elders:

*"Values have shifted. Responsibilities of parents were basically taken away when the modern Education system arrived. When the Government decided to take on responsibility either through Education, welfare, family allowance, the role of the parent was basically gone.*

*"The effects of having to stay in villages. First money became a very important part of village life; having to buy basic supplies. The government would not give family allowance if children were not in school. Values through discipline was gone when the role of the parent changed. I think this affected the relationship between parent and child."*

The transition from living on the land to living in villages, from relative isolation to community, from nomadic to sedentary life, was not just a physical change of location:

*"We live in houses that we don't need to gather wood and water [for] — sewage is provided for; every aspect of your life. Modern equipment is different: I go by skidoo, not dog team; motorized boat; I have a satellite phone; Honda on the land."*

The Inuit lifestyle, resilience, determinism and sense of pride was also affected:

*"In the past Inuit were self-reliant, but today they rely more on money. Basically it comes right down to money: Hunting equals bullets and gas. Before, they did not — dogs and komatiks"*.

As Inuit culture slowly evolved and changed, the very core Inuit values of familial relations were challenged.

> *"Because kids have no respect for their elders anymore, they don't transmit knowledge any more — they break windows. There is no connection between youth and Elders. If one is going to do anything it has to be in this area."*

Inuit parents found themselves no longer in charge of their children's education, which radically altered the strong bonds between Inuit adults and children. As the traditional relationship between Inuit parents and children was educational, based on the transmission of essential survival skills and traditional knowledge, it therefore rendered children totally dependent on and respectful of their parents and Elders — the keepers of the knowledge of life. When this educational relationship was replaced by modern education and foreign teachers, the role of the traditional parent/Elder was eliminated, and respect for Elders began to diminish. Parents and Elders no longer held the key to future survival; teachers and technology did. The relationship between youth and their elders was no longer one of essential dependency and respect:

> *"We have less communication because of TV's, I-Pods and computers. People stay out to 'hang out with their friends'. Children disrespect their parents. I guess the kids are having trouble listening to parents because of violence outside; suicide, murder, and hurting each other — causing problems because of*

*alcohol and drugs. It is hard to make them not addicted to those. Mostly kids don't want to listen to Elders, to sew and things, instead of catching-up and keeping themselves alive; instead of suicide."*

Despite these changes, most people interviewed stated that the core Inuit values of sharing, knowledge of the land and hunting, and transmission of cultural mores have not changed:

*"The ability to share. Language, but it is not necessarily. Elders often say that it is being progressively lost, but we still have it. We still hunt; we still gather; we still share. The survival aspect of it is constant."*

The essence of who Inuit are has not changed. Contemporary Inuit have been exposed to a new, modern lifestyle. In the end, many of the traditions and customs may have changed or evolved, but the essence of who Inuit are remains unchanged; Inuit are still Inuit living in a different world.

One perhaps contradictory observation was that *everything* is being challenged:

*"Everything is being challenged — all the values and principles are being challenged, whether it be the family core, the relationship between families or different groups/clans/camps. So all that is being challenged.*"

This view supports previous comments made concerning familial divisions and change in parental responsibilities. The position that everything is being challenged, including the stated core value of Inuit sharing is supported by the following:

> *"Inuit share — no way! In death maybe: All person's goods (dead) are shared as per need. But we look at [executive] Makivik bonuses, given to themselves: Most Inuit live in poverty, yet some few people are filthy rich, live in rich houses on the hill and have four vehicles, four skidoos, two boats and whatever parked outside — I mean they're rich! They used to share; not now."*

This very different and seemingly critical view of the demise of the Inuit cultural value of sharing, is surprisingly validated. The essence of who the Inuit are has not really changed, but Inuit culture has evolved, adapted and assimilated to the Canadian culture and lifestyle that they have lived alongside for a century. Some of these changes have been minimal, while others have had dramatic effects on the Inuit people and culture, such as examples cited above regarding the changing of familial relations. To hear many state that the Inuit still do share, is correct, but to hear that they do not share in today's society is also correct; the difference is in perspective.

Inuit do still share country food. An Inuit colleague of mine routinely goes ice fishing, bringing back upwards of twenty large Arctic Char and/or Trout, which is always divided amongst family, friends, and sometimes

colleagues. Local Hunter Support Program community freezers are fully operational.

However, the Inuit of Nunavik are currently living in a capitalist, North American twenty-first century era where the traditional sharing of food has little to do with personal desires for income, financial prosperity, or displays of wealth. There are wealthy Inuit and there are poor Inuit, as in most cultures and societies. Sharing has evolved. In the instance referred to, two (former) Makivik Corporation executives at Kuujjuaq had effectively authorized their own corporate bonuses to the tune of six hundred twenty-five thousand and two hundred fifty thousand dollars respectively, when public (and media) opinion held that this money could have been better used in order to aid in alleviating some of Nunavik's social or housing problems. There is a contemporary distinction between traditional Inuit sharing and the personal accumulation of wealth.

The Inuktitut language is also a vital component of traditional Inuit culture. The Inuktitut language has also evolved and changed, in some respects. Many of the older Inuktitut words used by the Elders have been lost and/or are no longer used, and the Inuit have had to either create new words for things that did not exist in the past (skidoos, computers, cars, for example) or adopt the English words in cases where there are no specific terms.

> *"Language and lifestyles are different. Our way of thinking isn't the same anymore."*

*Traditional Inuit Values:*

A traditional Inuit value that has governed the spirit of the Inuit people regardless of timeframe is that the Inuit outlook toward life has always been centered on a positive, happy disposition full of laughter, regardless of the circumstances:

> *"Inuit like playing and laughing a lot. Happiness gave them the tools to survive adversity while laughing — an important part of their culture."*

The majority of people in this study expressed that 'Family'; 'the Land'; and 'Sharing', as they pertained to survival, were traditional Inuit values:

> *"Inuit values would be more family — a big value. Family was our future. Elders still respected. Values are definitely within our families and relatives. We were so few people; had to stay alive."*

Responses provided to the question, "What were traditional Inuit values?" were similar in subject to responses given for traditional Inuit culture: Survival on the land was predicated on strong families, knowledge of the land, and the sharing of resources. Inuit culture, and Inuit values, in this case are observed as co-dependent, or causally inter-related.

As with changes to traditional Inuit culture, the changes to traditional Inuit values are also similar. There has been a gradual disconnection with the land as both a provider of food and as a way of life:

*“We’re not depending on the land as much anymore, so we do not go out anymore — to get food”*; *“More and more there are less people going out on the land — less long periods of camping. This has changed from my generation.”*

Many felt that this severed connection to the land, has had ripple-effects by also altering Inter-familial connections and the core Inuit value of ‘Family’:

*“The family unit has changed a lot. Family is still one of the most important values, but the role of the family has changed. Inuit don’t take care of their families the ways they used to — people are more concerned about themselves. Children are often left alone now while their parents are out drinking and gambling. I believe alcohol has greatly changed the family”*;

*“Today you see children being adopted outside to families because they did not take care of them — foster homes.”*

Many also felt that due to the loss of the educational role of the parent, there is little or no respect for family, parents or elders anymore:

*“One thing that seems to be vanishing is the taking care of our Elders. We don’t have any more time to communicate with our kids — they’re too busy watching TV, etc.”;*

*"We look when things go bad with children, we always find out family values — the family spirit is not there anymore, there has been a cut!"*

The former educational/teaching role of the parent has been replaced by Qallunaat teachers and cable TV, having devastating effects on these core traditional values:

*"Many fathers go hunting now, but do not bring their kids — that's sad. There's a big role that they are missing out on, instead of having beer with friends which is an excuse to get drunk and party on the land."*

These changes have occurred due to modernization, but also as a result of the change in the role of education in the lives of Inuit youth. As children no longer need hunting skills and traditional knowledge for 'survival', the need to learn this vital knowledge has been severed by the youth who it appears no longer have these listed amongst their top priorities, but also by many of their former teachers — their parents, who as a result no longer bother to pass on this vital knowledge. Once again, a disconnection between generations has been highlighted as a result of this educational shift:

*"Storytelling has been lost within my generation. Language has been somewhat maintained. In my father's time, I could say my parents truly loved their children. I still maintain that — others do not."*

The point that a modern education is now required for contemporary survival was also stated as being a crucial part of contemporary Inuit values:

> *"My parents survived on the land, but today to survive, you absolutely need an education."*

*Education:*

Education is survival. Education is the means for acquiring the knowledge necessary to survive in ones' environment, and once 'packaged', the passing of this vital knowledge on to future generations so that they too may survive and proposer:

> *"Education is definitely knowing what is around you and will be around you. It's a means of survival — no matter what culture you are in, even this one, education is your future".*

All people interviewed agreed that education is a means of survival in any culture, and in any time period, as it provides the skills needed for either physical survival in the extremes, the acquisition of jobs, or both:

> *"In a survival mode, education is your lifeline. Education is learning your traditional culture. Today we must also learn 'Qallunaaq culture'. You must learn in both to survive today: You are trying not to let go, but you need the other world — survival and jobs. We live in a global society now. Education is also my obligation to teach my kids to hunt and be on the land. To survive in both worlds."*

Acknowledging that acquiring a modern education is most important to contemporary Inuit in order to acquire better employment opportunities now, roughly half of those interviewed stated that it comes at the cost of the education needed for cultural maintenance:

> *"Education — modern learning, is good for the modern way of life; it's the road we are on now. But it has taken away from our traditional learning. In the classroom children do not learn from our old ways";*
>
> *"In today's world, education leads to better jobs. The disadvantages of education are that it prepares Inuit for the modern world, not traditional world";*
>
> *"The disadvantages of education are not letting our children to live in the land. We put them in school."*

One participant felt quite adamant that parents of contemporary Inuit students need to assume more responsibility toward the education of their children; both at the school and on the land:

> *"Education comes in a box. Education needs to find a way to make parents more responsible; to give back that responsibility to the parent. Parents need to understand the importance of their involvement in their kid's education."*

Due to the change in educational traditions, the pride associated with being a self-sufficient Inuk is no longer being learned through cultural transmission:

> *"It is very easy for me to say I am an Inuk; I am very proud and will pass on that pride to my children. But that pride of being an Inuk is not being prioritized in Education. The more education I (or my kids for that matter) have, the easier it will be to get a job. But it does not necessarily instill traditional values, knowledge, principle, and pride."*

This response seems to support comments made earlier regarding the severance of Inuit pride and determination through the change in educational format from traditional to contemporary education. Contemporary education has replaced traditional education at the expense of Inuit pride, it appears: A call must then be made to all Inuit parents to take on the responsibilities inherent by virtue of being Inuit parents in a modern world.

The acknowledgment that a southern, post-secondary education is most important for Inuit survival in contemporary Nunavik also comes at a cost. One participant mentioned that the education provided in Nunavik, although at no financial cost, comes at a qualitative cost as the secondary studies preparation for further studies is inadequate:

*"Free education — it's paid for. But we don't get the necessary studies; advanced studies. It feels like the school board is trying to get the cheapest teachers; when we go down south we can't cope with the education".*

Another participant pointed to the fact that in order for Inuit to pursue post-secondary studies they have to be removed from their villages, homes and families — in short, every shred of Inuit cultural identity:

> *"To achieve Higher Education you have to move away from your community. Going from a community of three hundred to four hundred, to a city of three million. Being away from family and culture."*

Once again, although now a necessity in modern Inuit life, 'Education' comes at one of many prices for the Inuit of Nunavik and has now become an essential survival skill and cultural value of contemporary Inuit that is passed down to future generations of Inuit children, as 'survival skills'.

*Suggested Changes:*

When asked what changes should be made to the current Inuit culture programs being taught in Nunavik schools, participants unanimously voiced the opinion and indeed strong reaction, that the 'culture programs' currently being taught in Nunavik schools are misguided and insufficient:

*“What Inuit Culture Programs? Inuktitut classes? Traditional skills classes?”*;

*“There are hardly no Inuit teachers; maybe five out of forty. The boys have gone years without a Culture teacher; why? Why — A lack of interest by everyone: Students, teachers, school board, etc. They need to make sure this teaching is done.”*

A general consensus seems apparent in that there is a strong need for culture classes centered on the teaching of traditional knowledge:

*“The changes I would make would be to teach programs that teach Inuit culture”;*

*“It is very important that they have ‘Inuit Culture’ courses to know how it happened — to know the past. Now, what is important? Inuit culture courses based on traditional culture”;*

*“First of all, I would make sure to have more material to work with; more Elders to be a part of the school. Teachers make their own work (curriculum). There should be fixed materials from Elders and the school board”;*

*“For me it is more of a challenge to take my son on the land to learn hunting. And since Education has taken this away from my son’s life, they need to find a way to teach this to my son.”*

*"Culture classes should focus more on that [culture]: Teach them the same ways they used to live back then; like sewing and more programs to take them out on the land for a week straight, and just live off of what they have from the land";*

Many participants suggested possible solutions to the issue of insufficient culture and traditional knowledge courses. As mentioned in the last response above, programs should be developed that take Inuit students out on the land for long periods, living off of the avails of the land, as their ancestors did.

Similar ideas were also presented by one participant who felt that the schools were essentially doing all that they could be doing toward teaching traditional culture courses, for this subject matter should be attended to elsewhere:

*"What is the trend is that there needs to be a traditional land college. Within school now there is not a lot to change. There is only so much time in a day where you can learn the two worlds/cultures, and that is the sacrifice"*;

and another idea was proposed as a way to provide drop-out students with 'the cure for what ails them', so to speak:

*"Open a school for those drop-outs, so they can learn how to survive and make warm clothes. Those children need to spend a lot of time with their Elders."*

This comment seems to imply that, in lieu of the repeatedly mentioned disconnections between youth/parents/elders in preceding sections of this analysis, the ‘cure’ is a re-connection to traditional Inuit culture. This is presented in such a manner as to state that ‘what they are missing is what they need’. Indeed, if the entire problem of a disconnection between generations stems from having had Inuit traditional education cut and replaced by contemporary education, the role of the parent replaced by a foreign ‘teacher’, the suggestion what is needed is more time with the Elders — is quite sound. Inuit Education must be reconnected.

*Elements of Inuit Culture Necessary for Cultural Maintenance:*

Roughly half of the participants replied ‘traditional knowledge and survival skills’ were the most important elements of Inuit culture that should be taught in an education system designed to preserve Inuit culture:

> *“Traditional knowledge of the land/hunting. We have such rich traditional history, that I would think would make a young student come out of the class and say, “I AM INUK!!”*;
>
> *“Hands-on outdoor learning would have to be enforced. They (Inuit) learn first by watching. They learn it for life, not just for now. Outdoors: Take them out to learn what is good snow, good wood.”*
>
> *“Get lots more animal skins to make Attigirks [parkas], snow pants and Ammautik, and hats, and seal-skin boots — they don’t teach*

*them in school how to do that. Get more dogs; so they can learn dog teams/komatiks".*

Roughly half of the participants also stated that language was the most important element of Inuit culture that should be taught in an education system designed to preserve Inuit culture:

*"Language. Try and have more classes in Inuktitut — or more time in Inuktitut classes; just try and help keep that up";*

*"There should be one straight Inuktitut school — not more than one language. We need to learn language as a job";*

*"Language for sure. History has to become a big part of it."*

All participants mentioned the importance of teaching Inuit history:

*"The more they understand their history, the more they will be close to their traditional culture";*

*"My daughter loved learning to sew, but most important were the stories told to her while sewing; ghost stories, cultural stories — about each other and their history; you get to see the values and history through stories. Kids should listen while doing cultural activities."*

The importance of stories and the oral tradition were also mentioned:

*"Stories, legends, survival. Even modern history, the signing of the J.B.N.Q.A.: basically David versus Goliath. That in itself is a survival story: Inuit vs. Hydro-Quebec and Government. Family names; the way we call each other."*

Some participants mentioned family names and the way Inuit call each other in response to an earlier question concerning suggested changes to the current Inuit culture programs taught in Nunavik schools:

*"My history lessons were of Quebec & Canada. When our culture has such rich history, great stories, knowledge if you were taught that can be used right there out on the land immediately; they [our rich history] are not being taken advantage of. Even simple things as the way we call each other as relatives — Akkaak, Anansiaq, second-cousins — are not being given enough, because these names, of relatives, make you know who you are related to — who family is."*

Inuit relations are extremely important. Who one is in relation to others, in Inuit culture, is as important as a person's name. Although they do on occasion call each other by their first names, traditionally, Inuit husbands and wives address each other by the Inuktitut terms for 'wife', 'husband', or the more common term of affection, 'Aipak' (partner). Prior to our marriage, I would often telephone my wife at her parent's house and ask for 'Nukaak' (younger sister), calling her by (Inuit) name, which in the

context of telephoning an Inuit family household is the more appropriate name to use.

This unique Inuit cultural way of addressing each and every person is now no longer being adequately taught, unless by chance, through the culturally-conscious family insistent on cultural maintenance. It appears that few families and people live their lives according to the maintenance of traditional Inuit standards. Fewer ensure that their Inuit children receive this cultural knowledge. Fortunately, such people are represented in this study (again, strengthening the argument for purposive sampling in qualitative research).

*Inuit Cultural Maintenance:*

When asked what is important for Inuit students to be learning today, one response helps to set the collective tone:

> *"Definitely the modern way of learning has taken over our cultural way of learning. It is important. They should be learning about what is going on in their environment."*

Inuit students need to be learning the survival skills that are essential for their current environment — as they always have. In this case these skills are a contemporary education that will prepare them for success (survival) in the modern world they now inhabit:

> *"What's going on today and what's being decided for them; that's what they should be learning. The 'Business World' — that is what has to be learned";*

*"To stay in school until the end — like University or College. So they have more chance to get better jobs. To survive, again. To be able to understand the Qallunaat language."*

Although employment prospects are directly linked to the outcome of a contemporary education, all participants also felt that it is equally important for Inuit students to be learning traditional knowledge and skills as they too form part of the Inuit environment today. The task, then, is in achieving a balance between the two necessities/camps:

*"To learn both worlds... Really is that! To identify what is important — what parts to let go of from the old world, and what parts to keep. You have to learn the new world. You have to know where you are coming from (values, etc.) to know who you are. Whether you go the college route or the technical vocational route, you need that to live.";*

*"Loaded question! I feel it is important to learn traditional knowledge and history, but in the perspective of my kids, my plan is for them to go all the way to University. I really believe that the more education they have, the more opportunities they will receive.*

*"To try and balance that perspective with traditional pride, I think is extremely difficult; and since the way the Education system has taken on that responsibility, they have to find a balance. A person who is proud of his or her background will have a lot more*

*confidence and self-esteem in what they do, whether it be in education, employment, personality amongst peers."*

A loss of pride has earlier been associated with the transition from the traditional Inuit educational model to the contemporary one. As the means toward achieving a traditional sense of self-worth and Inuit pride have been altered, this sense of traditional pride and resilience has been damaged. Contemporary education needs to find a way of re-establishing this sense of Inuit pride.

*"We are putting students 'in check'. They are not prepared for the south, and, they have lost their culture! Why is it difficult to make students work hard? They resist: They won't walk two blocks to school if their truck is broken. Why is it hard to make them work hard? We have spoiled them too much";*

*"We have no choice to go to school to save our brain — to use our brain. It seems everyone is so stupid: We have machines to do everything for us."*

Not only has contemporary education effectively robbed the Inuit of their traditional culture and knowledge, but in so doing it has rendered a strong and self-determined people lazy, dependent, and with a severed sense of pride:

*"Inuit say, 'We can do it the Inuit way', but on the other hand, if you are sick, there are no Inuit Doctors. Inuit need to fill all these roles themselves.*

*"An Egyptian who speaks Egyptian can be a Doctor — why can't Inuit? I think there are barriers: They don't want to. If we can pass this on [get past this], we have solved a big admissible barrier. We have to take responsibility for our own culture and move forward."*

And so modern Inuit find themselves in a catch twenty-two position. It is not that Inuit cannot go to school for decades in order to become doctors, lawyers, politicians and businesspeople if that is desirable, but that the Inuit sense of pride, self-determinism, reliance and ever-lasting drive to survive has taken a beating and it is easier to stay lying on the mat and be tended-to with one's wounded tail between one's legs, than it is to get back up, find a new way to beat the adversary and conquer their environment, forging forward victorious in a new round. Inuit culture, values and lifestyle have evolved, so too must Inuit identity and pride:

*"Before, there was no suicide — I believe that; you had to survive. A lot of people are lost. If you don't know where you came from it is very hard to know where you are going. If you don't know your family values, it is very difficult to move forward — no measure."*

Without firm footing in either world, merely adapting to a new beat and rhythm is challenging enough. Succeeding in and leading it, unfortunately, is a reality that only a few contemporary Inuit can enjoy, for now:

*"The Traditional Inuk takes advantage of what there is now. Go to school, learn to be a Doctor, come back and go out on the land; you are a traditional Inuk."*

This, perhaps, is more of an ideal that the Inuit of Nunavik should be striving toward, than a reality of present-day. If the Inuit of Nunavik focus on achieving cultural goals such as this, the above-mentioned model is one that is certainly within reach of all.

*Educational Medium:*

In response to the second of my initial two guiding questions, 'How should Inuit culture, values and traditional knowledge best be taught to Inuit today?', most participants agreed that Inuit culture, values and traditional knowledge must be taught to Inuit on the land, while all stated that this must be accomplished by having the Inuit Elders as teachers:

> *"I think it should be taken from the knowledge of Elders and knowledge of families: it should come from the domain of what they know";*
>
> *"By example! If it is within the school; that the Elders are involved, and from my experience, not just any Elder, but a person who is well-respected in the community. With modern technology today, anything is possible. I always see that we need to take advantage of that somehow. Perhaps a short video of traditional hunting practices; Elder telling hunting stories";*
>
> *"With the Elders. Use the Elders to teach the younger generation how they used to live — that's the best way to pass down the knowledge."*

Contemporary education systems are at odds with the way Inuit were traditionally educated. Inuit were educated on the land, not in classrooms. If Inuit culture is to survive, it must be taught on the land. To teach Inuit culture and traditional knowledge exclusively in a classroom is counterproductive to Inuit cultural maintenance. Perhaps as suggested, a blend of both might be optimal.

You can't teach people to cook or repair cars solely in the classroom. Descriptions of basic concepts and ideas may be introduced there, but without a 'hands-on component' the knowledge is out of context. Inuit culture and knowledge must be taught, and learned on the land. Students may read about how to skin a caribou, but unless they have the chance to actually skin one, they will never learn to do it.

> *"At least once, to show them how to cut the meat (as I was saying earlier), like caribou and nirliq [goose] — how to cut it. For the little girls, how to sew and using the skins. How to survive on the land; go camping for at least three weeks, so they will know exactly how to survive — or if they get an accident they can get a 'first-aid course'."*

The theme of having students spend extended time on the land learning traditional survival skills is one that has arisen repeatedly throughout these interviews, raised by most participants in response to differing lines of thought:

*"I think people who want to learn the culture should be able to go to a land college. Before, there was no suicide — I believe that; you had to survive. When you go to a land college, I have to cut my own wood, get water, clean my tent."*

An Inuit cultural "boot camp";

*"The ones who have been on the land are calmer, more analytical. You don't teach your kids in a classroom, you do it by sharing and letting them experience it."*

One participant introduced to me the idea of a formal 'land college', and touted it as an 'idea-in-the-making' that had been bantered-about at the corporate level (and perhaps too in the inner circles of Inuit leadership), but effectively not taken very seriously:

*"I look forward to the 'land college' idea: Everyone is concerned, but no concentrated effort — you don't need it for your job/pay cheque. We talk about it, but it doesn't have commitment to move it forward — It's a sorry thing."*

When asked "How can Education best serve Inuit needs?" most participants stressed that education was the key to improving the lives of individuals and the Inuit society as a whole:

*"In this day and age we need modern Inuit. We need lawyers and doctors. Inuit are going forward, not backwards — we need to fill all these positions. Education has a big part in order to teach these";*

*“To teach them what they need in the ‘now’ lifestyles, and prepare them the best they can for what they need, for which ever lifestyle they choose”;*

*“Education is the key to the survival of Inuit culture and traditions. That is the number one tool — education. Learning to be a doctor, or whatever — the services that are needed — the Inuit have to take those jobs; that’s the balance we have. There are more and more services, yet no Inuit to do the job”;*

*“I struggle with the idea of having post-secondary Education in the North — I find it is such a catch twenty-two; not enough experienced/skilled Inuit to run it, but I still want it here.”*

And in the end, we find ourselves back to the beginning of the discussion and the balance that must therefore be achieved, in lieu of the environment Nunavik Inuit currently find themselves living in, between the learning of traditional and contemporary knowledge and survival skills:

*“I also struggle with modern knowledge and traditional knowledge being balanced. If a complete modern system is being taught, the child will be ready for work, but will struggle with the cultural and self-identity. But if we put more emphasis on traditional knowledge, this affects the modern education that is so sought after.”*

Again, we observe Louis-Jacques Dorais' comment that although modern Inuit identity yearns toward the traditional identity of maqainniq, contemporary necessities pull Inuit identity toward Kiinaujaliurutiit (see pp. 112, 113 of this text).

There is no disputing the fact that an education in both traditions is required for contemporary Inuit of Nunavik. Inuit need to maintain their rich and unique culture, but Inuit also need to use education to excel at the modern world and become the leaders of their own tomorrow. Above all, what is needed are programs that restore the sense of Inuit pride that dissolved when the change in education systems altered Inuit culture:

> *"Pride is something that would need to be started first: Who you come from, who your ancestors are — how they survived; that would certainly get the ball rolling."*

As mentioned previously, the role of the parent must change and parents must accept the responsibility of their participation in their child's education order to ensure the continuance of the Inuit culture:

> *"At the same time I am struggling with myself as I know I have a role to play as a parent, and the responsibility of the Education system";*
>
> *"We need our Inuit pioneers. I have my role as a parent — it is a great life — do it by example. You have to make the time to do this. I think it is so sad that buddies go out [on land] together, drinking, but leave their son's behind — this is sad; it severs the culture."*

And so, perhaps a modified version of the suggestion for an Inuit land college would be in line with both traditional and contemporary models of Inuit education, and would also serve as a place to begin in building and restoring an injured sense of identity:

> *"I knew a little kid in the community; he was a scrawny teenage boy who was withdrawn, shy, poor in school, etc. When I saw him preparing to go out on the land he became a man; a 'hunter'. It is a 'living culture'";*
>
> *"What is great about Inuit culture and your history is that learning Inuit culture provides great pride, as you do it yourself. It is a confidence builder."*

Utilizing traditional Inuit culture to re-build a sense of Inuit individual and cultural pride, while fulfilling cultural maintenance requirements, would therefore seem like a logical and beneficial solution.

## ***Part 7***

*Conclusions and Recommendations*

*(Excerpt from)* Will the Inuit Disappear from the Face of this Earth?

"Will the Inuit disappear from the face of this earth? Will we become extinct? Will our culture, our language and our attachment to nature be remembered only in history books? These questions bring a great sadness to me. To realize that we Inuit are in the same category as the great whales, the bold eagle, the husky and the polar bear, brings me great fear. To realize that our people can be classified as an endangered species is very disturbing. Is our culture like a wounded polar bear that has gone out to sea to die alone? What can be done? There does not seem to be one single answer to these questions.

… "We must teach our children their mother tongue. We must teach them what they are and where they come from. We must teach them the values of our society which have guided us over the thousands of years. We must teach them our philosophies which go back beyond the memory of man. We must keep the embers burning from the fires which used to burn in our villages so that we may gather around them again. It is this spirit we must keep alive so that it may guide us in a new life in a changed world. Who is responsible for keeping this spirit alive? It is clearly the older people. We must have the leadership which they once provided us. They must realize this responsibility and accept it. If the older people will remember, the young must learn.

> … “The Inuit were once strong, independent and proud people. That is why we have survived. That strength, that independence, and that pride must surface again. We must prove to Canada that the original citizens of this country will not lie down and play dead. After all, the Inuit have been classified by the United Nations as a people who refuse to disappear.”
>
> (Amagoalik, 1977, pp. 52-54).

John Amagoalik’s wonderful essay not only sets the stage for the thrust of this research, but also provides the very answers that the participants in this study have with respect to how Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik must be accomplished.

The source and spirit of Inuit pride has been wounded and appears to be on the brink of extinction. In contemporary society, any attempts at reconstruction must be actuated through a concerted effort on the part of all parties involved, including Inuit youth, parents, Elders and the school.

The results of this study clearly suggest that the only way to successfully achieve Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik is through the involvement of the people who own this knowledge – the older generation of Inuit Elders. Inuit culture, values and traditional knowledge must be taught to Inuit youth on the land by Inuit Elders.

The passing of knowledge from one generation of Inuit to another was essential for the survival of Inuit culture. It is not so now.

The relationship that children had with their parents and elders changed when the traditional teaching role of the parent was replaced by modern education. A lack of need for the Elders in the traditional educational sense described, has contributed to a lack of respect for the Elders who no longer hold the keys to contemporary survival. The vessel or conduit of Inuit culture has been severed, effectively leaving three generations of Inuit people on opposing sides of a void. This has affected Inuit families, relations, and pride.

Education is a means of survival in any culture and in any time period; it provides the skills needed for physical survival in the extremes, the acquisition of jobs or both. Education is the key to prosperity in the modern world, as it is with Inuit cultural maintenance. Education in the North is bicultural in need. However, combined, these two cultural educational needs are in tension and appear to be given at the expense of each other in terms of the time needed to adequately teach both ‘cultures’.

When asked what changes should be made to the current Inuit culture programs being taught in Nunavik schools, almost all participants cited the problem of insufficient culture and traditional knowledge courses. Ironically, it is these very elements of Inuit culture, along with the Inuktitut language, ‘family names and naming’, that participants defined as the elements of Inuit cultural knowledge that are necessary for Inuit cultural maintenance.

Modern Inuit are often able to communicate with each other in languages other than Inuktitut, at work, at home and in the community. Despite the temptation to communicate in English or French (at the hospital, post office, or local store, for example), one participant elaborated on an ultimately essential element of cultural maintenance twice in the interview, that undoubtedly gets overlooked in the hurried pace of modern communications. The only way that Inuktitut seems to have a chance of surviving and flourishing is if Inuit make a deliberate and concerted effort to maintain Inuit culture by the conscious act of remembering to always speak Inuktitut to each other, under all conditions:

*"I always remember to speak to them (Inuit) in our first language."*

When asked what is important for Inuit students to be learning today, there was unanimous agreement that contemporary Inuit youth need an education that will prepare them for participation in both worlds and cultures.

The question then becomes, how? How do we teach contemporary Inuit youth the defined skills needed to survive and flourish in both worlds, without compromising the efficacy of either? From this research it is clear that the learning of traditional Inuit culture and skills is an ongoing, lifelong process. If schools in Nunavik were full time separate schools focusing exclusively on Inuit culture, knowledge and language, this would be undemocratic (see pp.123, 124 of this text). Schools alone can never provide an adequate 'course of study' to address these cultural concerns

in such a manner as to ensure cultural maintenance while also providing an adequate contemporary education for the modern world. Inuit culture needs to gain ground with each new generation, not lose ground, as has been the trend.

As traditional Inuit education was passed on by parents and Elders throughout the life course, it seems quite apparent that any educational attempts toward Inuit cultural maintenance in Nunavik must see the role of the parent as 'cultural teacher' return to the forefront of the Inuit educational experience. As parents are too busy earning a living in order to support their families to afford the time needed to perpetuate Inuit culture, as per the needs of the current capitalist economic system to which the Inuit now belong, it is not feasible to expect all Inuit parents to be able to do so.

As mentioned throughout the interviews, it takes an enormous amount of money — for trucks, boats, trailers, all-terrain vehicles, skidoos, gasoline, tents, G.P.S., satellite phones, komatiks, rifles, shotguns, ammunition, blinds, fishing and camping gear, cooking equipment, ice drills, nets, clothing, etc. — just for the ante to begin to play at the contemporary Inuit cultural maintenance table. Further to these funds is a requisite will and determination to take the endless time and care needed to pass this cultural knowledge on to one's children. In today's day and age, not many people (of any culture) have the discretionary funds needed to live on the land, let alone the time commitment, will and lifetime

devotion needed to pass this vital Inuit traditional knowledge and skills on to their children. Traditional Inuit life revolved around training the youth — it was something you did while surviving everyday life. Maintaining Inuit culture in today's world implies taking time off from contemporary work and society to do so.

Inuit culture needs to be passed down from generation to generation, as was the traditional Inuit educational model. Contemporary education systems are at odds with the way Inuit were traditionally educated. Inuit were educated on the land — not in classrooms. If Inuit culture is to survive, it must be taught on the land, over the course of childhood (at least), and under the tutelage of Inuit Elders.

Modern Inuit also need an education that will enable them to pursue a post-secondary education in the 'south'. If Inuit cultural maintenance is to have a chance to succeed and reverse the trend toward cultural deterioration, it must not interfere with the need to also acquire this 'southern' education.

Inuit cultural maintenance must therefore be achieved in conjunction with but separate from contemporary education.

This leaves relatively few choices regarding the coordination of a workable and feasible framework for an actual plan of study that can accommodate both of these Inuit educational needs simultaneously.

One option for an educational model could be to have alternate semesters on the land throughout the entire school (K-11) experience.

This would certainly boost cultural maintenance goals, but under this model traditional skills and knowledge essentially still ‘compete for time’ with contemporary education and is therefore not sound. Contemporary education would suffer as time needed to adequately teach this knowledge would be devoted to traditional skills and knowledge, which would also be compromised. Although sliced slightly differently, this proposed model would be an altered duplicate of the model in place now whereby two different ‘systems of education’ are in tension, are being taught at the expense of each other, and effectively clash.

An additional educational model could be to do as some religious groups espouse (as an example, the Mormons of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints come to mind) whereby spending a two-year mission in a foreign land becomes part of a rite of passage, and a life-changing event.

Were Inuit youth to be provided with the opportunity to go on a one year land mission of survival, akin to an Australian Aboriginal ‘Walkabout’ with a select group of Inuit Elders, they would learn the culture as they lived it, which would coincide with the traditional Inuit way of learning through observation and hands-on experience.

Under such a program, students could take a full year out of their academic studies in order to study this year-long intensive land/survival course. This hypothetical model is one that juxtaposes the two needed systems of education, instead of offering them in a more complimentary

manner. Inuit culture would then be something that is reduced to being learned in a lengthy 'crash course' over a relatively short time period, within which, a culture, cultural traditions and survival skills cannot be learned. The learning and refinement of Inuit culture and survival skills is a lifelong event that cannot be crammed into one year. Any program that is not exclusively designed with the goal of complete Inuit cultural maintenance is not worth looking at, as it will only serve to further the process of cultural deterioration already firmly in place.

The comments made regarding the idea of a land college were that it would be good, "*to go to learn to make nets, hunt with a harpoon"*, but under this type of a model, the land college becomes a place where one can go to brush up on their skills, or learn a particularly refined skill or hobby (as one would take a 'photography' or 'sushi-making' course, for example); an *optional* cultural adult education center. If Inuit cultural maintenance is left to the few proud and traditional-bound Inuit who desire this knowledge, as an optional choice, Inuit cultural maintenance cannot succeed. To have a formal land college that people could attend as one does for a weekend retreat would not succeed with regards to cultural maintenance, as Inuit culture cannot be sustained on a part-time, voluntary basis – perhaps this is why there was a will for the idea but no drive to see it through and accomplish it.

The concept of a land college is a wonderful idea for adults to practice and fine-tune cultural skills and knowledge, but is not what is currently and

drastically needed with regards to maintaining a culture at risk of disappearing. The Inuit youth need this cultural education now; from birth through to adulthood, in order to ensure its continuance. Inuit culture cannot be left to the curious few, or it will become nothing but that, retaining its place in history alongside other cultures of an era-gone-by.

I believe that the following option for an educational model is one way that the Inuit of Nunavik can successfully achieve sustainable cultural maintenance, while also ensuring that the modern education that is 'so sought after' is not compromised, and in turn can be strengthened to ensure that the Inuit of Nunavik are at the forefront of contemporary change, prosperity and their own future.

In Puvirnituq each summer a select group of a few renowned hunters/Elders from the community are hired to go on the land with students from the community in a form of cultural 'summer camp', for two to three weeks, in order to learn the traditional ways.

This local effort, started by a concerned community Inuktitut teacher and his wife at the regular school and funded through solicitation of local funds from the Corporation of Northern Villages Puvirnituq, must be further designed, developed and expanded to all regions of Nunavik, in a centralized and fully-funded Inuit cultural maintenance program.

Were a 'summer camp-type' program to be extensively developed into an intensive eight week summer program starting immediately at the end of the contemporary school year in May, this could then be followed by

periodic three week “refresher” land sessions, perhaps once each semester (at least three times per academic year), through the changing of the seasons — to learn summer tent and fishing net construction, maintenance and repair, equally with igloo and komatik construction, maintenance and repair in the winter, for example. Occupying between seventeen and twenty weeks per year, this would then represent the same amount of time as devoted to contemporary education during the entire academic year.

All traditional knowledge and skills would then be learned through direct physical involvement, on the land. The Inuktitut language would be the only language of instruction. Family names and naming, for example, could be taught throughout the on-going learning experience. All knowledge (shelter construction, camping, hunting, fishing, animal parts and preparation, culinary skills, sewing, ‘first-aid’, for example) could be taught ‘age-appropriate’, throughout the duration of the parallel (K-11) contemporary education system. In this model, the two systems of education would not interfere with each other, but would compliment each other through their differences: One being the learning of a contemporary education in classrooms in modern schools; the other the learning of traditional Inuit cultural and survival skills, hunting for one’s food, and living on the land.

In order for such an endeavor to take root, the complete involvement of the Kativik School Board and the local communities of Nunavik would be

needed. Inuit Elders would need to, once again, return to the forefront of Inuit Education and in the process regain the dependency and respect that they traditionally held. This model would require a shift in social structures in place in Nunavik, to one where an Elder's participation in the process of cultural maintenance would become the 'social norm' expected of Inuit men and women.

If communities were to provide for each Elder's 'retirement' from the work force at an earlier age than is currently the Canadian norm, these Elders could then be financially employed as cultural educators for a period of between two to five years in the service of Inuit cultural maintenance. This role could then become a personal 'mission' of sorts — a life achievement/accomplishment that one looked forward to and prepared for, throughout their younger years. From an Inuit Elder's perspective this could be a rewarding and beneficial way to 'ease into retirement', as well.

This model would achieve cultural maintenance. This model would balance and fulfill the need for a contemporary education in both cultures and 'worlds'. This model would serve to reconnect Inuit to the land; all Inuit. This model would serve to reconnect Inuit youth with the Inuit Elders and in so doing, assist in the cultivation of Inuit pride, which would ultimately have reciprocal social benefits such as reduction of suicides, alcoholism, and a sense of meaninglessness.

By alleviating the pressure to maintain the Inuit culture from the school board, schools would thereby have more time, energy and resources to devote to the teaching of contemporary curricula and knowledge, languages and vocational studies if desired, and achieve better results. Instead of trying to teach both at the expense of both, if each culture, per se, took care of the education of the culture they specialize in, there would be no compromise, to the benefit of students in both contexts.

This model would take a great deal of will, commitment, cooperation and coordination on the part of all Nunavik Inuit and northern organizations in order to be realized, but especially by students.

In order for this model to work, it would require students having longer school years, and less summer vacation time. The current school calendar could be adjusted to end on the first of May, coinciding with the coming of the Canada Geese the first week of May, followed by the eight week 'cultural camp', which would still leave six weeks of summer vacation afterward, before the commencement of the new school year in September. This might be difficult for youth to adapt to initially, but would eventually become accepted as 'par for the cultural maintenance course' and looked forward to by all students.

I have no doubts that this model would also serve to increase the levels of student interest, enjoyment, learning, retention, and performance rates remarkably, in both educational contexts. As a result, drop-out rates, enrollment numbers of Inuit students in post-secondary studies and their

success therein would also be affected. Joining this educational model to the idea of a ‘land college’ should be examined in greater depth in further studies.

My objective was to determine how education can best be used to assist in the preservation of Inuit cultural values in contemporary Nunavik. I examined factors which the Inuit of Nunavik feel defines their culture, and can provide a framework from which an education program can be structured with the intent of assisting in the preservation of Inuit culture, values and traditions.

I believe the model previously presented, although cumbersome in the effort, cooperation, and attention to detail required to accomplish sufficiently, meets the stated objective and goals of this research, and further provides a workable model that the Inuit of Nunavik, Inuit from the Circumpolar North, and other Aboriginal groups facing cultural maintenance questions in the face of contemporary society can use for the benefit of their own development.

My study indicates a need for further research in the areas of curricular design for and practical application of an Inuit traditional cultural knowledge and survival skills program in conjunction with a refined contemporary education system. Further studies are needed, and perhaps *must* be done by Inuit researchers, in order to promote the feasibility of this model of Inuit cultural maintenance in contemporary Nunavik.

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# Appendix A

## Interview Consent Form

Dear Study Participant:

The Ethics Committee of McGill University of Montreal requires that all study participants sign a consent form before research involvement.

As you are now aware, I am conducting research for my Doctoral dissertation focusing on defining Inuit values, culture and traditions, and methods of teaching and promoting Inuit culture through Education. The title of this research project is, “Inuit Cultural Values and Educational Traditions in Nunavik”.

The research itself consists of interviews with Inuit elders, political and educational leaders, those involved in Inuit curricular development, teachers of Inuit culture, and education committee members in Nunavik. These questions will seek to examine perceptions on Inuit culture, and ways of preserving Inuit culture, values and traditions through education. In the final report I shall examine these examples of cultural values and traditions with educational studies designed to improve educational opportunities for specific groups in our society.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to contribute to an hour-long interview. Your name will not be used in the final report and identifying details will be omitted or disguised. You have every right to refuse to answer any questions or to withdraw from the interview at any time without question or prejudice.

I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have about this research project, or to clarify and discuss your answers or my questions after the interview.

If you agree to participate, please sign one copy of this form and return one to me.
Nakurmiik,

Christopher Mount, Researcher
Box xxx, Kuujjuaq,
QC J0M 1C0
(819) 964-xxxx

Supervisors: Dr. Boyd White,
Dr. Kevin McDonough
McGill University
3700 McTavish Street, Montreal,
QC H3A 1Y2 (514) 398-4531

I understand the purpose of this study and know about the risks, benefits and inconveniences that this research project entails.

I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time from the study without any penalty or prejudice.

I understand how confidentiality will be maintained during this research project.

I understand the anticipated uses of data, especially with respect to publication, communication and dissemination of results.

I have carefully studied the above and understand my participation in this agreement. I freely consent and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I consent to having this interview tape-recorded: Yes ___ No ___
Name (please print)
_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Thank you for your participation in this study*

## Appendix B
*Interview Questions*

A) *Culture:*

1) What is traditional Inuit culture?

2) Could you provide an example (or story) of traditional Inuit culture?

3) What traditions (or customs) best define Inuit culture?

4) How is traditional Inuit culture different from Inuit culture today?

5) As Inuit culture is constantly evolving, what parts of Inuit culture remain unchanged?

B) *Values:*

1) What are (or were) traditional Inuit values?

2) Could you provide an example of how traditional Inuit values are different from Inuit values today?

*C) Education:*

1) How would you define education?

2) What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of education as you know it?

3) What changes would you make to the current Inuit culture programs presently taught in Nunavik schools? Why would you suggest these changes?

4) Which elements of Inuit culture should be taught in an education system designed to preserve Inuit culture?

5) What is important for Inuit students today to be learning in schools?

*D) Educational Medium:*

1) How should Inuit culture, values and traditional knowledge best be taught to Inuit today?

2) How can Education best serve Inuit needs?

# Appendix C

*Photography Footnotes*

***All photographs ©by Christopher Mount***

*(except *Photo ©by Sophie Tukalak*)*

*Cover Photo by Christopher Mount: "Plugged-in Igloo"; Puvirnituq, 1998*

| | Photo Title | Page | Location | Details | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Plugged-in Igloo | Title | Puvirnituq | Inhabited, contemporary Igloo wired for radio Reception | 1998 |
| 2. | Tent in the Tundra 1 | 2 | Inukjuak | Tent in tundra by water | 1996 |
| 3. | First Morning | 3 | Inukjuak | First view upon waking… | 1996 |
| 4. | Three Girls and Puppy | 3 | Inukjuak | Lucy Nowra, Kimberly POV, Sipura POV | 1996 |
| 5. | Air Inuit Landing | 4 | Inukjuak | Ice-covered runway | 1996 |
| 6. | Kids Sliding | 6 | Puvirnituq | Eleven kids sliding, pose | 1998 |
| 7. | Kids in Puddle | 8 | Puvirnituq | Late spring | 1999 |
| 8. | Girls in Puddle | 8 | Puvirnituq | Late spring | 1999 |
| 9. | POV on the Bay | 9 | Puvirnituq | Hudson Bay/POV at dusk | 1998 |
| 10. | Man Sewing Walrus | 10 | Inukjuak | Jeremy Iqualuq, sewing walrus on beach for transport | 1996 |
| 11. | "Good Morning" | 11 | Inukjuak | Boat on Inukjuak beach | 1996 |
| 12. | Kuujjuaq Inukshuk | 14 | Kuujjuaq | Inukshuk with bird, Kuujjuaq | 1998 |
| 13. | 2 Sunsets – POV | 15 | Puvirnituq | Illusion of two sunsets on wind-swept hill | 1998 |
| 14. | Map of Nunavik | 16 | Internet | www.makivik.org/media-centre | 2010 |
| 15. | Kuujjuaq Co-op | 16 | Kuujjuaq | Kuujjuaq Co-op – FCNQ | 2012 |
| 16. | Northern, Inukjuak | 16 | Inukjuak | Northern Stores (Northwest Company) | 1996 |
| 17. | Canada Post Office | 17 | Kuujjuaq | Canada Post Office, Kuujjuaq | 2012 |
| 18. | Kitativik Town Hall | 17 | Kuujjuaq | Municipal Offices/ Conference Center/ Movie Theatre | 2011 |
| 19. | Iguarsivik School | 17 | Puvirnituq | Iguarsivik School (K-11), Kativik School Board | 1998 |
| 20. | POV Adult Education | 18 | Puvirnituq | Puvirnituq Adult Education Center | 1998 |
| 21. | Tummiapiit Day Care | 18 | Kuujjuaq | Tummiapiit Day Care Center | 2012 |
| 22. | Kuujjuaq Hospital | 19 | Kuujjuaq | Ungava Tullattivik Health Center | 2012 |
| 23. | Kuujjuaq Forum | 19 | Kuujjuaq | Kuujjuaq Forum during 2011 NHL playoffs | 2011 |
| 24. | Inukjuak Airport | 19 | Inukjuak | Inukjuak Airport from runway | 1996 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25. Kuujjuaq Airport | 20 | Kuujjuaq | Main Terminal, Kuujjuaq Airport | 2011 |
| 26. Anglican Churches | 20 | Kuujjuaq | St. Stephans & old Anglican Church | 2012 |
| 27. Anglican Church | 20 | Kuujjuaq | St. Stephans Anglican Church, Kuujjuaq | 2012 |
| 28. Local Small Business | 21 | Kuujjuaq | Tivi Galleries, Kuujjuaq | 2012 |
| 29. My house, Inukjuak | 21 | Inukjuak | Bungalow/Trailer house | 1996 |
| 30. My house, Kuujjuaq | 21 | Kuujjuaq | Semi-detached, three bedroom duplex | 2012 |
| 31. House in POV | 21 | Puvirnituq | Detached three bedroom house | 1998 |
| 32. What minus 60 Looks Like | 22 | Puvirnituq | 8 a.m., -60 degrees, POV street | 1998 |
| 33. Sewage Truck | 22 | Puvirnituq | Corporation of Northern Villages Puvirnituq | 1998 |
| 34. Elder's House | 24 | Kuujjuaq | Tusaajiapik Elder's House | 2011 |
| 35. Skins Hanging to Dry | 25 | Puvirnituq | Stretched skins hanging to dry on a house | 1999 |
| 36. Inuktitut Stop Sign | 25 | Kuujjuaq | Inuktitut/English stop sign | 2012 |
| 37. Dog Sled/Hudson Bay | 26 | Puvirnituq | The late, Thomassie Sivuarapik | 1998 |
| 38. Kuujjuaq Hummer | 26 | Kuujjuaq | Seal-lifted Sports Utility Vehicle | 2012 |
| 39. Sea-lift arrival | 27 | Puvirnituq | Sea-lift barge carrying Containers (cars),off-loaded from anchored cargo ship | 1998 |
| 40. Sea-lift docking | 27 | Puvirnituq | Sea-lift barge docking on beach | 1998 |
| 41. Tent in the Tundra 2 | 28 | Puvirnituq | "locked" tent in the Tundra | 1998 |
| 42. Inukjuak | 29 | Inukjuak | Inukjuak on Hudson Bay (Belcher Islands) | 1996 |
| 43. Teacher/Student Statue | 30 | Puvirnituq | Iguarsivik School Statue: Peter Ittukalak | 1999 |
| 44. "Adult Education" | 31 | Puvirnituq | Elisapee Papialuk & daughter Sarah | 1998 |
| 45. Iviqtivik Adult Ed. | 33 | Inukjuak | Iviqtivik Adult Education Center | 1996 |
| 46. Iviqtivik Adult Ed. Sign | 34 | Inukjuak | Iviqtivik Adult Education Center Entrance | 1996 |
| 47. Nunavimmi Pigiursavik | 34 | Inukjuak | Nunavimmi Pigiursavik Adult and Vocational Education Center facing Adult Ed. Residence, under construction (KSB) | 1996 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 48. | From My Desk | 35 | Kuujjuaq | Kajusivik Adult Education Center | 2012 |
| 49. | Kajusivik Adult Ed. | 35 | Kuujjuaq | Kajusivik Adult Education Center | 2012 |
| 50. | Gutting Seal on Beach | 36 | Puvirnituq | Post community hunting boat return | 1998 |
| 51. | Canada Geese 1 | 37 | Puvirnituq | Canada Geese in "V" formation | 1998 |
| 52. | Canada Geese 2 | 37 | Puvirnituq | Geese under clouds | 1998 |
| 53. | Boy with Goose | 38 | Puvirnituq | Muncy Sivuarapik carrying goose home | 1998 |
| 54. | Goose by Stove | 38 | Puvirnituq | "Supper" | 1998 |
| 55. | Kids on the Roof | 39 | Puvirnituq | Kids on roof of shack | 1998 |
| 56. | Frozen (Hudson) Bay | 40 | Puvirnituq | Ice breaking in spring | 1999 |
| 57. | *Inukshuk 2 | 41 | Kuujjuaq | *Inukshuk *Photo by Sophie Tukalak* | 2011 |
| 58. | Snow Inukshuk | 41 | Puvirnituq | Inukshuk made from left-over igloo Blocks | 1999 |
| 59. | "Inside the Shack Next-door" | 42 | Inukjuak | Curiosity leads me in… | 1996 |
| 60. | Carving "Studio" 1 | 42 | Inukjuak | Noah Iqaluk, My next-door neighbour, Inukjuak | 1996 |
| 61. | Carver Next Door 1 | 43 | Inukjuak | Noah Iqaluk, carver | 1996 |
| 62. | Carving "Studio" 2 | 44 | Puvirnituq | Aisa Moses carving, with kids observing | 1998 |
| 63. | Carver Next Door 2 | 44 | Puvirnituq | Aisa Moses, My next-door neighbor, POV | 1998 |
| 64. | "Stone-pile Grave" | 48 | Inukjuak | Stone-pile grave, shovels on hill | 1996 |
| 65. | Caribou Coral | 60 | Inukjuak | Caribou herded into coral; | 1996 |
| 66. | Cross in Graveyard | 63 | Puvirnituq | Tombstones in P.O.V. Graveyard | 1998 |
| 67. | Tools of the Devil | 66 | Inukjuak | Paraphernalia piled on river ice | 1996 |
| 68. | Community Looks On | 66 | Inukjuak | Maina Nastapoka(-Epoo); (foreground) | 1996 |
| 69. | Gasoline Added | 67 | Inukjuak | Gasoline is poured on paraphernalia | 1996 |
| 70. | A Prayer is Said 1 | 67 | Inukjuak | Prayer to rid community of devil | 1996 |
| 71. | And it is Set Ablaze | 68 | Inukjuak | Paraphernalia is set on Fire | 1996 |
| 72. | Hunting Boats Arrive | 70 | Puvirnituq | Hunting boats arrive to cheers | 1998 |
| 73. | " Arriving With Flair" | 70 | Puvirnituq | Flares from boat in celebration upon arrival | 1998 |
| 74. | A Prayer is Said 2 | 71 | Inukjuak | Prayer of thanks for what they have received | 1996 |
| 75. | Country Food 1 | 72 | Inukjuak | Caribou on the dock | 1996 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 76. | Country Food 2 | 72 | Inukjuak | Tri-pronged walrus on beach | 1996 |
| 77. | Country Food 3 | 73 | Puvirnituq | Seal on tarpaulin | 1998 |
| 78. | Elders in Traditional Dress | 74 | Puvirnituq | Alacie Aulluk Tullaugak, Mary Sivuarapik (POV Adult Ed. Center) | 1998 |
| 79. | Girl in Kamiks in Snow | 75 | Inukjuak | Girl playing in snow with kamiks | 1996 |
| 80. | Meeting of Two Worlds | 76 | Puvirnituq | Skidoo and dogsled meet on Hudson Bay | 1998 |
| 81. | Two Women/Ammautiik | 77 | Puvirnituq | Annie Novlinga, Emily Tullugak | 1998 |
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